

GILES CORY¹



AN ILLUSTRATION OF UNKNOWN PROVENANCE



A RECENT HALLOWEEN IN DUBIOUS TASTE

There are rumors that Giles Cory was not the most pleasant man in Salem. For instance he was said to have once in a fury beaten a servant to death while his wife Mary Brite Cory was fruitlessly attempting to calm him down. On another occasion when there had been a fire in the roof of his neighbor John Proctor, John suspected that the fire was malicious and that Giles was responsible (until it became clear that the fire was an accident and had been started by his own servant boy using a lamp).

**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**

1. He had daughters Martha and Margaret Cory who after his execution serially married William Cleves and produced the grandchildren John Cleves, born 11 October 1676; Elinor Cleves, 1678; Martha Cleves, 1681; William Cleves, 23 July 1686; Hannah Cleves, 31 March 1688; Robert Cleves, 21 July 1689; Ebenezer Cleves, 13 October 1691; and Benjamin Cleves, 23 October 1693. Thus there are quite a few running around loose in the world today who can testify truthfully that one of their ancestors had been tortured to death under accusation of witchcraft.



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1611

August 31, Saturday (Old Style): [Giles Cory](#) was baptized in the St Sepulcher's Church of Northampton, England, son of Giles Cory and Elizabeth Cory (according to the baptismal record the name is Cory rather than Corey).

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT





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1640

By this point [Giles Cory](#) was in Salem, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Rebecca Towne, daughter of William Towne and Joanna Blessing Towne, age about 18, unmarried, was brought to Salem with that family.

**LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?
— NO, THAT’S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN’S STORIES.
LIFE ISN’T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.**



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1676

A prison was established on [Nantucket Island](#), the initial real prison in the American colonies. William Bunker was chosen as warden with compensation set at “foeur pounds, halfe in wheat, the other in other graine.”

[Giles Cory](#) was brought to trial in Essex court in the Massachusetts Bay Colony after beating Jacob Goodale, one of his indentured servants, to death for stealing apples. Although there was no such offense as killing an indentured servant in the course of punishment, the court considered Cory’s force as “unreasonable,” and he was fined.

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





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1691

April 26, Sunday (Old Style): In Salem on this day, both old Captain [Richard More](#) and the local farmer [Giles Cory](#) demonstrated contrition. The old Captain's contrition was demonstrated not only by his attire and his "blubbering" behavior (the appropriate weeping and tearing of the clothing) before the congregation of the First Church and his words, but also by some piece of writing which he then served upon the Reverend Nicholas Noyes. (The delivery of such a piece of writing was unprecedented—one wonders what it contained—but nevertheless Richard would be entitled to remove that scarlet letter **A** he had been wearing affixed to his garments.)

Old Captain More having lyan under the Churches censure, almost 2 yeares whereby he was debarred from the Lords Supper comeing severall times to the Elders, and at last publicly in a writing and partly by speech professing his Repentance for his offences against God and his Church was in charity accepted and by the vote of the Church forgiven and restored to his former state.²

**WHAT I'M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF**

2. Richard D. Pierce, ed. THE RECORDS OF THE FIRST CHURCH OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS, 1629-1736 (Salem MA: Essex Institute, 1974), page 171



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1692

April 19, Tuesday (Old Style): Abigail Hobbs, Bridget Bishop, Giles Corey, and Mary Warren were examined. Abigail Hobbs was 14 years of age and a refugee from the frontier region racial warfare, living at this time in the village of Topsfield close to Salem. Abigail confessed that she had indeed seen the Devil, whom she described as “a black man.” This had happened in the woods outside Falmouth in Maine — the town in which the Reverend George Burroughs was minister. She had seen the “black man” in the woods, she said, in 1688 or 1689, only a few months prior to the bloody Abenaki assault upon the people of her town. Magistrate [John Hathorne](#) demanded that Abigail Hobbs directly tell the court:

"Are you guilty, or not?"

She responded:

"I have seen sights and been scared."

The examiners were able to obtain such a confession only from Abigail Hobbs, however, and not from any other person being examined.



A man who died in the jailhouse, William Hobbs, had this to offer:

"I can deny it to my dying day."

WITCHES

John Hathorne became confused as to who had said what, and as he was interrogating [Giles Cory](#), he attempted to engage him in regard to a remark that someone else had made about a black dog. Cory emphatically replied

"I do not know that I ever spoke that word in my life."

Cory then refused to take any further part in the proceeding, standing mute. He was attempting to challenge this sorry court and its sloppy proceedings, but this was a tactical legal error — because a person who refused to testify could under current English law be subjected to *pein fort et dure* until he or she came out of their “muteness.” (*Pein fort et dure*, under these colonial conditions, would amount to being taken out into the field behind the courtroom and loaded up with stones until the witness either began to speak, or expired.)

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September 16, Friday or 17, Saturday (Old Style): In an open field behind the jail of Salem, in the center of the town, in the center of a large crowd, [Giles Cory](#) was being urged to cooperate in the trials for [witchcraft](#). He was prostrate on the ground and large stones were being placed upon his body, one by one.



AN ILLUSTRATION OF UNKNOWN PROVENANCE



A RECENT HALLOWEEN IN DUBIOUS TASTE

Captain Gardiner of Nantucket was urging Giles to begin to testify, but he would not. He gasped:



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Famous Last Words:



"What school is more profitably instructive than the death-bed of the righteous, impressing the understanding with a convincing evidence, that they have not followed cunningly devised fables, but solid substantial truth."

— A COLLECTION OF MEMORIALS CONCERNING DIVERS DECEASED MINISTERS, Philadelphia, 1787



"The death bed scenes & observations even of the best & wisest afford but a sorry picture of our humanity. Some men endeavor to live a constrained life — to subject their whole lives to their will as he who said he might give a sign if he were conscious after his head was cut off — but he gave no sign Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows."

—Thoreau's JOURNAL, March 12, 1853

1681	Headman Ockanickon of the Mantas	the Mantas are the "Leaping Frogs" group of the Lenape tribe	<i>"Be plain and fair to all, both Indian and Christian as I have been."</i>
1692	Massachusetts Bay colonist Giles Corey	being pressed to death for refusing to cooperate in his trial for witchcraft	<i>"Add more weight that my misery may be the sooner ended."</i>
1777	John Bartram	during a spasm of pain	<i>"I want to die."</i>
1790	Benjamin Franklin	unsolicited comment	<i>"A dying man can do nothing easy."</i>
1793	Louis Capet, King Louis XVI of France	being beheaded in the Place de la Concorde	<i>"I die innocent of all the crimes laid to my charge; I Pardon those who have occasioned my death; and I pray to God that the blood you are going to shed may never be visited on France."</i>
1793	Jean-Paul Marat	reviewing a list of names	<i>"They shall all be guillotined."</i>
1793	<u>Citizen Marie Antoinette</u>	stepping on the foot of her executioner	<i>"Pardonnez-moi, monsieur."</i>
... other famous last words ...			

"In pressing, his tongue being prest out of his Mouth, the Sheriff with his Cane forced it in again, when he was dying."



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Major American Witchcraft Cases

1647	Elizabeth Kendall, Alse Young	1663	Mary Barnes
1648	Margaret Jones, Mary Johnson	1666	Elizabeth Seager
1651	Alice Lake, Mrs. (Lizzy) Kendal, Goody Bassett, Mary Parsons	1669	Katherine (Kateran) Harrison
1652	John Carrington, Joan Carrington	1683	Nicholas Disborough, Margaret Mattson
1653	Elizabeth “Goody” Knapp, Elizabeth Godman	1688	Annie “Goody” Glover
1654	Lydia Gilbert, Kath Grady, Mary Lee	1692	Bridget Bishop, Rebecca Towne Nurse, Sarah Good, Susannah Martin, Elizabeth Howe, Sarah Wildes, Mary Staples, Mercy Disborough, Elizabeth Clawson, Mary Harvey, Hannah Harvey, Goody Miller, Giles Cory, Mary Towne Estey, Reverend George Burrough, George Jacobs, Sr., John Proctor, John Willard, Martha Carrier, Sarah Good, Martha Corey, Margaret Scott, Alice Parker, Ann Pudeator, Wilmott Redd, Samuel Wardwell, Mary Parker, Tituba
1655	Elizabeth Godman, Nicholas Bayley, Goodwife Bayley, Ann Hibbins	1693	Hugh Crotia, Mercy Disborough
1657	William Meaker	1697	Winifred Benham, Senr., Winifred Benham, Junr.
1658	Elizabeth Garlick, Elizabeth Richardson, Katherine Grade	1724	Sarah Spencer
1661	Nicholas Jennings, Margaret Jennings	1768	—— Norton
1662	Nathaniel Greensmith, Rebecca Greensmith, Mary Sanford, Andrew Sanford, Goody Ayres, Katherine Palmer, Judith Varlett, James Walkley	1801	Sagoyewatha “Red Jacket”



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“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FANTASIZING, HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY



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“It’s all now you see. Yesterday won’t be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago.”

– Remark by character “Garin Stevens”
in William Faulkner’s INTRUDER IN THE DUST





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Prepared: June 16, 2014



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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.



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Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.