

**About Karen Vorbeck Williams,
author of *My Enemy's Tears: The Witch of Northampton***



It all started at her grandmother's knee.

Karen Vorbeck Williams grew up hearing stories about her ancestor who was accused of witchcraft in New England: Mary Bliss Parsons who lived in Northampton, Massachusetts and was indicted, imprisoned and stood trial for witchcraft in 1675, 17 years before the Salem witch trials.

Although Karen believed her grandmother, she didn't necessarily believe in witches – until she saw one for herself.

One evening just after sunset when Karen was a child, a dark figure peeped in through the living room window of her family's home. The old woman cupped her hands around her face and fixed her eyes on the 3 Vorbeck sisters who were gathered in a frightened knot whispering, "A witch." The stranger stared a moment, then fled into the mounting dusk.

What Karen didn't know then was that her childhood reaction to the dark figure in the window was as old as time itself, that thousands upon thousands of innocent people had died in flames or at the end of a rope because of the accusations of young girls, fearful clergy or farmers whose crops had failed.

The stories she heard about Mary instilled a lifelong fascination in Karen. She wanted to know the truth about this woman. Who was she? Legend said this witch of Northampton was young and a great beauty—if haughty and outspoken. But many of the people who knew Goodwife Parsons as a flesh and blood woman were quite certain that she had made friends with the Devil, that her incantations made their cows die, their spinning go awry and sickened their newborn babies. They believed she could murder with her spells.

Karen spent 20 years researching and writing the story of her ancestors' adventures settling the New World. Though it took many years to write her novel *My Enemy's Tears*, she could not resist sharing it with others. Now an amateur historian, she looks forward to finishing another book of historical fiction and a novel set in the 1940–50s. Previously, Williams has been an editor, a prize-winning photographer and a garden designer. In her free time, she enjoys her garden. She lives in Rumford, Rhode Island.

Learn more at: www.MyEnemysTears.com

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