



SCARY PLACES

# Witch Haunts

by Heidi E.Y. Stemple



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by Heidi E.Y. Stemple

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# Witch Haunts

Cauldrons, broomsticks, spells, and black cats are some of the things that witches bring to mind. Yet, stories about witches are more than just spooky **legends**. Throughout history, whenever there have been strange occurrences, people have often suspected **witchcraft**. If someone was found guilty of practicing witchcraft, the result could be a terrible death.

In this book, you will visit 11 of the spookiest witch haunts in the world. Among them are a castle haunted by the ghost of a woman suspected of being a witch, a town where many supposed witches were brutally **tortured**, and a tower where people gather on Halloween to call upon witches. As you explore each of these strange places, you can decide for yourself whether a real witch lurks there!











# The Dead Man's Curse

## Joshua Ward House, Salem, Massachusetts

In the town of Salem, there stands a three-story brick house. From the outside, the building looks ordinary. Inside, however, the ghost of a sheriff who did terrible things to accused witches is thought to linger.

The Joshua Ward House





In 1692, something strange happened in Salem. Several girls started having frightening screaming fits. The girls were suspected of having been **bewitched**, and hundreds of innocent townspeople were accused of being witches. Sheriff George Corwin, nicknamed “the Strangler,” tortured the accused by stringing them up by their necks and ankles until blood came out of their noses.

In all, 20 people were found guilty of witchcraft. Sheriff Corwin hanged most of the accused. One man shouted a **curse** at the Strangler just before he was **executed**: “Damn you! I curse you and Salem!” Soon after, Sheriff Corwin died of a heart attack when he was just 30 years old.

The sheriff’s family buried him in the basement of the family’s home. Almost 100 years later, a man named Joshua Ward tore down the home and built a larger house on the same spot. Some believe the **spirit** of the sheriff still lives there today. Many visitors have seen a ghostly figure sitting by the fireplace. Could it be the Strangler?

