AWESOME stories

MARY DYER BECOMES A QUAKER

0. MARY DYER BECOMES A QUAKER - Story Preface

1. LIFE IN PURITAN MASSACHUSETTS

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6. MARY DYER BECOMES A QUAKER

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9. RELATED LINKS ABOUT MARY DYER

During her 1652 trip to England, Mary Dyer met George Fox and became a Quaker. This development was not surprising, since Fox's religious interpretations were similar to those of Anne Hutchinson. Some of the Quakers came to New England where their views clashed with Puritan views.

By 1657, when Mary Dyer and her family returned from England, Boston Puritans had already passed anti-Quaker laws. Since she came back by way of Boston, Dyer was imprisoned when she set foot on American soil. Only when William, her husband, assured authorities Mary would not speak out until she was out of Massachusetts, was she released.

By 1658, anti-Quaker sentiment had reached its zenith in the Colony. Laws against Quakers were unbelievably harsh. People could be branded with an "H" for heretic or their tongues could be seared with a hot iron. When Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote The Scarlet Letter, some years later, he wrote knowing the laws had been unspeakably harsh. Today, we wonder how anyone could be made to walk around with a huge red "A" (for adultery) pinned to one's clothes. How much more amazed are we when we think about branding on human skin?

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
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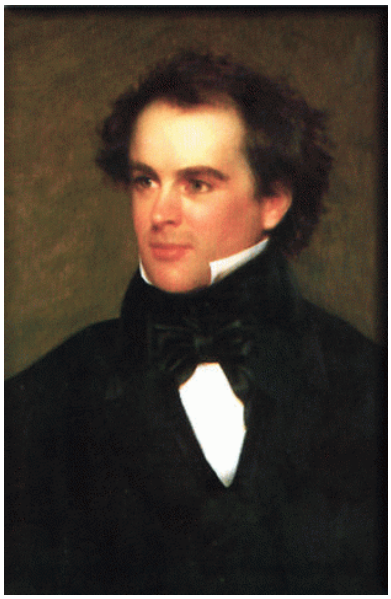

Nathaniel Hawthorne
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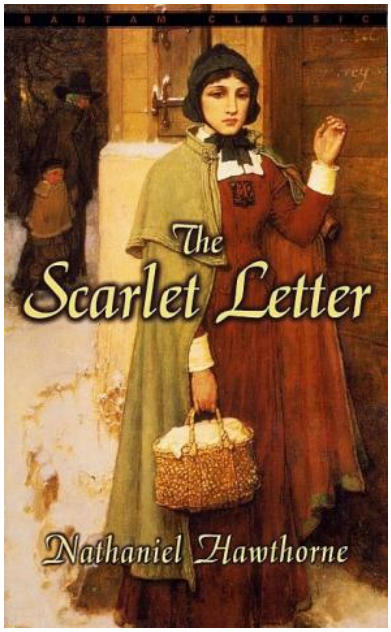

The Scarlet Letter - by Nathaniel Hawthorne
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