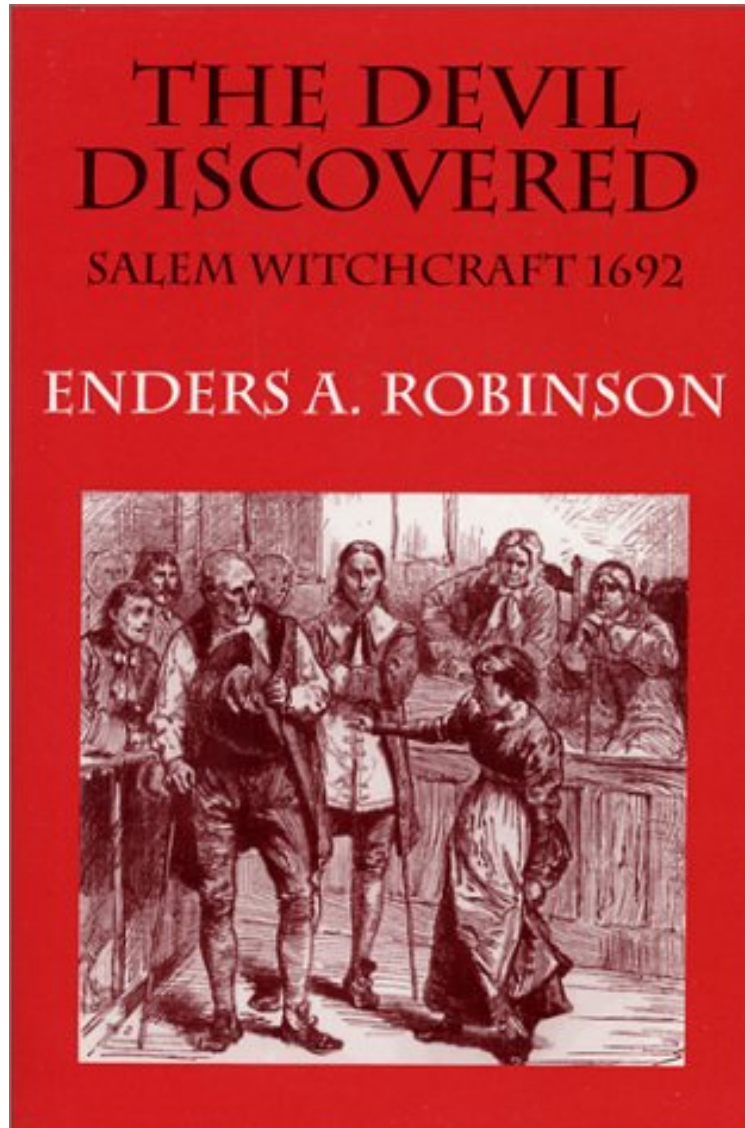


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## The Devil Discovered: Salem Witchcraft, 1692

*Enders A. Robinson*

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The Salem witch hunt of 1692 represents one of the grimmest events in early American history. It is the story of innocent people caught in a web of intrigue from which they could not extricate themselves. The author, himself a descendant of one of those executed, argues masterfully that the witch hunt was driven by conspiracies of envious men intent on destroying their enemies. Sanctioned by the old guard of Puritan leaders, these men arrested two hundred people for witchcraft, twenty-eight of whom were executed or died in prison. The convergence of religious, social, political, and economic forces that sparked the accusations and trials are laid out clearly and concisely, exploring the motives and relationships of those who fanned the flames of the witch hunt. Robinson also provides a closer look at the lives of seventy-five of the people accused as witches, analyzing their places in the community and shedding light on why they were targeted. Title of related interest also available from Waveland Press: Edwards (Simonson, ed.), Selected Writings of Jonathan Edwards, Second Edition (ISBN 9781577663317).

From Library Journal The tercentennial of the Salem witchcraft trials--1992--will surely generate a demand for materials on this topic. Robinson supports the current theory involving "highly placed" conspirators in the political and religious leadership of Salem, as well as in Boston. The work, however, focuses not on the theory, but rather on the people. It is alive with individuals bursting with emotions, foibles, and hidden agendas. To read this book is to dwell as one amongst them. There is one caveat: the lengthy descriptions of alliances and extended family ties can get overly involved and confusing. Scholars may prefer Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum's Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft (LJ 8/74) or their Salem Witchcraft Papers (Da Capo, 1977). This book will appeal to the general public who may wish to learn and be entertained without the boring trial accounts or gory details. Recommended for public libraries.- Suzanne C. Garrison-Terry, Dowl ing Coll. Lib., Oakdale, N.Y. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.