



**Salem Witchcraft: Comprising More Wonders of
the Invisible World. Collected by Robert Calef;
And Wonders of the Invisible World, By Cotton
Mather; ... Notes and Explanations by Samuel P.
Fowler**

Samuel P. Fowler, Cotton Mather, Robert Calef

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Two Important Early Accounts of the Infamous Salem Witchcraft Trials Based on Primary Sources, with Notes and Explanations by Samuel P. Fowler.

Published in 1693, *Wonders of the Invisible World* by Cotton Mather [1663-1728] is an account of selected trials written at the request of the judges, who wished to address claims of impropriety. Though he believed in witchcraft, Mather was critical of the judges' conduct when the trials were underway. After reading the transcripts, however, he concluded that the verdicts rested on ample evidence according to the standards of English and American law.

Published in 1700, *More Wonders of the Invisible World, Or The Wonders of the Invisible World Displayed* by Robert Calef [1648-1719] attacked Mather's account. Skeptical about the existence of witchcraft, he argued for the injustice of the trials and suggested, moreover, that Mather influenced the judges and public opinion. A well-documented and devastating account, it was the first important publication to show that the trials were a miscarriage of justice.

More Wonders of the Invisible World engendered a critical reaction in the form of a book entitled *Some Few Remarks, upon a Scandalous Book, against the Government and Ministry of New-England. Written, by one Robert Calef. Detecting the Unparrallel'd Malice and Falsehood of the said Book; and Defending the Names of several particular Gentlemen, by him therein aspersed and abused. Composed and Published by several Persons belonging to the Flock of some of the Injured Pastors, and concerned for their Just Vindication* (Boston: Printed by T. Green, Sold by Nicholas Boone, 1701). In the section "To the Christian reader" it describes Calef's book as containing "venome" (sic) and "false narrations, and odious representations."

Originally published: Salem: H.P. Ives and A.A. Smith, 1861. xxi, [22]-450 pp.

Samuel P. Fowler [1800-1888] was a member of the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention held in Boston in 1853. He is the author of *An account of the life, character, &c., of the Rev. Samuel Parris, of Salem Village, and of his connection with the witchcraft delusion of 1692* (1857). Fowler's library was recognized for its breadth of works related to witchcraft and American history.

Cotton Mather [1662-1728], the son of Increase Mather, took over for his father as Pastor of the Old North Church in Boston in 1685. Mather is known for his founding role in the Salem witchcraft trials.

Robert Calef [1648-1719], a member of the Baptist Church in Boston, denounced the Salem witchcraft trials and in particular criticized Mather's zeal in promoting the trials.

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Juanita Stoneman:

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