

RECORDS OF THE SALEM WITCH-HUNT

This book represents the first comprehensive record of all legal documents pertaining to the Salem witch trials, in chronological order. Numerous newly discovered manuscripts, as well as records published in earlier books that were overlooked in other editions, offer a narrative account of the much-written-about episode in 1692–93. The book may be used as a reference book or read as an unfolding narrative. All legal records are newly transcribed, and errors in previous editions have been corrected. Included in this edition is a historical introduction, a legal introduction, and a linguistic introduction. Manuscripts are accompanied by notes that, in many cases, identify the person who wrote the record. This has never been attempted, and much is revealed by seeing who wrote what, when.

Bernard Rosenthal has written widely on American literature and culture. His monographs include *City of Nature* and *Salem Story*, and he has also edited many published volumes, including *The Oregon Trail* by Francis Parkman, Jr. He is also the author of numerous articles and reviews. Rosenthal has received at different times four grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission in support of this book. One of his NEH grants was in collaboration with Benjamin Ray, partially in support of this book; another was to support this book's completion. Rosenthal was also a Fulbright lecturer in 1996–97 at Tampere University in Finland. He is Professor Emeritus at the State University of New York at Binghamton.

RECORDS OF THE SALEM WITCH-HUNT

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I Petition to your honours not for my own life for I know I must die . . . I Question
not but your honours does to the uttmost of your Powers in the discouery and
detecting of witchcraft and witches and would not be gulty of Innocent blood for the
world but by my own Innocencye I know you are in the wrong way . . . I being
confident there is seuerall of them has belyed themselue.

– *Mary Esty, executed September 22, 1692*

CONTENTS

	Associate Editors	page ix
	Acknowledgments	xi
I.	LIST OF FACSIMILE PLATES	1
II.	GENERAL INTRODUCTION <i>Bernard Rosenthal</i>	15
III.	LEGAL PROCEDURES USED DURING THE SALEM WITCH TRIALS AND A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PUBLISHED VERSIONS OF THE RECORDS <i>Richard B. Trask</i>	44
IV.	LINGUISTIC INTRODUCTION <i>Peter Grund, Risto Hiltunen, Leena Kahlas-Tarkka, Merja Kytö, Matti Peikola, and Matti Rissanen</i>	64
	1. Introduction	64
	2. Text Categories	65
	3. Recorders	69
	4. Spelling, Pronunciation, Word Boundaries, Capitalization, and Punctuation	72
	5. Morphology, Syntax, and Vocabulary	77
	6. Discourse	83
	7. Legal Terminology and Latin Vocabulary	86
	8. Abbreviations	88
V.	EDITORIAL PRINCIPLES	91
VI.	CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENT <i>Bernard Rosenthal and Margo Burns</i>	95
VII.	RECORDS OF THE SALEM WITCH-HUNT	101
	February–March 1692	125
	April 1692	167
	May 1692	225
	June 1692	350

July 1692	451
August 1692	496
September 1692	571
October–December 1692	676
1693	734
1694–1750	841
Appendix	921
Timeline: Court of Oyer & Terminer and Superior Court of Judicature	923
Biographical Notes <i>Marilynne K. Roach</i>	925
Works Cited	965
Indexes: Introduction	971
Names Included in Document Titles	973
Concordance of Names	983

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Marilynne K. Roach, an independent scholar in Watertown, Massachusetts, found that the twenty-seven years spent researching her book *The Salem Witch Trials: A Day-by-Day Chronicle of a Community Under Siege* (2002) has by no means exhausted the subject. As a freelance writer she has contributed articles to historical and genealogical journals, and as a graduate of Massachusetts College of Art, she has illustrated several works of her own and other authors with an emphasis on history.

Richard B. Trask is Town Archivist for Danvers, Massachusetts (old Salem Village). His projects have included restoring his seventeenth-century home; excavating the 1681 Reverend Samuel Parris parsonage; serving as curator of the 1678 Rebecca Nurse Homestead; writing *The Devil Hath Been Raised* (1992); serving as historian to various films, including “Three Sovereigns for Sarah”; and co-designing the 1992 Salem Village Witchcraft Victims’ Memorial. Trask has taught history and lectured extensively. He is a descendant of several witchcraft victims. An authority on studying historical photography, Trask has consulted for CBS News, the President Kennedy Assassination Records Review Board, and the National Archives. He has written eight books.

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For many reasons this book took longer than anticipated, and I mention this here only because changes in the publishing industry during that long period made the book difficult for Cambridge University Press to publish without subvention support. To address this financial problem I took a summer off from working on the book, and with major assistance from Margo Burns requested financial support from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The proposal was successful, and I am deeply grateful for the award given to me in support of the book. I am similarly grateful to Timothy Connelly at NHPRC, who proved so helpful and patient in addressing my seemingly endless questions. Regarding awards, I received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities in support of this book. Without that support from NEH the book would not have appeared, at least not in so ambitious a form. In expressing appreciation to the granting agencies, I emphasize that both the collaborative proposal with Professor Ray, the first NEH grant supporting the book, and the proposal to NHPRC made clear the names and records of my colleagues working on this edition, which surely influenced the favorable decisions. The grant I received from NEH to complete the book did not specifically include the names of my colleagues, but without their role in creating this edition I would not have had the proposal to make that I did. I also acknowledge my appreciation to the English Department at SUNY Binghamton; to its Chairs, David Bartine and Susan Strehle; to Peter Mileur, Dean of Arts and Sciences; and to Mary Ann Swain, Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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– Bernard Rosenthal