

Bloody Mary

Who was Mary of Portsmouth? Why did she inspire the myth of “Bloody Mary”? This will all be explained in this month’s article of “Folklores of New England” written by James Nordway for the Myth Bible, a magazine for anyone interested in myth and folklore.

Mary of Portsmouth, according to legend, was born in the woods of northern New Hampshire sometimes in the late 1640’s. It is commonly thought that her parents were French settlers from “New France”. Mary’s parents abandoned her in southern New Hampshire when she was a child, leaving her to defend for herself. In her teenage years through her early twenties, Mary taunted the early settlers of Portsmouth with a mirror, which was stolen from a wealthy noblewoman.

She would often say “gaze into this mirror and your fictional horrors will turn to truth” as she held the small mirror in her left hand (back in those days being left handed was a sign of the devil). Mary would steal anything she wanted for herself when nobody was around to see the deed.

Mary’s camp was along the Piscataqua River. This camp was where the witch hunters found Mary’s dead body with scrapes deep into the flesh of her face. Her eyes were pulled right out of the sockets. Blood was found just on the glass part of her mirror, and on her body of course. According to the myth, her soul was dragged into the mirror by the devil himself, forever trapping it in the “mirror world”.

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