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 Final Paper

A Pious Woman Condemned by Rumor, Church, and Court: The Case of Elizabeth Howe

*“Though shee wer condemned before men shee was Justefyed befor god”<sup>1</sup>*

*-Goody Safford*

Prior to the year 1682, Goody Elizabeth Howe enjoyed a reputation defined by piety, honesty, and neighborliness. Two distinct disputes in 1682 would come together ten years later during the Salem witch crisis to place Elizabeth’s life in mortal peril. A “faling [out]” between Samuel Perley and the Howes preceded fits suffered by Samuel’s daughter, who reportedly identified Elizabeth as her tormentor. Although ministerial accounts contested Elizabeth’s culpability, rumors spread and stained Elizabeth’s holy reputation. Her rejection from the Ipswich Church approximately two or three years later, informed by the rumor of witchcraft and other reports from neighbors, exacerbated suspicion, as those involved in the church’s decision attributed maleficium to Elizabeth.<sup>2</sup>

The second dispute occurred on June 14, 1682, the same year Samuel Perley’s daughter first reported afflictions. The Topsfield men, Thomas Baker, Jacob Towne, and John Howe, Elizabeth’s brother-in-law, challenged John Putnam of Salem Village over his claim to land along the Ipswich River. This dispute pitted the Howe family against the Putnam family, a driving force behind the Salem witch trials of 1692. Ultimately, Elizabeth’s reputation of witchcraft coupled with her relationship to John Howe and by extension association with the Putnam land dispute influenced her conviction as a witch. Although numerous individuals

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Rosenthal, et al., eds., *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 341 (Hereafter *RSWH*).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 351.

attested to her pious character, Elizabeth's case revealed that in the context of conflict with townspeople and extended familial relations prejudice superseded esteem.<sup>3</sup>

Elizabeth, born in England about 1637 to William and Joan Jackson, moved to Rowley, Massachusetts with her family, original settlers of Rowley. On April 13, 1658 she married James Howe Jr. of Ipswich and moved to Topsfield. Ten years after her marriage in 1668, her father, William, granted James Howe Jr. land in Boxford. William named his son John Jackson Sr., Elizabeth's brother, and William's grandson John Jackson Jr., Elizabeth's nephew, as heirs to his sizable estate, excluding Elizabeth and her two sisters, Mary and Deborah. In 1692 John Sr. and John Jr., like Elizabeth, faced accusations of witchcraft, and Mary (Jackson) Foster and Deborah (Jackson) Trumble married into families who would accuse Elizabeth during the crisis.<sup>4</sup>

Elizabeth lived in Topsfield at the Ipswich border with her husband James and their children. Characterized as "neighbourly," trustworthy, and pious, Elizabeth enjoyed the esteem of many of her neighbors. Deborah Hadley, a neighbor of 24 years, testified that she "found [Howe] a Neighbourly woman Consciencious in her dealing faithful to her pmises." Hadley's testimony evoked an image of an ideal contributor in a network of townspeople. Hadley also spoke to Howe's devotion, finding Howe "Christian-like in her Conuersation." On June 25, 1692 Simon Chapman spoke to Howe's devotion: "[Howe] semid to be a woman throu in that gret work of conuiktion and conuartion which I pray god mak us all." By Chapman's account, Elizabeth was a model of Christian conviction and conversion; a model he wished all to follow. Daniel Warner, John Warner, and Sarah Sarnar also believed her to be a good Christian.

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<sup>3</sup> George Francis Dow, ed., *Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, Massachusetts* (Salem: Essex Institute, Vol. VIII. 1911), 319.

<sup>4</sup> Enders A. Robinson, *The Devil Discovered: Salem Witchcraft 1692* (New York: HIPPOCRENE BOOKS, INC., 1991), 301; George Brainard Blodgette and Amos Everett Jewett, *Early Settlers of Rowley, Massachusetts* (Somersworth: New England History Press, 1981), 166.

Although numerous individuals testified to Elizabeth's good and Christian character, Elizabeth and her husband, like many New Englanders, had a number of disputes with their neighbors. One dispute in particular resulted in an indelible mark on Elizabeth's reputation.<sup>5</sup>

Conflict with the Perley family of Topsfield preceded suspicions of Elizabeth's witchcraft. In 1682 Samuel Perley had an unspecified "faling [out]" with James and Elizabeth Howe.<sup>6</sup> Samuel Perley did not take the Howes to court; however, his use of the phrase "faling [out]" implied that the conflict caused irrevocable damage between the families. Likely influenced by her father's hostilities, Samuel and Ruth (Trumble) Perley's daughter, Hannah, about ten years old at the time, complained of afflictions and named Elizabeth as her tormenter.<sup>7</sup>

The Perleys, though angry with the Howes, delayed acting on the accusation. Samuel reported that "i did often chide [Hannah] for naming goode how being loth her name shold be defamed."<sup>8</sup> Samuel portrayed himself as reluctant to damage Elizabeth's good reputation; however, a delay to procure more evidence to bolster the accusation against an unstained member of the community was more likely his motivation. Sarah Andrews, the Perley's 27-year-old daughter, reiterated Samuel's story, testifying, "her father had Corrected [Hannah] for charging So pious a woman." This testimony confirmed Elizabeth's upstanding reputation. The Perleys visited doctors, who affirmed witchcraft to be the cause of Hannah's condition, thus substantiating the claim of witchcraft against Elizabeth. According to Samuel, Hannah continued

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<sup>5</sup> *RSWH*, 397, 398, 404. In addition to Deborah Hadley, Simon Chapman, and Daniel Warner, John Warner, and Sarah Warner, Mary Chapman, Joseph and Mary Knowlton, and James Howe Sr. attested to Elizabeth's character, *Ibid.*, 398, 404, 414.

<sup>6</sup> Absent a formal complaint against the Howes in Essex County Court Records from 1680-1683, the dispute is only referred to as "a faling [out]," *ibid.*, 351.

<sup>7</sup> Ruth was the sister of John Trumble, husband of Elizabeth's sister Deborah, Reverend Philip Graystone, *Elizabeth Jackson of Rowley: The East Yorkshire girl who emigrated to New England and was executed as a witch in Salem Massachusetts in 1692* (Lampada Press, 1993.), 30; Hannah was born June 8, 1671, M. V. B. Perley, *History and Genealogy of the Perley Family* (Salem: Higginson Book Company, 1906), 15, <https://archive.org/details/historyandgenea00perlgoog>.

<sup>8</sup> Loth defined as "Averse, disinclined, reluctant, unwilling," "Loth," *The Oxford English Dictionary* (2017). <http://www.oed.com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/view/Entry/55390?rskey=o7sdf3&result=2&isAdvanced=false#eid>.

to suffer and named Elizabeth as her tormenter for two or three more years until Hannah's death around 1684.<sup>9</sup>

Testimony corroborating Samuel and Ruth Perley's account originated from a neighbor and members of the Perley family. Mary Commings, a neighbor of the Perleys, recounted a time that Hannah indicated that Elizabeth's specter roamed the house. Sarah Andrews, like her parents, testified that Hannah named Elizabeth Howe as her tormentor. Deborah Perley, wife of Timothy Perley, Samuel Perley's younger brother, testified that when Hannah and her mother visited, Hannah claimed she saw Elizabeth's specter enter and then emerge from an oven. Deborah Perley also reported two other instances of affliction.<sup>10</sup>

Deborah Perley observed Hannah and Elizabeth Howe interact twice. On the first occasion, Hannah accompanied Deborah to the Howe residence. Deborah remembered that Hannah had a fit and "goode how...was so louing to her." Referencing Hannah's accusations against Elizabeth, Deborah asked "whi [Hannah] talked so of goode how being she was so louing to her." Hannah responded that the intensity of her suffering prompted her to name her tormentor. On the second occasion, Deborah again witnessed warmth between Hannah and Elizabeth and asked Hannah, "Whi she was so louing to good[e] how." Hannah explained that she feared Elizabeth would murder her if she acted differently, explaining away her reportedly positive interactions to a familial source. Hannah's accusations, however, proved to be inconsistent.<sup>11</sup>

The Rowley ministers Samuel Phillips and Edward Payson contested such reports. The ministers visited the Perley household to observe Hannah and determine if she accused Elizabeth

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<sup>9</sup> *RSWH*, 358, 351.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 401, 358; Perley, *History and Genealogy*, 7; *RSWH*, 352. In 1692 Timothy Perley testified about a dispute with Elizabeth Howe over "bords." It is unclear when the dispute occurred, but the conflict demonstrated troubles between the extended Perley family and the Howes, *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

Howe.<sup>12</sup> Edward Payson testified, “How came in; their afflicted Daughter, upon something that her Mother spake to her with tartnes[s], presently fell into one of her usu[a]ll strange fitts.” The mother, it seemed, initiated Hannah’s fit with harsh words, delivered at Elizabeth’s entrance. Hannah did not name Howe as her tormentor during the fit. Afterwards, Elizabeth, as Phillips reported, “took [Hannah] by the hand & askt her whither [Elizabeth] had ever done her any hurt And she answered noe never, and if I did complain of you in my fitts I know not that I did soe.” This intimate and positive interaction between Hannah and Elizabeth was likely similar to the “[loving]” interactions Deborah observed. However, Hannah denied to the ministers ever suffering at the hands of Elizabeth. Further, Hannah dismissed the validity of any statement she may have made accusing Elizabeth. Hannah’s words to the ministers stood in stark contrast to the accusations she shared with her family and neighbor: parties predisposed to be sympathetic to the negative feelings the Perleys held against the Howes.<sup>13</sup>

The ministers observed influencing factors in the Perley household. Phillips recounted that he observed Hannah’s brother “sayd to his sister say [How is] a witch say she is a witch.” The brother’s command was another instance of a family member influencing Hannah’s accusations against Elizabeth. Phillips concluded, “Noe wonder that the child in her fitts did mention Goodwife How, when her nearest relations were soe frequent in expres[si]ng their suspicions.” Coupled with Ruth Perley’s “tartnes[s]” at Elizabeth’s entrance, another member of the household appeared to be promoting accusations against Elizabeth. Rumor of Elizabeth afflicting Hannah spread from the Perley family to the townspeople.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Elizabeth and her family grew up in Rowley and would have been familiar with the Rowley ministers. John Trumble was a Rowley Church Deacon which would have connected both the Perleys and the Howes to the Rowley Church and to the ministers, Grayston, *Elizabeth Jackson of Rowley*, 29.

<sup>13</sup> *RSWH*, 374, 373.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 373-374.

Shortly after Hannah's death, Elizabeth attempted to join the Ipswich Church. A number of brethren in the church, "being unsatisfied," challenged Elizabeth's eligibility and reached out to townspeople to speak to her conviction and character. The elders' dissatisfaction likely stemmed from the rumor of witchcraft. Elizabeth, seeking support for her application, appealed to Joseph Safford's wife, who was frightened because of the witchcraft rumor. Elizabeth "took [Safford] by the hand," likely exacerbating Safford's fears and said, "I belieue that you are not ignorant [Lost] [SWP = of the] g(r)ete scandall." Following, Goody Safford was "[taken] beyond Reason and all parswasion" to take up Elizabeth's case to the elders of the church. However, Elizabeth's efforts were to no avail. Samuel Perley enjoyed membership in the Topsfield church and held seat number three in the Ipswich church. Called by the Ipswich church, he presented the elders an account of Elizabeth's involvement in his daughter's afflictions. Although many individuals offered testimony, his words and Isaac Foster's account significantly influenced the judgement against Elizabeth.<sup>15</sup> Perley stated, "When we had declared to them what we knew thaise cause to put a stop to her coming into the church." The church ultimately denied her admission. The rejection, in turn, exacerbated suspicion and set off a number of maleficium reports against Elizabeth.<sup>16</sup>

Individuals involved in informing the church's decision attributed harms of body and property, occurring after their reports to the church, to Elizabeth's work. Mary Commings reported to the church that Elizabeth and James misrepresented the manner in which the Commings treated a mare, which afterwards had suffered harms. Jacob Foster reported, "My father was an instrumentall means of her being [denied] admision" and attributed maleficium regarding his mare to Elizabeth Howe. Martha Wood likewise cited her father's involvement in

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 351, 340-341; Perley, *History and Genealogy*, 15. Isaac Foster was the brother-in-law of Elizabeth's sister Mary (Robinson, *The Devil Discovered*, 302).

<sup>16</sup> *RSWH*, 351.

Elizabeth's rejection from the church and assigned a loss of drink and daze to the hands of Elizabeth. Goody Safford, who failed to secure Elizabeth a spot in the church, "was taken after a Reuing franzy manar expresing in a Reging manar that goode how must Com into the church and that shee was a precious saint and though shee wer Condemned befor men shee was Justefyed befor god." Although Goody Safford later recanted her statement and attributed such an outburst to Elizabeth's witchcraft, her statement reiterated Elizabeth's reputation as a pious woman prior to 1682. Additionally, Samuel Perley reported that his cow drowned within days of him reporting to the church. Although Samuel Perley never formally accused Elizabeth Howe in a court of law, the church's inquiries about Elizabeth and decision to deny her entry served as a form of a trial.<sup>17</sup>

In 1682, the same year Hannah first reported afflictions, the Putnam family engaged with a member of the Howe family over land disputes. Salem Village faced troubles with their borders due to ambiguous and even contradictory land grants. Disputes culminated in the latter half of the 1670s and during the 1680s between Salem Village and the towns of Wenham, Andover, and Topsfield. Both Salem Village and the town of Topsfield claimed title to land near the Ipswich River. Salem Village's claim originated from a General Court ruling on September 4, 1639, while Topsfield's claim originated from a 1643 grant by the same court originally to Ipswich, the "parent town" of Topsfield. This overlap resulted in disputes and fueled animosity between the residents of Salem Village and Topsfield, manifesting itself in a trial in which John Putnam took Thomas Baker of Topsfield "with Jacob Towne and John How as sureties" to court for trespassing and cutting down a tree.<sup>18</sup>

On March 22, 1680 Topsfield granted Thomas Baker, Jacob Towne, and John Howe, the authority "to demand of any man or men that hath aney Land Lying in our Towne to show there

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 401, 438, 450, 341, 351.

<sup>18</sup> Robinson, *The Devil Discovered*, 61; Emerson W. Baker, *A Storm of Witchcraft: The Salem Trials and the American Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 82-83; Dow, ed., *Records*, 320-321.

bounds of ye land.” On May 4, 1682 Topsfield affirmed the power of Baker, Towne, and Howe to call for the “Rights and titles” of contested territories and extended their authority to trespass onto said disputed properties. On June 14, 1682 Towne, Baker, and Howe met with John Putnam of Salem Village and produced a Topsfield order that demanded Putnam, as a Salem man, to produce bounds and grants for his property. The order also stated that should such documents not meet satisfaction, “[The Topsfield men] had liberty to fell timber on their claimed land.” John Putnam failed to comply with the order, so the Topsfield men “before [Putnam’s] face felled one timber tree within Topsfeld line in a considerable way.” This threat and affront to Putnam’s land likely left Putnam angry and embittered. John Putnam’s brother Thomas Putnam testified to the events and Nathaniel Putnam was also involved in the testimony.<sup>19</sup>

The land dispute between the Putnams and John Howe and Elizabeth’s dispute with the Perleys, which prompted her reputation as a witch, occurred a decade before the Salem witch trials. In 1692 Elizabeth’s brother-in-law’s history with the Putnams and Elizabeth’s history of witchcraft collided during the trials.

In 1692 the witch trials commenced. On Friday, May 27, 1692 the newly instated Massachusetts Governor William Phips ordered the establishment of the Court of Oyer and Terminer. The following day Salem Villagers Joseph Holton and John Walcott, in the name of their magistrates, issued a formal complaint “ffor Sundry acts of Witchcraft” against “How the wife of James How of Topsfield” and ten other individuals. On May 28 a “List of Accused and Accusers” identified Elizabeth as “goody How of Topsfeild or Ipswich bounds” and identified Mary Walcott and Abigail Williams, who “suspect hir but canot sartainly say” as Elizabeth’s accusers. Either on May 30 or sometime after, a different scribe added two other means of identification of Howe first as “[Captain] Hows brother wife,” referencing her connection with

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 320, 322-323.



John Howe, one of the three faces of the controversial land dispute against John Putnam, and second as “[James] Hows wife,” highlighting her connection with the men of the Howe family. Within days, Mary Walcott and Abigail Williams’ doubt of Elizabeth’s innocency vanished, perhaps as her connection to John Howe was publicized.<sup>20</sup>

During Elizabeth’s examination on May 31, Mary Walcott, Abigail Williams, Mercy Lewis, Mary Warren, Susannah Sheldon, John Indian, and Ann Putnam (daughter of Thomas Putnam, John Putnam’s brother) experienced afflictions, including chokes, pinches, and pricks. Mary Walcott claimed that Elizabeth “pincht ” and “choakt” her earlier in May, and Abigail Williams stated that Elizabeth harmed her “a great many times” and presented Abigail the devil’s book. Ann Putnam reported that Elizabeth “had hurt her” on three occasions and later presented a pin in her hand. In response to the charge of witchcraft, Elizabeth stressed her innocence: “If it was the last moment I was to live, God knows I am innocent of any thing in this nature.” She called on God, which emphasized her piety, and she reiterated her innocence during the examination. When asked if “This is the first time that ever you were accused?” She responded yes. To which the examiner asked, “Do not you know that one at Ipswich hath accused you?” The examiner’s question referenced the Perley scandal. She answered, “This is the first time that ever I heard of it.” Perhaps Elizabeth answered no because she never faced formal charges.<sup>21</sup>

The Court of Oyer and Terminer tried Elizabeth Howe on June 30, 1692. According to the Reverend Cotton Mather, in his work in defense of the trials, *Wonders of the Invisible World*, her trial commenced with depositions of the afflicted and a touch test. The afflicted discerned Howe’s touch from the touch of others during the touch test, which revealed her guilt.

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<sup>20</sup> *RSWH*, 322-325. The ten individuals named in the complaint on May 28, 1692 included Martha Carrier, Elizabeth Fosdick, Wilmot Redd, Sarah Rice, John Alden, William Procter, John Flood, Mary Toothaker, Margaret Toothaker, Arthur Abbott, in addition to Elizabeth Howe.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 339.

Additionally, according to the afflicted, ghosts had visited, who identified Howe as their murderer. Many of the depositions focussed on Hannah Perley's afflictions and the maleficium resulting from Elizabeth's rejected application to the church; however, a number of her neighbors testified to her pious and honest character. Mather hand-picked five of the nineteen individuals executed by the court to portray the trials as legitimate forms of justice. Mather probably included the case of Elizabeth Howe in his work because aside from the testimonies on her behalf, which Mather omitted from his account, Elizabeth's well known history of witchcraft and maleficium accusations against her made her a "usual suspect," as Mary Beth Norton wrote in her work *In the Devil's Snare*. Regarding the testimonies against Elizabeth, Mather explained, "The things in themselves, were Trivial; but there being such a Course of them, it made them the more to be considered." Mather's statement offered insight into the mindset of the witch trials; the trials preferred quantity over quality.<sup>22</sup>

Mather summarized multiple depositions, including those of Francis Lane and John Howe. In 1685 James Howe Jr. hired Francis Lane to assist him with fence posts. In turn, Lane hired John Perley, son of Samuel Perley, to assist. Elizabeth warned against John Perley's involvement. Lane testified, "[Elizabeth] did not beleieve that [said] Posts & railes would doe because that [said] John Pearly helped him." Elizabeth, aware of her adverse history with the Perleys, anticipated problems arising from John Perley's involvement. Elizabeth's prediction came to fruition, and the rails failed. However, Francis Lane, instead of attributing the broken rails to foul play at the hands of John, brother of Hannah Perley, Lane's testimony implied that

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<sup>22</sup> Cotton Mather, "Wonders of the Invisible World," in *Witch-Hunting in Seventeenth-Century New England: A Documentary History 1638-1693*, 2nd ed., edited by David D. Hall (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1999), 307-309. Cotton Mather's account included a number of testimonies against Elizabeth Howe. Mather incorrectly identified Timothy Perley as the father of Hannah Perley (ibid., 309). See Baker, *A Storm of Witchcraft*, 199; Mary Beth Norton. *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 183; Mather, "Wonders," 309.

Elizabeth's prediction resulted from witchcraft. The testimony demonstrated the ongoing consequences of the dispute between the Howes and the Perleys.<sup>23</sup>

John Howe's testimony against Elizabeth appeared to be influenced by the Putnam land dispute. By 1692 James Howe Jr. had lost his sight. Elizabeth asked John Howe to escort her to Salem Village for her examination. John refused and claimed, "If she had ben sant for upon allmost any account but witch Craft I would a haue gone with hur but one that account I would not for ten pounds." John emphasized that the charge of witchcraft specifically led to his refusal. By John's account, Elizabeth expressed anger at his decision. Afterwards, he stated that he thought his pig was bewitched. He also found that his hand failed to work. He testified, "I sospacted no other parson but my [said] sister elizabeth How."<sup>24</sup> By accusing Elizabeth, he aligned himself with the Putnam family. Probably aware of accusations against Rebecca Nurse, a pious church member, accused likely in part due to her relationship to her brother Jacob Towne, another face of the land dispute, John likely wanted to distance himself from his sister-in-law.<sup>25</sup>

During Elizabeth's imprisonment in Boston, James Howe Jr. visited her twice a week, and she never seemed to lose her faith. Elizabeth Howe was found guilty of witchcraft and was executed on July 19, 1692. In the subsequent months of the trials, confessors such as Mary Lacey Sr., Richard Carrier, and Mary Toothaker also confirmed Elizabeth as a witch. Confessors named

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<sup>23</sup> Perley, *History and Genealogy*, 15; *RSWH*, 439; Daniel Allen Hearn, *Legal Executions In New England, 1623-1960* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc. 1999), 79.

<sup>24</sup> *RSWH*, 414, 438.

<sup>25</sup> Rebecca Nurse, like Elizabeth Howe, was renowned for her piety. However, Rebecca, in a more favorable position than Elizabeth as a member of the Salem Church and with no previous association with witchcraft, still faced execution. Elizabeth's trial followed Rebecca's, during which the Nurse family presented a petition signed by 39 individuals on Rebecca's behalf and challenged the validity of the accusers. When a trial centered on a rejected Ipswich church member, stained by a history of witchcraft followed Rebecca's, a guilty verdict was likely, Norton, *In the Devil's Snare*, 223-226; For more information on the connection between the Topsfield Land dispute and the convictions of Rebecca (Towne) Nurse and Mary (Towne) Easty and accusations against Sarah (Towne) Cloyce see Persis W. McMillen, *Currents of Malice: Mary Towne Esty and Her Family in Salem Witchcraft*, (Portsmouth: Peter E. Randall Publisher. 1990) 59-60; John's fears may have been exacerbated due to his relationship to his uncle Reverend Francis Dane, many of whose family was accused. John's association would have placed another target on his back, Robinson, *The Devil Discovered*, 302; Baker, *A Storm of Witchcraft*, 236-237.

sightings of condemned witches to add validity to their confessions. Members of Elizabeth's extended family also identified her as a witch.<sup>26</sup>

In August, Rose Foster and Martha Sprague accused Sarah Bridges, Mary Bridges Jr., Hannah Post, and Susanna Post of witchcraft. During the examinations on August 25, 1692, the four accused, all related, confessed to witchcraft and implicated each other. In addition to confessing, Sarah Bridges of Andover, daughter of John and Sarah (Howe) Bridges remembered a time her horse threw her. Sarah explained that "She thought it was by her aunt How." Unsolicited, Sarah evoked the image of her condemned and executed Aunt. That same day Sarah's step-sister, Hannah Post, implicated John Jackson Sr. and John Jackson Jr. of Rowley, Elizabeth's brother and nephew. Susanna Post, another step-sister of Sarah, implicated John Sr.<sup>27</sup>

That same August 25, Ephraim Foster of Andover and Joseph Tyler of Boxford issued a complaint against John Jackson Sr. and John Jackson Jr., for harming Martha Sprague and Rose Foster. Whether the complaint preceded the examination of the girls, leading to Hannah and Susanna's implication of the Jacksons, or was informed by their examinations remained unclear. However, the complaint appeared to stem from animosities between the Fosters and Howes and by extension the Jacksons. Ephraim was the nephew of Isaac Foster, who blocked Elizabeth from the Ipswich church, and cousin of Jacob Foster, who testified against Elizabeth as mentioned above.<sup>28</sup>

The examinations of John Jackson Sr. and John Jackson Jr. occurred on August 27. During his examination, John Jackson Jr., like Sarah Bridges, referred to his Aunt Elizabeth. He claimed that "His Ant How" bewitched him around 1688 and the devil came to him in her shape. He denied ever signing the devil's book and denied affliction at the hands of his father. John

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<sup>26</sup> *RSWH*, 857, 468, 477, 482, 491-492.

<sup>27</sup> Norton, *In the Devil's Snare*, 257; *RSWH*, 931, 553-555.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 550-551, Robinson, *The Devil Discovered*, 302.

Jackson Sr., during his examination that same day, like his sister Elizabeth, stressed his innocence. They remained in prison until their release on January 12, 1693.<sup>29</sup>

Two disputes, resulting in lasting hostilities, influenced the course of Elizabeth's life and legacy. James Howe Sr., Elizabeth's father-in-law, testified on June 28, 1692 on Elizabeth's behalf. He concluded his testimony with a desire: that "god may guide your honours to se a differans between [prejudice] and [conscious]." Unfortunately, in the year 1692 the court failed to discern anger from justice.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> *RSWH*, 556-558, 516.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 414.

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