

Committee: Salem Village
Topic: Salem Village 1692
Person: Salmon Jebidiah

The origin of the village of Salem dates back to 1623 when the Dorchester Company of England was sent to create a settlement off the northern coast of Massachusetts in order to collect the abundance of codfish in the nearby watersⁱ. Although the settlement struggled at first, it managed to survive for a few years and was named Cape Ann. Later on in 1626, after Cape Ann was abandoned, a group of immigrants, led by Roger Conant, left the settlement and established Salemⁱⁱ. During this time many expeditions to the New World commenced, including John Endecott's, which arrived in Salem with about fifty servants and planters. Endecott's main goal was to prepare the colony for the arrival of future colonists, which would come as result of the Massachusetts Bay Company's new charter granted by King Charles I in 1629ⁱⁱⁱ. However, by the time the colonists arrived, led by John Winthrop, Salem was completely unprepared to support the 700 new members^{iv}. The first winter was extremely rough on the settlers and it was found that nearly 100 of the newcomers were lost before December.

As time went on and the population expanded, the colonists, who were majority Puritan, invited more Puritan settlers over from England who were escaping religious persecution as well. By 1640, towns on the coasts became overcrowded with the influx of new colonists, which led to the formation of inland farming communities, like Salem Village. The Massachusetts Bay Colony continued to thrive, however previous good ties with the nearby Native Americans were beginning to break beginning in 1650 when a large amount of Native Americans were wiped out by disease brought over by the colonists. Additionally, the resentment of colonists grew from aggressive expansion and the ending of trade partnerships. Eventually in 1675, the Native Americans of the Wampanoag, Nipmuck, Pocumtuck and Narragansett tribes reverted to war against the colonists in what came to be known as King Phillip's War^v. Although the Native Americans managed to destroy twelve frontier towns, the colonist ultimately had the upper hand due to better technology and tactics, which they used to completely deplete the Wampanoag and Narragansett tribes as well as behead Metacom, the leader of the rebellion.

As for the government of Salem, it was very much intertwined with religion seeing that most of the population was Puritan. Because Britain was dealing with their own affairs under the rule of Cromwell, the colony was able to declare themselves a commonwealth in 1649^{vi}. This allowed for Puritan domination of the government, in which only those who had achieved full church membership, a minority at the time, could be involved in the government^{vii}. However, this Puritan government rule only lasted until 1685 after King James II came back into rule when the colony's charter was withdrawn due to repeated violations. King James II went on to merge the Massachusetts colony along with others into the Dominion of New England ruled by Sir Edmond Andros who instituted new taxes, forbid town meetings, and revoked the General Council^{viii}. Luckily for the Puritans, King James II was soon overthrown in the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the Puritans quickly regained control. However, in 1691, a new charter was put into place, which imposed the implementation of Royal Government and elected assembly as well as restricted religious laws. Due to this new government, Puritans felt that they were stripped of all power and were being persecuted in a place they had come to flee persecution. This, along with food shortages, disease, and Native American attacks only heightened the sense of hysteria, which led to the Salem Witch Trials of 1692.

Next, in the situation, I, Salmon Jebidiah, a physician of Andover, would like to work towards all means possible in order to overcome any conflict that may present itself whether it be

dealings within in Indian, government, or supernatural means. To begin with, to deal with my personal matters, I would like to court a woman in the village. To achieve this goal, I plan on doing on of two things: waiting for Abigail Faulkner's sickly husband, Francis Faulkner, to die or somehow contaminating his medicines to kill him off secretly. The first may take a longer amount of time however, the latter would be quick yet risky. If Francis Faulkner continues to live, I will most likely seek out Susana Cole or Mary Rowlandson if they are willing.

Moving forward, seeing that I am extremely untrustful of outsiders I am in favor of depleting the population of nearby Indian tribes. Because of the many past attacks of Indians on nearby communities and our own, I would be in favor of utilizing a new tactic of my own invention: biological warfare. By using the disease of smallpox against the nearby Indian tribe who call themselves that "Wabanakis" through the means of blankets infected with the disease, we would be able to wipe out the entire tribe within 6 month to a year. We would infect these blankets by having a sickly member of the community, supposedly Francis Faulkner who is currently sick, contaminate the blankets by transferring his disease upon them. Some may believe that they disease would afflict our own community as well, however seeing that our pure and holy bodies are better-equipped than those of the natives, we would be able to stand strong while they would be left completely susceptible to the disease. In addition, although some may believe that purposely unleashing a deadly disease on a population of people would be going against good morals and "Godly values", it still stands true that not eliminating the group would most definitely result in the death of our own people within the community, or in other words, would result in the destruction of the real children of God. Therefore, by imposing infected blankets against the natives we would be able to defeat their tribe without engaging in warfare while at the same keeping the community safe.

Finally, if there were any witch accusations within the colony, I would want to be the first inspector of the afflicted girls, seeing that I am the most qualified physician within the colony. I would start with a typical physical examination looking for anything from a fever to a deadly plague. However, if I am unable to find a something wrong with the girls I will definitely look into alternate causes. First, I believe that one cause of the sick girls could be the effect of one of the crops in our colony: rye. It has come to my attention that some of our rye crop in the village has developed abnormalities that stand out from the healthy ones. Therefore, it would plausible that some of the rye crop, which we use for bread, could be poisoned by the devil, an animal, or worse, one of our own citizens. If the rye was proved to be poisoned and the afflicted girls had ingested bread with some of the poisoned crop, it could be possible that it is the cause of the strange activities. In addition, to discontinue the poisoning of the crop, I think we would need to station guards around the crop as well as replant a new fresh crop that would be safe from infection. Next, I cannot find anything physically wrong with the girls and the crop is not actually poisoned, I would have to diagnose the girls as being bewitched.

All in all, I, Salmon Jebidiah, plan to navigate through the situation of our "prone to crisis" town through effective and logically sound actions. I am ready to not only save myself, but more importantly, I am ready to save my community as a whole.

ⁱ <http://www.capeannmuseum.org/about/history-cape-ann/>

ⁱⁱ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Endecott

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h572.html>

^{iv} <http://historyofmassachusetts.org/history-of-the-massachusetts-bay-colony/>

^v <http://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/king-philips-war>

^{vi} <http://historyofmassachusetts.org/history-of-the-massachusetts-bay-colony/>

^{vii} <http://spartacus-educational.com/USABmapM.htm>

^{viii} <http://historyofmassachusetts.org/history-of-the-massachusetts-bay-colony/>