

5. Massachusetts Officials Describe the Outbreak of Witchcraft in Salem, 1692

Mr. Parris had been some years a Minister in Salem-Village, when this sad Calamity (as a deluge) overflowed them, spreading it self far and near: . . .

It was the latter end of February 1691, when divers young Persons belonging to Mr. Parris's Family, and one or more of the Neighbourhood, began to Act, after a strange and unusual manner, *viz.* as by getting into Holes, and creeping under Chairs and Stools, and to use sundry odd Postures and Antick Gestures, uttering foolish, ridiculous Speeches, which neither they themselves nor any others could make sense of; the Physicians that were called could assign no reason for this; but it seems one of them, having recourse to the old shift, told them he was afraid they were Bewitched; upon such suggestions, they that were concerned applied themselves to Fasting and Prayer, which was attended not only in their own private Families, but with calling in the help of others.

March the 11th. Mr. Parris invited several Neighbouring Ministers to join with him in keeping a Solemn day of Prayer at his own House; the time of the exercise those Persons were for the most part silent, but after any one Prayer was ended, they would Act and Speak strangely and Ridiculously, yet were such as had been well Educated and of good Behaviour, the one, a Girl of 11 or 12 years old, would sometimes seem to be in a Convulsion Fit, her Limbs being twisted several ways, and very stiff, but presently her Fit would be over.

A few days before this Solemn day of Prayer, Mr. Parris's Indian Man and Woman made a Cake of Rye Meal, with the Childrens Water, and Baked it in the

"An Impartial Account of the Most Memorable Matters of Fact, Touching the Supposed Witchcraft in New England," in *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases*, George Lincoln Burr (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1914), 341–344.

Ashes, and as is said, gave it to the Dog; this was done as a means to Discover Witchcraft, soon after which those ill affected or afflicted Persons named several that they said they saw, when in their Fits, afflicting of them.

The first complain'd of, was the said Indian Woman, named Tituba. She confessed that the Devil urged her to sign a Book, which he presented to her, and also to work Mischief to the Children, etc. She was afterwards Committed to Prison, and lay there till Sold for her Fees. The account she since gives of it is, that her Master did beat her and otherways abuse her, to make her confess and accuse (such as he call'd) her Sister-Witches, and that whatsoever she said by way of confessing or accusing others, was the effect of such usage; her Master refused to pay her Fees, unless she would stand to what she had said.

The Children complained likewise of two other Women, to be the Authors of their Hurt, *Viz.* Sarah Good, who had long been counted a Melancholy or Distracted Woman, and one Osburn, an Old Bed-rid Woman; which two were Persons so ill thought of, that the accusation was the more readily believed; and after Examination before two Salem Magistrates, were committed:

March the 19th. Mr. Lawson (who had been formerly a Preacher at the said Village) came thither, and hath since set fourth in Print an account of what then passed, about which time, as he saith, they complained of Goodwife Cory, and Goodwife Nurse, Members of the Churches at the Village and at Salem, many others being by that time Accused.

March the 21st. Goodwife Cory was examined before the Magistrates of Salem, at the Meeting House in the Village, a throng of Spectators being present to see the Novelty. Mr. Noyes, one of the Ministers of Salem, began with Prayer, after which the Prisoner being call'd, in order to answer to what should be Alledged against her, she desired that she might go to Prayer, and was answered by the Magistrates, that they did not come to hear her pray, but to examine her.

The number of Afflicted were at that time about Ten, *Viz.* Mrs. Pope, Mrs. Putman, Goodwife Bibber, and Goodwife Goodall, Mary Wolcott, Mercy Lewes (at Thomas Putmans) and Dr. Griggs Maid, and three Girls, *Viz.* Elizabeth Parris, Daughter to the Minister, Abigail Williams his Neice, and Ann Putman, which last three were not only the beginners, but were also the chief in these Accusations. These Ten were most of them present at the Examination, and did vehemently accuse her of Afflicting them, by Biting, Pinching, Strangling, etc. And they said, they did in their Fits see her likeness coming to them, and bringing a Book for them to Sign; Mr. Hathorn, a Magistrate of Salem, asked her, why she Afflicted those Children? she said, she did not Afflict them; he asked her, who did then? she said, "I do not know, how should I know?" she said, they were Poor Distracted Creatures, and no heed to be given to what they said; Mr. Hathorn and Mr. Noyes replied that it was the Judgment of all that were there present, that they were bewitched, and only she (the Accused) said they were Distracted: She was Accused by them, that the Black Man Whispered to her in her Ear now (while she was upon Examination) and that she had a Yellow Bird, that did use to Suck between her Fingers, and that the said Bird did Suck now in the Assembly; order being given to look in that place to see if there were any sign, the Girl that pretended to see it said, that it was too late now, for she had removed a Pin, and put it on her Head, it was upon search found, that a Pin was there sticking upright. When the Accused had any motion of their Body, Hands or

Mouth, the Accusers would cry out, as when she bit her Lip, they would cry out of being bitten, if she grasped one hand with the other, they would cry out of being Pinched by her, and would produce marks, so of the other motions of her Body, as complaining of being Prest, when she lean'd to the seat next her, if she stirred her Feet, they would stamp and cry out of Pain there. After the hearing the said Cory was committed to Salem Prison, and then their crying out of her abated.

"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (Enfield, July 8, 1741) (Salem, Mass.: G. Roulstone, 1786), 1st ser., no. 19618.



4. Increase Mather Describes the Proofs of Witchcraft, 1684

Inasmuch as things which are preternatural, and not accomplished without diabolical operation, do more rarely happen, it is pity but that they should be observed. Several accidents of that kind have hapned in New England, which I shall here faithfully relate, so far as I have been able to come unto the knowledge of them.

Very remarkable was that Providence wherein Ann Cole of Hartford in New England was concerned. She was, and is accounted, a person of real piety and integrity; nevertheless, in the year 1662, then living in her fathers house (who has likewise been esteemed a godly man), she was taken with very strange fits, wherein her tongue was improved by a dæmon to express things which she herself knew nothing of; sometimes the discourse would hold for a considerable time; the general purpose of which was, that such and such persons (who were named in the discourse which passed from her) were consulting how they might carry on mischievous designs against her and several others, mentioning sundry wayes they should take for that end, particularly that they would afflict her body, spoil her name, &c. The general answer made amongst the dæmons was, "She runs to the rock." This having continued some hours, the dæmons said, "Let us confound her language, that she may tell no more tales." She uttered matters unintelligible. And then the discourse passed into a Dutch tone (a Dutch family then lived in the town), and therein an account was given of some afflictions that had befallen divers; amongst others, what had befallen a woman that lived next neighbour to the Dutch family, whose arms had been strangely pinched in the night, declaring by whom and for what cause that course had been taken with her. The Reverend Mr. Stone (then teacher of the church in Hartford) being by, when the

Increase Mather, *An Essay for the Recording of Remarkable Providences* (Boston, 1684), 135–167, 168–185.

discourse hapned, declared, that he thought it impossible for one not familiarly acquainted with the Dutch (which Ann Cole had not in the least been) should so exactly imitate the Dutch tone in the pronunciation of English. Several worthy persons (viz., Mr. John Whiting, Mr. Samuel Hooker, and Mr. Joseph Haines) wrote the intelligible sayings expressed by Ann Cole, whilst she was thus amazingly handled. The event was, that one of the persons (whose name was Greensmith, being a lewd and ignorant woman, and then in prison on suspicion for witchcraft) mentioned in the discourse as active in the mischief done and designed, was by the magistrate sent for; Mr. Whiting and Mr. Haines read what they had written, and the woman being astonished thereat, confessed those things to be true, and that she and other persons named in this preternatural discourse, had had familiarity with the devil. Being asked whether she had made an express covenant with him, she answered, she had not, only as she promised to go with him when he called, which accordingly she had sundry times done, and that the devil told her that at Christmass they would have a merry meeting, and then the covenant between them should be subscribed. The next day she was more particularly enquired of concerning her guilt respecting the crime she was accused with. She then acknowledged, that though when Mr. Haines began to read what he had taken down in writing, her rage was such that she could have torn him in pieces, and was as resolved as might be to deny her guilt (as she had done before), yet after he had read awhile, she was (to use her own expression) as if her flesh had been pulled from her bones, and so could not deny any longer: she likewise declared, that the devil first appeared to her in the form of a deer or fawn, skipping about her, wherewith she was not much affrighted, and that by degrees he became very familiar, and at last would talk with her; moreover, she said that the devil had frequently the carnal knowledge of her body; and that the witches had meetings at a place not far from her house; and that some appeared in one shape, and others in another; and one came flying amongst them in the shape of a crow. Upon this confession, with other concurrent evidence, the woman was executed; so likewise was her husband, though he did not acknowledge himself guilty. Other persons accused in the discourse made their escape. Thus doth the devil use to serve his clients. After the suspected witches were either executed or fled, Ann Cole was restored to health, and has continued well for many years, approving herself a serious Christian.

There were some that had a mind to try whether the stories of witches not being able to sink under water were true; and accordingly a man and woman, mentioned in Ann Cole's Dutch-toned discourse, had their hands and feet tyed, and so were cast into the water, and they both apparently swam after the manner of a buoy, part under, part above the water. A by-stander, imagining that any person bound in that posture would be so born up, offered himself for trial; but being in the like matter gently laid on the water, he immediately sunk right down. This was no legal evidence against the suspected persons, nor were they proceeded against on any such account; however, doubting that an halter would choak them, though the waters would not, they very fairly took their flight, not having been seen in that part of the world since. Whether this experiment were lawful, or rather superstitious and magical, we shall enquire afterwards.

Another thing which caused a noise in the country, and wherein Satan had undoubtedly a great influence, was that which hapned at Groton. There was a maid in that town (one Elizabeth Knap) who in the moneth of October, anno 1671, was

taken after a very strange manner, sometimes weeping, sometimes laughing, sometimes roaring hideously, with violent motions and agitations of her body, crying out "Money, money," &c. In November following, her tongue for many hours together was drawn like a semicircle up to the roof of her mouth, not to be removed, though some tried with their fingers to do it. Six men were scarce able to hold her in some of her fits, but she would skip about the house yelling and looking with a most frightful aspect. December 17: Her tongue was drawn out of her mouth to an extraordinary length; and now a *dæmon* began manifestly to speak in her. Many words were uttered wherein are the labial letters, without any motion of her lips, which was a clear demonstration that the voice was not her own. Sometimes words were spoken seeming to proceed out of her throat, when her mouth was shut; sometimes with her mouth wide open, without the use of any of the organs of speech. The things then uttered by the devil were chiefly railings and revilings of Mr. Willard (who was at that time a worthy and faithful pastor to the church in Groton). Also the *dæmon* belched forth most horrid and nefandous blasphemies, exalting himself above the Most High. After this she was taken speechless for some time. One thing more is worthy of remark concerning this miserable creature. She cried out in some of her fits, that a woman (one of her neighbours) appeared to her, and was the cause of her affliction. The person thus accused was a very sincere, holy woman, who did hereupon, with the advice of friends, visit the poor wretch: and though she was in one of her fits, having her eyes shut, when the innocent person impeached by her came in, yet could she (so powerful were Satans operations upon her) declare who was there, and could tell the touch of that woman from any ones else. But the gracious party, thus accused and abused by a malicious devil, prayed earnestly with and for the possessed creature; after which she confessed that Satan had deluded her, making her believe evil of her good neighbour without any cause. Nor did she after that complain of any apparition or disturbance from such an one. Yea, she said, that the devil had himself, in the likeness and shape of divers, tormented her, and then told her it was not he but they that did it. . . .

5. The Court Examines Rebecca Nurse and Takes Testimony from Her and Her Friends, Salem, 1692

Testimony of Ann Putnam, Junior

The deposition of Ann Putnam, junior, who testifieth and saith that on the 13th March, 1691/92, I saw the apparition of Goody Nurse, and she did immediately afflict me, but I did not know what her name was then, though I knew where she used to sit in our meetinghouse. But since that, she hath grievously afflicted by biting.

"Testimony of Ann Putnam, Senior and Ann Putnam, Junior Against Rebecca Nurse, May 31, 1692;" "Testimony of Israel and Elizabeth Porter, Daniel Andrew, and Peter Cloyse;" and "Examination of Rebecca Nurse," in Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, eds., *Salem-Village Witchcraft: A Documentary Record of Local Conflict in Colonial New England* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1972), 18-19, 21-22, 23-25. Reprinted by permission of Stephen Nissenbaum.

pinching, and pricking me, [and] urging me to write in her book. And, also, on the 24th of March, being the day of her examination, I was grievously tortured by her during the time for her examination, and also several times since. And, also, during the time of her examination, I saw the apparition of Rebekah Nurs go and hurt the bodies of Mercy Lewis, Mary Wolcott, Elizabeth Hubbard, and Abigail Williams.

Ann Putnam, Junr, did own the oath which she hath taken: this her evidence to be truth, before us, and Jurors for Inquest, this 4 day of June, 1692.

Testimony of Ann Putnam, Senior, and Ann Putnam, Junior

The deposition of Ann Putnam, the wife of Thomas Putnam, aged about 30 years, who testifieth and saith that on the 18th March 1692, I being wearied out in helping to tend my poor afflicted child and maid, about the middle of the afternoon I lay me down on the bed to take a little rest; and immediately I was almost pressed and choked to death, that, had it not been for the mercy of a gracious God and the help of those that were with me, I could not have lived many moments; and presently I saw the apparition of Martha Corey, who did torture me so as I cannot express, ready to tear me all to pieces, and then departed from me a little while; but before I could recover strength or well take breath, the apparition of Martha Corey fell upon me again with dreadful tortures, and hellish temptations to go along with her. And she also brought to me a little red book in her hand and a black pen, urging me vehemently to write in her book; and several times that day she did grievously torture me, almost ready to kill me.

And on the 19th March, Martha Corey again appeared to me; and also Rebecca Nurse, the wife of Francis Nurse, Sr.; and they both did torture me a great many times this day with such tortures as no tongue can express, because I would not yield to their hellish temptations, that, had I not been upheld by an Almighty arm, I could not have lived [the] night. The 20th March being sabbath-day, I had a great deal of respite between my fits. 21st March being the day of the examination of Martha Corey I had not many fits, though I was very weak, my strength being, as I thought, almost gone.

But on the 22nd March, 1692, the apparition of Rebecca Nurse did again set upon me in a most dreadful manner, very early in the morning, as soon as it was well light. And now she appeared to me only in her shift, and brought a little red book in her hand, urging me vehemently to write in her book; and because I would not yield to her hellish temptations, she threatened to tear my soul out of my body, blasphemously denying the blessed God and the power of the Lord Jesus Christ to save my soul, and denying several places of Scripture which I told her of, to repel her hellish temptations. And for near two hours together, at this time, the apparition of Rebecca Nurse did tempt and torture me, and also the greater part of this day with but very little respite. 23d March, am again afflicted by the apparitions of Rebecca Nurse and Martha Corey, but chiefly by Rebecca Nurse. 24th March being the day of the examination of Rebecca Nurse, I was several times in the morning afflicted by the apparition of Rebecca Nurse, but most dreadfully tortured by her in the time of her examination, insomuch that the honored magistrates gave my husband leave to carry me out of the meetinghouse; and as soon as I was carried out of the meetinghouse doors, it pleased Almighty God, for his free grace and mercy's sake, to deliver me out of the paws of those roaring lions, and jaws of those tearing bears [so] that ever since that time they

have not had power so to afflict me, until this 31st May 1692. At the same moment that I was hearing my evidence read by the honored magistrates, to take my oath, I was again re-assaulted and tortured by my before-mentioned tormentor, Rebecca Nurse.

Sworn Salem Villiage, May the 31st, 1692
 Before us John Hathorne } Assistants
 Jonathan Corwin }

Ann Putnam, Senior, appeared before us, the Jurors of Inquest, and owned this her evidence this 3rd day of June, 1692.

The testimony of Ann Putnam, Jr., witnesseth and saith that being in the room when her mother was afflicted, she saw Martha Corey, Sarah Cloyse and Rebecca Nurse, or their apparition, upon her mother.

Testified to the truth thereof by
 Ann Putnam, Salem, May 31st, 1692
 Before us John Hathorne } Assistants
 Jonathan Corwin }

Testimony of Israel and Elizabeth Porter, Daniel Andrew, and Peter Cloyse

We whose names are underwritten, being desired to go to Goodman Nurse's house to speak with his wife and to tell her that several of the afflicted persons mentioned her; and accordingly we went, and we found her in a weak and low condition in body as she told us, and had been sick almost a week.

And we asked her how it was, otherwise, with her. And she said she blessed God for it, she had more of his presence in this sickness than sometime she have had, but not so much as she desired. But she would, with the apostle, press forward to the mark, and many other places of Scripture to the like purpose.

And then, of her own accord, she began to speak of the affliction that was amongst them, and in particular of Mr. Parris's family, and how she was grieved for them, though she had not been to see them by reason of fits that she formerly used to have, for people said it was awful to behold. But she pitied them with all her heart, and went to God for them. But she said she heard that there was persons spoke of that were as innocent as she was, she believed.

And after much to this purpose, we told her we heard that she was spoken of also. Well, she said, if it be so, the will of the Lord be done. She sat still a while, being as it were amazed, and then she said, Well, as to this thing, I am as innocent as the child un-born. But surely, she said, what sin hath God found out in me unrepented of, that he should lay such an affliction upon me in my old age? And, according to our best observation, we could not discern that she knew what we come for before we told her.

Israel Porter
 Elizabeth Porter

To the substance of what is above we, if called thereto, are ready to testify on oath.

Daniel Andrew
 Peter Cloyse

Examination of Rebecca Nurse

The examination of Rebeckah Nurse at Salen Village, 24 Mar., 1691/92.

Mr. Harthorn. What do you say (speaking to one afflicted), have you seen this woman hurt you?

Yes, she beat me this morning.

Abigail, have you been hurt by this woman?

Yes.

Ann Putnam, in a grievous fit, cried out that she hurt her.

Goody Nurse, here are two—Ann Putnam the child and Abigail Williams—complains of your hurting them. What do you say to it?

N. I can say before my Eternal Father, I am innocent, and God will clear my innocence.

Here is never a one in the assembly but desires it. But if you be guilty, pray God discover you.

Then Hen: Kenney rose up to speak.

Goodman Kenney, what do you say?

Then he entered his complaint and farther said that since this Nurse came into the house he was seized twice with an amazed condition.

Here are not only these, but here is the wife of Mr. Tho Putnam who accuseth you by creditable information, and that both of tempting her to iniquity and of greatly hurting her.

N. I am innocent and clear, and have not been able to get out of doors these 8 or 9 days.

Mr. Putman, give in what you have to say.

Then Mr. Edward Putnam gave in his relate.

Is this true, Goody Nurse?

I never afflicted no child, never in my life.

You see these accuse you. Is it true?

No.

Are you an innocent person, relating to this witchcraft?

Here Tho: Putnam's wife cried out: Did you not bring the Black man with you? Did you not bid me tempt God and die? How oft have you eat and drunk your own damnation? What do you say to them?

Oh Lord, help me, and spread out her hands, and the afflicted were grievously vexed.

Do you see what a solemn condition these are in? When your hands are loose, the persons are afflicted.

Then Mary Walcott (who often heretofore said she had seen her, but never could say, or did say, that she either bit or pinched her, or hurt her) and also Elis. Hubbard, under the like circumstances, both openly accused her of hurting them.

Here are these 2 grown persons now accuse you. What say you? Do not you see these afflicted persons, and hear them accuse you?

The Lord knows. I have not hurt them. I am an innocent person.

It is very awful for all to see these agonies, and you, an old professor, thus charged with contracting with the devil by the effects of it, and yet to see you stand with dry eyes when there are so many wet.

You do not know my heart.

You would do well, if you are guilty, to confess. Give Glory to God.

I am as clear as the child unborn.

What uncertainty there may be in apparitions I know not, yet this with me strikes hard upon you, that you are, at this very present, charged with familiar spirits. This is your bodily person they speak to. They say now they see these familiar spirits come to your bodily person. Now what do you say to that?

I have none, sir.

If you have confessed, and give Glory to God, I pray God clear you, if you be innocent. And if you be guilty, discover you. And therefore give me an upright answer: have you any familiarity with these spirits?

No. I have none but with God alone.

How came you sick, for there is an odd discourse of that in the mouths of many.

I am sick at my stomach.

Have you no wounds?

I have not but old age.

You do know whether you are guilty, and have familiarity with the devil, and now when you are here present, to see such a thing as these testify: a black man whispering in your ear and birds about you. What do you say to it?

It is all false. I am clear.

Possibly you may apprehend you are no witch, but have you not been led aside by temptations that way?

I have not.

What a sad thing it is that a church member here, and now another of Salem, should be thus accused and charged.

Mrs. Pope fell into a grievous fit and cried out: a sad thing sure enough. And then many more fell into lamentable fits.

Tell us, have you had visible appearances more than what is common in nature?

I have none, nor never had in my life.

Do you think these suffer voluntary or involuntary?

I cannot tell.

That is strange: everyone can judge.

I must be silent.

They accuse you of hurting them, and if you think it is not unwilling but by design, you must look upon them as murderers.

I cannot tell what to think of it. Afterwards, when this was somewhat insisted on, she said: I do not think so. She did not understand aright what was said.

Well then, give an answer now, do you think these suffer against their wills or not?

I do not think these suffer against their wills.

Why did you never visit these afflicted persons?

Because I was afraid I should have fits, too.

Note: Upon the motion of her body, fits followed upon the complainants, abundantly and very frequently.

Is it not an unaccountable case that when you are examined these persons are afflicted?

I have got nobody to look to but God.

Again, upon stirring her hands, the afflicted persons were seized with violent fits of torture.

Do you believe these afflicted persons are bewitched?

I do think they are.

When this witchcraft came upon the stage, there was no suspicion of Tituba (Mr. Parris's Indian woman). She professed much love to that child, Betty Parris. But it was her apparition did the mischief, and why should not you also be guilty, for your apparition doth hurt also?

Would you have me belie myself?

She held her neck on one side, and accordingly so were the afflicted taken.

Then, authority requiring it, Sam: Parris read what he had in characters taken from Mr. Tho: Putman's wife in her fits.

What do you think of this?

I cannot help it, the Devil may appear in my shape.

This is a true account of the sum of her examination, but by reason of great noise, by the afflicted and many speakers, many things are pretermitted.

Memorandum

Nurse held her neck on one side and Eliz. Hubbard (one of the sufferers) had her neck set in that posture. Whereupon another patient, Abigail Williams, cried out: Set up Goody Nurse's head, the maid's neck will be broke. And when some set up Nurse's head, Aaron Wey observed that Betty Hubbard's was immediately righted. . . .

3. Mary Jemison Recounts Her Experience of Capture and Adoption as a Seneca, 1755

My education had received as much attention from my parents, as their situation in a new country would admit of. I had been at school some, where I learned to read in a book that was about half as large as a Bible; and in the Bible I had read a little. I had also learned the Catechism, which I used frequently to repeat to my parents, and every night, before I went to bed, I was obliged to stand up before my mother and repeat some words that I suppose was a prayer.

My reading, Catechism and prayers, I have long since forgotten; though for a number of the first years that I lived with the Indians, I repeated the prayers as often as I had an opportunity. After the revolutionary war, I remembered the names of some of the letters when I saw them; but have never read a word since I was taken prisoner. It is but a few years since a Missionary kindly gave me a Bible, which I am very fond of hearing my neighbors read to me, and should be pleased to learn to

A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison (1824; Reprint American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, 1982).

read it myself; but my sight has been for a number of years, so dim that I have not been able to distinguish one letter from another. . . .

. . . Our family, as usual, was busily employed about their common business. Father was shaving an axe-helve at the side of the house; mother was making preparations for breakfast;—my two oldest brothers were at work near the barn; and the little ones, with myself, and the woman and her three children, were in the house.

Breakfast was not yet ready, when we were alarmed by the discharge of a number of guns, that seemed to be near. Mother and the women before mentioned, almost fainted at the report, and every one trembled with fear. . . .

. . . They first secured my father, and then rushed into the house, and without the least resistance made prisoners of my mother, Robert, Matthew, Beisey, the woman and her three children, and myself, and then commenced plundering. . . .

The party that took us consisted of six Indians and four Frenchmen, who immediately commenced plundering, as I just observed, and took what they considered most valuable; consisting principally of bread, meal and meat. Having taken as much provision as they could carry, they set out with their prisoners in great haste, for fear of detection, and soon entered the woods. On our march that day, an Indian went behind us with a whip, with which he frequently lashed the children to make them keep up. In this manner we travelled till dark without a mouthful of food or a drop of water; although we had not eaten since the night before. Whenever the little children cried for water, the Indians would make them drink urine or go thirsty. At night they encamped in the woods without fire and without shelter, where we were watched with the greatest vigilance. Extremely fatigued, and very hungry, we were compelled to lie upon the ground supperless and without a drop of water to satisfy the cravings of our appetites. As in the day time, so the little ones were made to drink urine in the night if they cried for water. Fatigue alone brought us a little sleep for the refreshment of our weary limbs; and at the dawn of day we were again started on our march in the same order that we had proceeded on the day before. About sunrise we were halted, and the Indians gave us a full breakfast of provision that they had brought from my father's house. Each of us being very hungry, partook of this bounty of the Indians, except father, who was so much overcome with his situation—so much exhausted by anxiety and grief, that silent despair seemed fastened upon his countenance, and he could not be prevailed upon to refresh his sinking nature by the use of a morsel of food. Our repast being finished, we again resumed our march, and before noon passed a small fort that I heard my father say was called Fort Canagojigge.

That was the only time that I heard him speak from the time we were taken till we were finally separated the following night.

Towards evening we arrived at the border of a dark and dismal swamp, which was covered with small hemlocks, or some other evergreen, and other bushes, into which we were conducted; and having gone a short distance we stopped to encamp for the night.

Here we had some bread and meat for supper: but the dreariness of our situation, together with the uncertainty under which we all labored, as to our future destiny, almost deprived us of the sense of hunger, and destroyed our relish for food.

Mother, from the time we were taken, had manifested a great degree of fortitude, and encouraged us to support our troubles without complaining; and by her conversa-

tion seemed to make the distance and time shorter, and the way more smooth. But father lost all his ambition in the beginning of our trouble, and continued apparently lost to every care—absorbed in melancholy. Here, as before, she insisted on the necessity of our eating; and we obeyed her, but it was done with heavy hearts.

As soon as I had finished my supper, an Indian took off my shoes and stockings and put a pair of moccasins on my feet, which my mother observed; and believing that they would spare my life, even if they should destroy the other captives, addressed me as near as I can remember in the following words:—

"My dear little Mary, I fear that the time has arrived when we must be parted forever. Your life, my child, I think will be spared; but we shall probably be tomahawked here in this lonesome place by the Indians. O! how can I part with you my darling? What will become of my sweet little Mary? Oh! how can I think of your being continued in captivity without a hope of your being rescued? O that death had snatched you from my embraces in your infancy; the pain of parting then would have been pleasing to what it now is; and I should have seen the end of your troubles!—Alas, my dear! my heart bleeds at the thoughts of what awaits you; but, if you leave us, remember my child your own name, and the name of your father and mother. Be careful and not forget your English tongue. If you shall have an opportunity to get away from the Indians, don't try to escape; for if you do they will find and destroy you. Don't forget, my little daughter, the prayers that I have learned you—say them often; be a good child, and God will bless you. May God bless you my child, and make you comfortable and happy."

During this time, the Indians stripped the shoes and stockings from the little boy that belonged to the woman who was taken with us, and put moccasins on his feet, as they had done before on mine. I was crying. An Indian took the little boy and myself by the hand, to lead us off from the company, when my mother exclaimed, "Don't cry Mary—don't cry my child. God will bless you! Farewell—farewell!"

The Indian led us some distance into the bushes, or woods, and there lay down with us to spend the night. The recollection of parting with my tender mother kept me awake, while the tears constantly flowed from my eyes. A number of times in the night the little boy begged of me earnestly to run away with him and get clear of the Indians; but remembering the advice I had so lately received, and knowing the dangers to which we should be exposed, in travelling without a path and without a guide, through a wilderness unknown to us, I told him that I would not go, and persuaded him to lie still till morning.

Early the next morning the Indians and Frenchmen that we had left the night before, came to us; but our friends were left behind. It is impossible for any one to form a correct idea of what my feelings were at the sight of those savages, whom I supposed had murdered my parents and brothers, sister, and friends, and left them in the swamp to be devoured by wild beasts! But what could I do? A poor little defenceless girl; without the power or means of escaping; without a home to go to, even if I could be liberated; without a knowledge of the direction or distance to my former place of residence; and without a living friend to whom to fly for protection, I felt a kind of horror, anxiety, and dread, that, to me, seemed insupportable. I durst not cry—I durst not complain; and to inquire of them the fate of my friends (even if I could have mustered resolution) was beyond my ability, as I could not speak their language, nor they understand mine. My only relief was in silent stifled sobs.

My suspicions as to the fate of my parents proved too true; for soon after I left them they were killed and scalped, together with Robert, Matthew, Betsey, and the woman and her two children, and mangled in the most shocking manner.

Having given the little boy and myself some bread and meat for breakfast, they led us on as fast as we could travel, and one of them went behind and with a long staff, picked up all the grass and weeds that we trailed down by going over them. By taking that precaution they avoided detection; for each weed was so nicely placed in its natural position that no one would have suspected that we had passed that way. It is the custom of Indians when scouting, or on private expeditions, to step carefully and where no impression of their feet can be left—shunning wet or muddy ground. They seldom take hold of a bush or limb, and never break one; and by observing those precautions and that of setting up the weeds and grass which they necessarily lop, they completely elude the sagacity of their pursuers, and escape that punishment which they are conscious they merit from the hand of justice.

After a hard day's march we encamped in a thicket, where the Indians made a shelter of boughs, and then built a good fire to warm and dry our benumbed limbs and clothing; for it had rained some through the day. Here we were again fed as before. When the Indians had finished their supper they took from their baggage a number of scalps and went about preparing them for the market, or to keep without spoiling, by straining them over small hoops which they prepared for that purpose, and then drying and scraping them by the fire. Having put the scalps, yet wet and bloody, upon the hoops, and stretched them to their full extent, they held them to the fire till they were partly dried and then with their knives commenced scraping off the flesh; and in that way they continued to work, alternately drying and scraping them, till they were dry and clean. That being done they combed the hair in the neatest manner, and then painted it and the edges of the scalps yet on the hoops, red. Those scalps I knew at the time must have been taken from our family by the color of the hair. My mother's hair was red; and I could easily distinguish my father's and the children's from each other. That sight was most appaling; yet, I was obliged to endure it without complaining.

In the course of the night they made me to understand that they should not have killed the family if the whites had not pursued them . . .

At the place where we halted, the Indians combed the hair of the young man, the boy and myself, and then painted our faces and hair red, in the finest Indian style. We were then conducted into the fort, where we received a little bread and were then shut up and left to tarry alone through the night . . .

The night was spent in gloomy forebodings. What the result of our captivity would be, it was out of our power to determine or even imagine.—At times we could almost realize the approach of our masters to butcher and scalp us;—again we could nearly see the pile of wood kindled on which we were to be roasted; and then we would imagine ourselves at liberty; alone and defenceless in the forest, surrounded by wild beasts that were ready to devour us. The anxiety of our minds drove sleep from our eyelids; and it was with a dreadful hope and painful impatience that we waited for the morning to determine our fate.

The morning at length arrived, and our masters came early and let us out of the house, and gave the young man and boy to the French, who immediately took them away. Their fate I never learned; as I have not seen nor heard of them since.

I was now left alone in the fort, deprived of my former companions, and of everything that was near or dear to me but life. But it was not long before I was in some measure relieved by the appearance of two pleasant looking squaws of the Seneca tribe, who came and examined me attentively for a short time, and then went out. After a few minutes absence they returned with my former masters, who gave me to them to dispose of as they pleased. . . .

On our way we passed a Shawanee town, where I saw a number of heads, arms, legs, and other fragments of the bodies of some white people who had just been burnt. The parts that remained were hanging on a pole which was supported at each end by a crotch stuck in the ground, and were roasted or burnt black as a coal. The fire was yet burning; and the whole appearances afforded a spectacle so shocking, that, even to this day, my blood almost curdles in my veins when I think of them!

At night we arrived at a small Seneca Indian town, at the mouth of a small river, that was called by the Indians, in the Seneca language, She-nan-jee, where the two Squaws to whom I belonged resided. There we landed, and the Indians went on; which was the last I ever saw of them.

Having made fast to the shore, the Squaws left me in the canoe while they went to their wigwam or house in the town, and returned with a suit of Indian clothing, all new, and very clean and nice. My clothes, though whole and good when I was taken, were now torn in pieces, so that I was almost naked. They first undressed me and threw my rags into the river; then washed me clean and dressed me in the new suit they had just brought, in complete Indian style; and then led me home and seated me in the center of their wigwam.

I had been in that situation but a few minutes, before all the Squaws in the town came in to see me. I was soon surrounded by them, and they immediately set up a most dismal howling, crying bitterly, and wringing their hands in all the agonies of grief for a deceased relative. . . .

"Oh our brother! Alas! He is dead—he has gone; he will never return! Friendless he died on the field of the slain, where his bones are yet lying unburied! Oh, who will mourn his sad fate? No tears dropped around him; oh no! No tears of his sisters were there! . . .

. . . His spirit has seen our distress, and sent us a helper whom with pleasure we greet. Dicke-wamis has come: then let us receive her with joy! She is handsome and pleasant! Oh! she is our sister, and gladly we welcome her here. In the place of our brother she stands in our tribe. With care we will guard her from trouble; and may she be happy till her spirit shall leave us."

In the course of that ceremony, from mourning they became serene—joy sparkled in their countenances, and they seemed to rejoice over me as over a long lost child. I was made welcome amongst them as a sister to the two Squaws before mentioned, and was called Dicke-wamis; which being interpreted, signifies a pretty girl, a handsome girl, or a pleasant, good thing. That is the name by which I have ever since been called by the Indians.

I afterwards learned that the ceremony I at that time passed through, was that of adoption. The two squaws had lost a brother in Washington's war, sometime in the year before, and in consequence of his death went up to Fort Pitt, on the day on which I arrived there, in order to receive a prisoner or an enemy's scalp, to supply their loss.

It is a custom of the Indians, when one of their number is slain or taken prisoner in battle, to give to the nearest relative to the dead or absent, a prisoner, if they have chanced to take one, and if not, to give him the scalp of an enemy. On the return of the Indians from conquest, which is always announced by peculiar shoutings, demonstrations of joy, and the exhibition of some trophy of victory, the mourners come forward and make their claims. If they receive a prisoner, it is at their option either to satiate their vengeance by taking his life in the most cruel manner they can conceive of; or, to receive and adopt him into the family, in the place of him whom they have lost. All the prisoners that are taken in battle and carried to the encampment or town by the Indians, are given to the bereaved families, till their number is made good. . . .

"Franklin's Plan of Union," in *The Documentary History of the State of New-York*, E.B. O'Callaghan (Albany: Weed, Parsons, and Co., Public Printers, 1850), II, 357-359.