

**Record of the examination of Rebecca Nurse (Mar. 24, 1692)**

The examination of Rebekah Nurse at Salem Village

24. mar. 1691/2

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 Putman in a grievous fit cryed out that she hurt her.

Goody Nurse , here are two An: Putman the child & Abigail Williams complains of your hurting them What do you say to it

N. I can say before my Eternal father I am innocent, & God will clear my innocency

Here is never a one in the Assembly but desires it, but if you be guilty Pray God discover you.

Then Hen: Kenny rose up to speak

Goodm: Kenny what do you say

Then he entered his complaint & farther said that since this Nurse came into the house he was seizd twice with an amaz'd condition

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

N. I am innocent & clear & have not been able to get out of doors these 8. or 9. dayes.

Mr Putman: give in what you have to say

Then Mr Edward Putman 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: Putmans wife cryed out, Did you not bring the Black man with you, did you not bid me tempt God & dye How oft have you eat and drunk y'r own damaon What do you say to them

Oh Lord help me, & spread out her hands, & the afflicted were greviously vexed

Do you not see what a solemn condition these are in? when your hands are loose the pesons are afflicted.

Then Mary Walcot (who often heretofore said she had seen her, but never could say or did say that she either bit or pincht her, or hurt her) & also Eliz: Hubbard under the like circumstances both openly accused her of hurting them

Here are these 2 grown persons now accuse you, w't say you? Do not you see these afflicted persons, & hear them accuse you.

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

It is very awfull to all to see these agonies & you an old Professor thus charged with contracting with the Devil by the [a] effects of it & yet to see you stand with dry eyes when there are so many whet—

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 com to your bodily person, now what do you say to that

I have none Sir:

If you have confess & give glory to God I pray God clear you if you be innocent, & if you are 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 stumach --

Have you no wounds

I have none but old age

You do Know whither you are guilty, & have familiarity with the Devil, & now when you are here present to see such a thing as these testify a black man whispering in your ear, & 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 & now an other of Salem, should be thus accused and charged

Mrs Pope fell into a greivous fit, & cryed out a sad thing sure enough: And then many more fell into lamentable fits.

Tell us have not you had visible appearances more than what is common in nature?

I have noe nor never had in my life

Do you think these suffer voluntary or involuntary

I cannot tell

That is strange every one can judge

I must be silent

They accuse you of hurting them, & if you think it is not unwillingly but by designe, you must look upon them as murderers

I cannot tell what to think of it

Afterwards when this was som what 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 fitts followed upon the complainants abundantly & very frequently

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

I have got no body to look to but God

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

Do you beleive these afflicted persons are bewitcht

I do think they are

When this Witchcraft came upon the stage there was no suspicion of Tituba ( Mr Paris's Indian woman) she profest much love to that child Betty Paris , but it was her apparition did the mischief, & why should not you also be guilty, for your apparition doth hurt also.

Would you have me bely my self—

she held her Neck on one side, & accordingly so were the afflicted taken

Then Authority requiring it Sam: Paris read what he had in characters taken from Mr Tho: Putmans wife in her fitts

What do you think of this

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

This a true account of the sume of her examination but by reason of geat noyses by the afflicted & many speakers, many things are pretermitted

Memorandum

Nurse held her neck on one sid & Eliz: Hubbard (one of the sufferers) had her neck set in that posture whereupon another Patient Abigail Williams cryed out set up Goody Nurses head the maid's neck will be broke & when some set up Nurses head Aaron Wey observed that Betty Hubbards was immediatly righted

Salem Village March. 24'th 1691/2

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