

so small that he "could not judge them fit for any use" (Document 49). The implication was that she had been using them to dress the dolls. Given how difficult it was to prove witchcraft, descriptions of hard evidence such as poppets would have been invaluable to those in favor of conviction. The magistrates issued a warrant for Bridget Bishop's arrest on April 18 and examined her the following day. Bishop was the first of the accused to be tried, on June 2. She was convicted and hanged on June 10.¹

¹Bridget Bishop has sometimes been confused with Sarah Bishop (also married to an Edward Bishop), who ran an unlicensed tavern. Some locals alleged that Sarah Bishop's tavern was attracting young people, who "were in danger to be corrupted" (Bernard Rosenthal et al., eds., *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009], 300).

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*Examination of Bridget Bishop
(as Recorded by Ezekiel Cheever)*

April 19, 1692

Bridget Bishop being now coming in to be examined relating to her accusation of suspicion of sundry acts of witchcrafts, the afflicted persons are now dreadfully afflicted by her, as they do say.

MR. HATHORNE: Bishop, what do you say? You here stand charged with sundry acts of witchcraft by you done or committed upon the bodies of Mercy Lewis and Ann Putnam and others.

BISHOP: I am innocent. I know nothing of it. I have done no witchcraft.

MR. HATHORNE: Look upon this woman [speaking to the afflicted] and see if this be the woman that you have seen hurting you.

Mercy Lewis and Ann Putnam and others do now charge her to her face with hurting of them.

MR. HATHORNE: What do you say? Now you see they charge you to your face.

BISHOP: I never did hurt them in my life. I did never see these persons before. I am as innocent as the child unborn.

MR. HATHORNE: Is not your coat cut?

Bishop answers "No," but her garment being looked upon, they find it cut or torn two ways. Jonathan Walcott saith that the sword that he struck at Goody Bishop with was not naked but was within the scabbard,¹ so that the rent may very probably be the very same that Mary Walcott did tell that she [Bridget Bishop] had in her coat by Jonathan's striking at her appearance. The afflicted persons charge her with having hurt them many ways and by tempting them to sign to the Devil's book, at which charge she seemed to be very angry and shaking her head at them, saying it was false. They are all greatly tormented (as I conceive) by the shaking of her head.

MR. HATHORNE: Goody Bishop, what contract have you made with the Devil?

BISHOP: I have made no contract with the Devil. I never saw him in my life.

Ann Putnam sayeth that she calls the Devil her God.

MR. HATHORNE: What say you to all this that you are charged with? Can you not find in your heart to tell the truth?

BISHOP: I do tell the truth. I never hurt these persons in my life. I never saw them before.

MERCY LEWIS: Oh, Goody Bishop, did you not come to our house last night and did you not tell me that your master made you tell more than you were willing to tell?

MR. HATHORNE: Tell us the truth in this matter. How come these persons to be thus tormented and to charge you with doing?

BISHOP: I am not come here to say I am a witch to take away my life.

¹A sheath or case that holds the blade of a sword or dagger.

MR. HATHORNE: Who is it that doth it if you do not? They say it is your likeness that comes and torments them and tempts them to write in the book. What book is [it] that you tempt them with?

BISHOP: I know nothing of it. I am innocent.

MR. HATHORNE: Do you not see how they are tormented? You are acting witchcraft before us. What do you say to this? Why, have you not a heart to confess the truth?

BISHOP: I am innocent. I know nothing of it. I am no witch. I know not what a witch is.

MR. HATHORNE: Have you not given consent that some evil spirit should do this in your likeness?

BISHOP: No. I am innocent of being a witch. I know no man, woman, or child here.

MARSHALL HERRICK: How came you into my bedchamber one morning, then, and asked me whether I had any curtains to sell?

She is by some of the afflicted persons charged with murder.

MR. HATHORNE: What do you say to these murders you are charged with?

BISHOP: I am innocent. I know nothing of it.

Now she lifts up her eyes and they are greatly tormented.

MR. HATHORNE: What do you say to these things here, [these] horrible acts of witchcraft?

BISHOP: I know nothing of it. I do not know whether [there] be any witches or no.

MR. HATHORNE: No? Have you not heard that some have confessed?

BISHOP: No. I did not.

Two men told her to her face that they had told her. Here she is taken in a plain lie. Now she is going away, they are dreadfully afflicted. Five afflicted persons do charge this woman to be the very woman that hurts them.

This is a true account of what I have taken down at her examination according to [my] best understanding and observation. I have also in her examination taken notice that all her actions have great influence upon the afflicted persons and that [they] have been tortured by her.

Ezekiel Cheever

from the within mentioned subscribers, [and] that that piece of flesh of Goodwife Nurse's formerly seen is gone and only a dry skin nearer to the anus in another place.

Eleanor Henderson

Elizabeth Hill

Hannah Kezer

Alice Pickering

Lydia Pickman

Rebecca Sharpe

J Barton, surgeon

Anna Stephens

Marjory Williams

Jane Woolings

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*John Bly Sr. and Rebecca Bly against
Bridget Bishop*

June 2, 1692

John Bly, Sr. and Rebecca Bly, his wife, of Salem, both testify and say that said John Bly bought a sow of Edward Bishop of Salem, sawyer,¹ and by agreement with said Bishop was to pay the price agreed upon unto Lieutenant Jeremiah Neale of Salem. And Bridget, the wife of said Edward Bishop, because she could not have the money or value agreed for paid unto her, she [came] to the house of the deponents in Salem and quarreled with them about it. Soon after which, the sow having pigged,² she was taken with strange fits, jumping up and knocking her head against the fence and seemed blind and deaf and would not eat, neither let her pigs suck, but foamed at the mouth, which Goody Henderson hearing of said she believed she was over-looked,³ and that they had their cattle ill in such a manner at the eastward when she lived there, and [they] used to cure them by giving of them red ocher⁴ and milk, which we also gave the sow, quickly after eating of which she grew better, and then

¹Carpenter.

²Having given birth to piglets.

³Bewitched

⁴An earthy clay containing iron oxide, usually yellow or reddish brown, often used as a pigment.

for the space of near two hours together she getting into the street did set of jumping and running between the house of said deponents and said Bishops as if she were stark mad, and after that was well again; and we did then apprehend, or judge, and do still, that said Bishop had bewitched said sow.

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*John Bly Sr. and William Bly against
Bridget Bishop*

June 2, 1692

John Bly, Sr., aged about fifty-seven years, and William Bly, aged about fifteen years, both of Salem, testifieth and saith that being employed by Bridget Bishop, alias Oliver, of Salem to help take down the cellar wall of the old house she formerly lived in, we the said deponents in holes of the said old wall belonging to the said cellar found several poppets made up of rags and hogs' bristles with headless pins in them with the points outward, and this was about seven years last past.

Essex County Court Archives, vol. 1, no. 147, from the Records of the Court of Oyer and Terminer, 1692, Property of the Supreme Judicial Court, Division of Archives and Records Preservation, on deposit at the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.

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Richard Coman against Bridget Bishop

June 2, 1692

Richard Coman, aged about thirty-two years, testifieth that some time about eight years since, I then being in bed with my wife at Salem, one fifth day of the week at night, either in the latter end of May or the

Essex County Court Archives, vol. 1, no. 146, from the Records of the Court of Oyer and Terminer, 1692, Property of the Supreme Judicial Court, Division of Archives and Records Preservation, on deposit at the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.

John Louder against Bridget Bishop

June 2, 1692

John Louder of Salem, aged about thirty-two years, testifieth and saith that about seven or eight years since, I then living with Mr. John Gedney in Salem and having had some controversy with Bridget Bishop, the wife of Edward Bishop of Salem, sawyer, about her fowls that used to come into our orchard or garden, some little time after which, I going well to bed, about the dead of the night felt a great weight upon my breast and awakening looked and it being bright moonlight did clearly see said Bridget Bishop, or her likeness, sitting upon my stomach; and putting my arms off of the bed to free myself from that great oppression, she presently laid hold of my throat and almost choked me, and I had no strength or power in my hands to resist or help myself; and in this condition she held me to almost day. Some time after this, my mistress, Susannah Gedney, was in our orchard and I was then with her, and said Bridget Bishop, being then in her orchard, which was next adjoining to ours, my mistress told said Bridget that I said or affirmed that she came one night and sat upon my breast as aforesaid, which she denied and I affirmed to her face to be true and that I did plainly see her, upon which discourse with her she threatened me. And some time after that, I, being not very well, stayed at home on a Lord's Day and on the afternoon of said day, the doors being shut, I did see a black pig in the room coming towards me, so I went towards it to kick it and it vanished away. Immediately after I sat down on a narrow bar and did see a black thing jump into the window and [it] came and stood just before my face upon the bar. The body of it looked like a monkey, only the feet were like a cock's feet with claws and the face somewhat more like a man's than a monkey. And I being greatly affrighted, not being able to speak or help myself by reason of fear, I suppose, so the thing spake to me and said, "I am a messenger sent to you, for I understand you are troubled in mind, and if you will be ruled by me, you shall want for nothing in this world," upon which I endeavored to clap my hands upon it, and said, "You Devil! I will kill you!" But [I] could feel no substance and it
