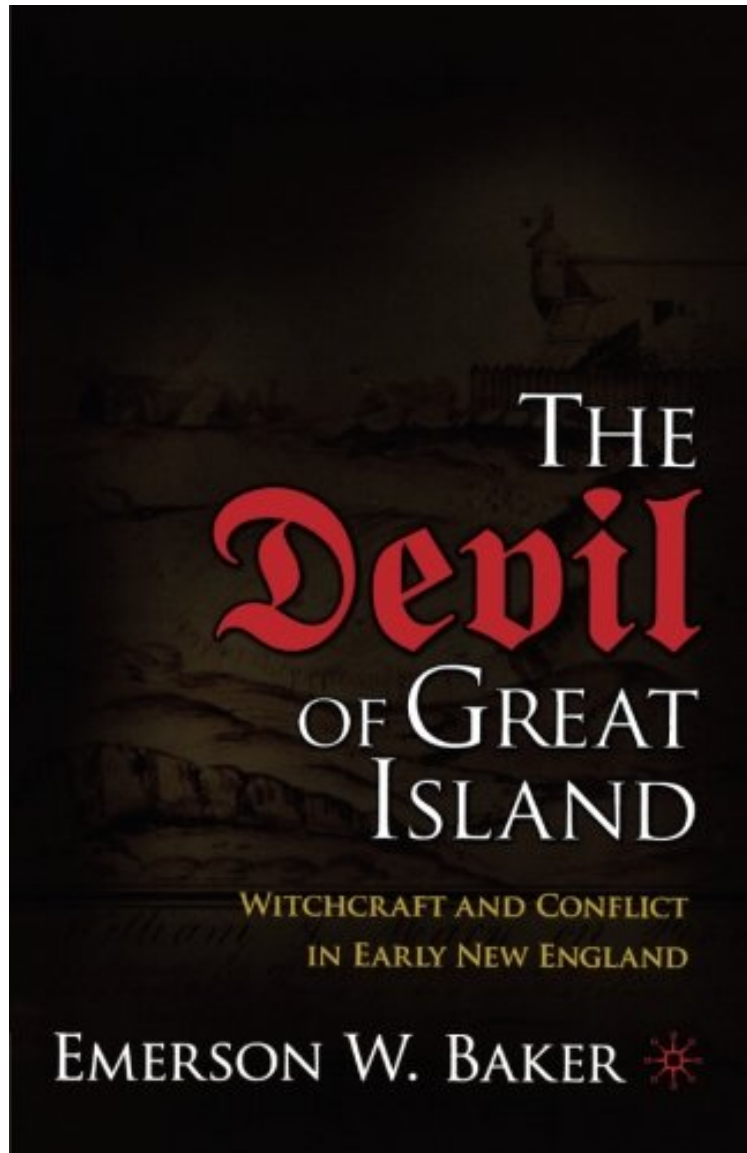


(Free read ebook) The Devil of Great Island: Witchcraft and Conflict in Early New England

The Devil of Great Island: Witchcraft and Conflict in Early New England

Emerson W. Baker

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#522810 in Books Baker Emerson W 2010-04-15 2010-04-15 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.50 x .58 x 5.50l, .75 #File Name: 0230623875256 pages The Devil of Great Island Witchcraft and Conflict in Early New England | File size: 66.Mb

Emerson W. Baker : The Devil of Great Island: Witchcraft and Conflict in Early New England before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Devil of Great Island: Witchcraft and Conflict in Early New England:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. History Buffs/Amateur Genealogists, Rejoice! Fascinating Stuff...By C. D. Anyone even remotely interested in early New Hampshire history, genealogy, New England witch trials, or anyone with ancestors from coastal New Hampshire must read *The Devil of Great Island*, by Prof. Emerson Baker, PhD, of Salem State College. (No, I'm not related to him - that I know of, anyway - nor do I own stock in the publisher, sadly...) I was quite pleasantly surprised to read a historian's account of 17th century life that was not bland and boring. Dr. Baker mentions at least 8 people that I am related to...anyone with deep and early New Hampshire roots probably will encounter an ancestor in this book! More importantly, Dr. Baker strips away the hype of the Salem witch trials and the subsequent accusations of witchcraft elsewhere in New England, most notably on Great Island (later New Castle), New Hampshire, and systematically explains the reason behind the accusations. He also describes the major players, and even finds the likely culprits behind the mischief. For anyone who doesn't know, Jane (Guy?) Walford, (my many-times-great grandmother) of Great Island was accused of witchcraft, initially in 1648. She fought the allegations for 21 years! During that time, not only was she exonerated, but she actually counter-sued for slander and won...the first and only such case in recorded history. She and her husband, Thomas Walford, had successfully taken on a number of life-altering challenges, such as their being the first European settlers of Charlestown, MA, defiance of the formidable Puritan establishment in that colony, and another pioneering move to New Hampshire. (Their character may help explain some of my own family's stubbornness!) In the end, Dr. Baker explains in detail not only WHAT happened during the now-famous "Lithobolia" (stone-throwing devil incident of 1682) on Great Island, but WHY it happened, and WHO probably did it. Along the way he mentions my relatives (and possibly yours) including the Amazeen, Brookings, Shapleigh, and Walford families. Of course, many, many more local families were involved and are included. Of all the books I have read so far about the incident and local history (which number in the dozens), I must say this one is my favorite, I guess because it is more lively and descriptive. A simple web search of the book name and author will provide anybody interested in lots more information about the book and how to find it. As a side-note, I realized not long ago that a former colleague at work is a direct descendant of Jane Walford's accusers Elizabeth and Nicholas Rowe. Although he and I got along just fine, most of my other peers avoided him quite vigorously due to his "contrary" nature! Very interesting...0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy JPCFun read. Author does a very good job of making the topic readable. Enjoyed it very much.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Lithobolia!By CustomerGood, interesting read if you like New England witch stories.

In 1682, ten years before the infamous Salem witch trials, the town of Great Island, New Hampshire, was plagued by mysterious events: strange, demonic noises; unexplainable movement of objects; and hundreds of stones that rained upon a local tavern and appeared at random inside its walls. Town residents blamed what they called "Lithobolia" or "the stone-throwing devil." In this lively account, Emerson Baker shows how witchcraft hysteria overtook one town and spawned copycat incidents elsewhere in New England, prefiguring the horrors of Salem. In the process, he illuminates a cross-section of colonial society and overturns many popular assumptions about witchcraft in the seventeenth century.

From Publishers Weekly Baker, who teaches history at Salem State College, examines a witchcraft accusation made a decade before the more famous Salem outbreak. In June 1682, someone showered stones at a Great Island, N.H., tavern owned by a Quaker named George Walton. When the stone-throwing continued through the summer, Walton accused his neighbor, widow Hannah Jones, of witchcraft. The neighbor, in turn, charged that Walton was a wizard. Baker helpfully connects the Great Island event to other stone-throwing episodes in early New England, and he uncovers some of the social factors including town politics, a property dispute, and struggles between Walton and his servants that lurked underneath the Great Island drama. His examination of anti-Quaker sentiment is especially nuanced. Baker is widely read in the academic literature on witchcraft; in fact, his analysis is mostly derivative, leaning heavily on works by John Demos, Carol Karlsen, Mary Beth Norton and others. Baker's use of anachronistic analogies like the witchcraft accusation... might be seen as the seventeenth-century equivalent of 'playing the race card' do more to obscure than illuminate. Still, colonial history buffs will appreciate this account of the strange happenings in Great Island. Maps. (Oct.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Does a fine job of bringing to life a little-known aspect of the tumultuous Puritan era. Kirkus sEnthralling . . . Baker's welcome account throws a strong light on an American witchcraft episode that has not hitherto received the attention it clearly deserves. The Historian With deft insights, Tad Baker illuminates a supernatural mystery from seventeenth-century New England. Thoroughly researched and clearly written, *The Devil of Great Island* leaves no stone unturned, revealing a popular culture of marvels and wonders. And it offers a gripping tale well told. Alan Taylor, author of *American Colonies* Thoroughly fascinating and fascinatingly thorough, Baker's lively narrative of a witchcraft episode in early New Hampshire exposes the many reasons why a 'stone-throwing devil' attacked George Walton and his tavern. In learning about life on Great Island, at the mouth of the Piscataqua River, readers also learn much about a part of New England that does not fit our standard Puritan stereotypes and thus about a diverse aspect of

our collective past that will now become better known. Mary Beth Norton, author of *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692* The witch trials of seventeenth-century New England have been extensively worked over by historians, and yet, as this fascinating book shows, there are new insights to be gained by moving the focus beyond Massachusetts and the Puritans. In this meticulously researched case study, Emerson W. Baker not only makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of supernatural beliefs in colonial North America, but also weaves an enjoyable and accessible story that leads the reader up to the events at Salem. Dr. Owen Davies, author of *Popular Magic: Cunning-Folk in English History* Emerson Baker combines his talents as historian of early New England and historical archaeologist to untangle the web of personal conflicts, property disputes, and tensions political and religious that underlay the events on Great Island. *The Devil of Great Island* will surely take its place among the must-read books on witchcraft in seventeenth-century New England. James Leamon, author of *Revolution Downeast: The War for American Independence in Maine* In Baker's expert hands, this long ignored witchcraft episode yields important insight into the bizarre imagination and rich social diversity of late 17th century northern New England. Here we encounter the contrasting beliefs of Quakers, Puritans, Baptists, Antinomians, and Godless fishermen as well as the clashing political interests of Native Americans, Europeans, Puritans, and Royalists. This masterful narrative of religious and social pluralism in early New England helps to refocus our vision of the foundations of America and also puts other New England witchcraft events into useful perspective. Benjamin C. Ray, Director, Salem Witch Trials Documentary Archive, University of Virginia About the Author Emerson W. Baker teaches history at Salem State College in Salem, Massachusetts. He lives in York, Maine.