

**Record of the examination of Mary Osgood (Sept. 8, 1692)**

The examination and confession (8. Sept. 92.) of Mary Osgood, wife of Captain Osgood of Andover, taken before John Hawthorne and other their Majesties justices.

She confesses, that about 11 years ago, when she was in a melancholy state and condition, she used to walk abroad in her orchard; and upon a certain time, she saw the appearance of a cat, at the end of the house, which yet she thought was a real cat. However, at that time, it diverted her from praying to God, and instead thereof she prayed to the devil; about which time she made a covenant with the devil, who, as a black man, came to her and presented her a book, upon which she laid her finger and that left a red spot: And that upon her signing, the devil told her he was her God, and that she should serve and worship him, and, she believes, she consented to it. She says further, that about two years ago, she was carried through the air, in company with deacon Frye's wife, Ebenezer Baker's wife, and Goody Tyler, to five mile pond, where she was baptized by the devil, who dipped her face in the water and made her renounce her former baptism, and told her she must be his, soul and body, forever, and that she must serve him, which she promised to do. She says, the renouncing her first baptism was after her dipping, and that she was transported back again through the air, in company with the forenamed persons, in the same manner as she went, and believes they were carried upon a pole. Q. How many persons were upon the pole? A. As I said before, viz. four persons and no more but whom she had named above. –She confesses she has afflicted three persons, John Sawdy, Martha Sprague and Rose Foster, and that she did it by pinching her bed clothes, and giving consent the devil should do it in her shape, and that the devil could not do it without her consent. –She confesses the afflicting persons in the court, by the glance of her eye. She says, as she was coming down to Salem to be examined, she and the rest of the company with her, stopped at Mr. Phillips's to refresh themselves, and the afflicted persons, being behind them upon the road, came up just as she was mounting again and were then afflicted, and cried out upon her, so that she was forced to stay until they were all past, and said she only looked that way towards them. Q. Do you know the devil can take the shape of an innocent person and afflict? A. I believe he cannot. Q. Who taught you this way of witchcraft? A. Satan, and that he promised her abundance of satisfaction and quietness in her future state, but never performed any thing; and that she has lived more miserably and more discontented since, than ever before. She confesses further, that she herself, in company with Goody Parker, Goody Tyler, and Goody Dean, had a meeting at Moses Tyler's house, last monday night, to afflict, and that she and Goody Dean carried the shape of Mr. Dean, the minister, between them, to make persons believe that Mr. Dean afflicted. Q. What hindered you from accomplishing what you intended? A. The Lord would not suffer it so to be, that the devil should afflict in an innocent person's shape. Q. Have you been at any other witch meetings? A. I know nothing thereof, as I shall answer in the presence of God and his people; but said, that the black man stood before her, and told her, that what she had confessed was a lie; notwithstanding, she said that what she had confessed was true, and thereto put her hand. Her husband being present was asked, if he judged his wife to be any way discomposed. He

answered, that having lived with her so long, he doth not judge her to be any ways discomposed, but has cause to believe what she has said is true. – When Mistress Osgood was first called, she afflicted Martha Sprague and Rose Foster , by the glance of her eyes, and recovered them out of their fits by the touch of her hand. Mary Lacey and Betty Johnson and Hannah Post saw Mistress Osgood afflicting Sprague and Foster . – The said Hannah Post and Mary Lacey and Betty Johnson, jun. and Rose Foster and Mary Richardson were afflicted by Mistress Osgood, in the time of their examination, and recovered by her touching of their hands.

I underwritten, being appointed by authority, to take this examination, do testify upon oath, taken in court, that this is a true copy of the substance of it, to the best of my knowledge, 5 Jan 1692-3. The within Mary Osgood was examined before their Majesties justices of the peace in Salem.

Attest. John Higginson , Just. Pac.

*(Thomas Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts-Bay, II, 24-25)*

Source: <http://teachinghistory.org/best-practices/examples-of-historical-thinking/24551>