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Mary Towne Eastey (also spelled **Esty**, **Easty**, **Estey**, or **Estye**) (August 24, 1634 – September 22, 1692) was a victim of the Salem witch trials of 1692. Mary's sisters, Rebecca Nurse and Sarah Cloyce, were also accused of witchcraft; Rebecca was executed, but Sarah was not.

Early life

Mary Towne was born to William Towne and Joanna (née Blessing) in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, England. One of eight children, she and her family moved to America around 1640. Mary married **Isaac Eastey** in 1655 in Topsfield, Massachusetts; Isaac, a farmer, was born in England on November 27, 1627. Together the couple had eleven children: Joseph (1657-1739), Sarah (1660-1749), John (b. 1660), Isaac (1662-1714), Hannah (b. 1667), Benjamin (b. 1669), Samuel (b. 1672), Jacob (b. 1673), Joshua (b. 1678), Jeffrey (b. ca. 1680), and Mary.

Accusation and trial

Like her sister Rebecca, Mary was a pious and respected member of Salem, and her accusation came as a surprise. During the examination on April 22, 1692, when Eastey clasped her hands together, Mercy Lewis, one of the afflicted, imitated the gesture and claimed to be unable to release her hands until Eastey released her own. Again, when Mary inclined her head, the afflicted girls accused her of trying to break their necks. Mercy claimed that Eastey's specter had climbed into her bed and laid her hand upon her breasts. When asked by magistrates John Hathorne and Jonathan Corwin how far she had complied with Satan, she replied, "Sir, I never complied but prayed against him all my dayes, I have no compliance with Satan, in this....I am clear of this sin.^[1]"

For reasons unknown, Eastey was released from prison after two months, and discharged on May 18. However, on May 20, Mercy Lewis claimed that Eastey's specter was afflicting her, and was supported by the other girls. A second warrant was issued that night for Eastey's arrest. She was taken from her bed and returned to the prison; Lewis's fits ceased after Mary was chained. Eastey was tried and condemned to death on September 9. The following is Mary's petition to the judges:

The humbl petition of mary Eastick unto his Excellencyes S'r W'm Phipps to the honour'd Judge and Bench now Sitting in Judicature in Salem and the Reverend ministers humbly sheweth

That whereas your poor and humble petitioner being condemned to die Doe humbly begg of you to take it into your Judicious and pious considerations that your Poor and humble petitioner knowing my own Innocencye Blised be the Lord for it and seeing plainly the wiles and subtilty of my accusers by my Selfe can not but Judge charitably of others that are going the same way of my selfe if the Lord stepps not mightily in i was confined a whole month upon the same account that I am condemned now for and then cleared by the afflicted persons as some of your honours know and in two dayes time I was cryed out upon by them and have been confined and now am condemned to die the Lord above knows my Innocence then and Likewise does now as att the great day will be know to men and Angells—I Petition to your honours not for my own life for I know I must die and my appointed time is sett but the Lord he knowes it is that if it be possible no more Innocent blood may be shed which undoubtidly cannot be Avoyded In the way and course you goe in I question not but your honours does to the uttmot of your Powers in the discovery and detecting of witchcraft and witches and would not be guilty of Innocent blood for the world but by my own Innocency I know you are in this great work if it be his blessed you that no more Innocent blood be shed I would humbly begg of you that your honors would be plesed to examine theis Afflicted Persons strictly and keep them apart some time and Likewise to try some of these confesing wichis I being confident there is severall of them has belyed themselves and others as will appeare if not in this wor[l]d I am sure in the world to come whither I am now agoing and I Question not but youle see and alteration of thes things they my selfe and others having made a League with the Divel we cannot confesse I know and the Lord knowes as will shortly appeare they belye me and so I Question not but they doe others the Lord above who is the Searcher of all hearts knows that as I shall answer att the Tribunall seat that I know not the least thinge of witchcraft therfore I cannot I dare not belye my own soule I beg your honers not to deny this my humble petition from a poor dying Innocent person and I Question not but the Lord will give a blesing to yor endevers.^[2]

Robert Calef, in *More Wonders of the Invisible World*, described Eastey's parting words to her family "as serious, religious, distinct, and affectionate as could be expressed, drawing tears from the eyes of almost all present." She was hanged on

September 22, along with Martha Corey, Ann Pudeator, Alice Parker, Mary Parker, Wilmot Redd, Margaret Scott, and Samuel Wardwell. On the gallows she prayed for an end to the witch hunt.

In November, after Eastey had been put to death, Mary Herrick gave testimony about Eastey. Herrick testified that she was visited by Eastey who told her she had been put to death wrongfully and was innocent of witchcraft, and that she had come to vindicate her cause. Eastey's family was compensated with 20 pounds from the government in 1711 for her wrongful execution. Her husband Isaac lived until June 11, 1712.

References

1. ^ "Examination of Mary Easty" (HTML). *The Salem Witchcraft Papers, Verbatim Transcriptions of the Court Records*. <http://etext.virginia.edu/etcbin/toccer-new2?id=BoySal1.sgm&images=images/modeng&data=/texts/english/modeng/oldsalem&tag=public&part=240&division=div2>. Retrieved 2007-12-10.
2. ^ "Petition of Mary Easty" (HTML). *The Salem Witchcraft Papers, Verbatim Transcriptions of the Court Records*. <http://etext.virginia.edu/etcbin/toccer-new2?id=BoySal1.sgm&images=images/modeng&data=/texts/english/modeng/oldsalem&tag=public&part=262&division=div2>. Retrieved 2007-12-10.

Salem witch trials Timeline · People · Cultural depictions Magistrates

William Stoughton · John Hathorne · Jonathan Corwin · Samuel Sewall · Bartholomew Gedney · Thomas Danforth · Nathaniel Saltonstall · Joseph Herrick · George Herrick

Town physician

William Griggs

Clergy

Samuel Parris · Cotton Mather · Increase Mather · Nicholas Noyes · John Hale · Deodat Lawson · Samuel Willard

Politicians and public figures

William Phips · Thomas Brattle · Robert Calef · Thomas Putnam

Accusers

John DeRich · Elizabeth Hubbard · Mercy Lewis · Betty Parris · Ann Putnam, Jr. · Susannah Sheldon · Mary Walcott · Abigail

Williams · Sarah Bibber · Samuel Parris · John Indian · Richard Tango

Accused

John Alden · Edward Bishop · Edward Bishop III · Sarah Bishop · Mary Black · Mary Bradbury · Martha Carrier · Rachel Clinton · Sarah Cloyce · Rebecca Eames · **Mary Eastey** · Mary English · Phillip English · Thomas Farrar, Sr. · Abigail Faulkner

· Dorothy Good · Elizabeth Hart · William Hobbs · Mary Lacy · Sarah Morey · Sarah Osborne · Elizabeth Proctor · John Proctor

· Sarah Proctor · William Proctor · Tituba Indian

Confessed and accused others

Tituba · Abigail Hobbs · Deliverance Hobbs · Margaret Jacobs · Mary Warren · Ann Foster · Mary Lacey Jr. · Mary Lacey Sr.

· Sarah Churchwell

Executed

Bridget Bishop · George Burroughs · Martha Carrier · Martha Corey · **Mary Eastey** · Sarah Good · Elizabeth Howe · George Jacobs, Sr. · Susannah Martin · Rebecca Nurse · Alice Parker · Mary Parker · John Proctor · Ann Pudeator · Wilmot Redd

· Margaret Scott · Samuel Wardwell · Sarah Wildes · John Willard

Died in prison

Lydia Dustin · Ann Foster · Sarah Osborne · Roger Toothaker

Pressed to death

Giles Corey

Born in prison

John Proctor, III