

# Bewitched



There are some moments in history that are difficult to understand. Long before President Trump complained of the endless media “witch hunts” that he claimed were being perpetrated against him during his administration, there were literal witch hunts being conducted that resulted in unbelievable claims and horrific consequences.

Mary Perkins, a 2nd cousin 13 times removed, was one who became accused of practicing “certain detestable arts called witchcraft & sorceries.” She was arrested in 1692, at the age of 77, and forced to stand trial. Among the evidence against her was the claim that she turned into a blue boar and attacked the house of George Carr. Another witness claimed “spectral evidence” saying that the ghost of George Carr visited them to say that Mary Perkins killed him. The fact that George Carr had, many years earlier, proposed to Mary who rejected him to instead marry Thomas Bradbury, a prominent Massachusetts citizen, did not seem to factor into the final

verdict. Nor did the fact that she later denied John Carr permission to marry her granddaughter because she felt the girl to be too young. It appears the resulting family grudge was deeply felt and lasted for decades. Largely due to the Carr family testimony, the 77 year old was found guilty of witchcraft and was sentenced to hang.

This, despite reasoned and passionate pleas from her husband, pastor, daughter-in-law's father, and 118 neighbors all of whom attested to her Christian character and charity. Everything mentioned thus far is well documented in the archives. What is not is how she managed to escape the noose. Three others convicted of the same crime that day were executed. Somehow Mary avoided the sentence. Some say she bribed the jailer, others point to Bradbury's high community standing that may have allowed him to use his political contacts to intervene. However she managed it, we know that Mary lived in "exile" for a number of years until the witch hunt fervor died down. She then returned to her home and family in Salisbury Massachusetts where she lived until her natural death in 1700 at the age of 85.

*Michael Ondrasik and Home Video Studio specialize in the preservation of family memories through the digitalization of film, videotape, audio recordings, photos, negatives and slides. For more information, call 352-735-8550 or visit our [website](#).*