

# Traitor on Trial

## Mr Baron Hullock, Judge

The charges against Jonathan were of arson\* and felony\* of stealing.

**The question for you the Jury are:**

- Did Jonathan Martin set fire to York Minster?
- Was he capable of knowing right from wrong?

**Once you have made your decision, there are four possible sentences available to you.**

- Setting the prisoner free
- Prison
- Sentenced to death
- Locked up in a mental health institution

**Please think about this very carefully because Jonathan's fate is in your hands.**

\*arson – to deliberately set fire to property

\*felony – a serious crime that could result in property being confiscated or capital punishment

# Key Witnesses for the Trial

1. Jonathan Martin
2. Robert Swinbank
3. Job Knowles
4. Mr Newman, Yorkshire Fire Officer
5. Robert Anderson – for the defence
6. Paul Glenton – a Doctor for the defence
7. Mr Alderson – for the prosecution
8. Mrs Lawn – for the prosecution
9. Richard Martin – Jonathan's brother

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## Jonathan Martin

The reason I set fire to the Cathedral was because of a dream. I dreamed that a cloud came down on the Cathedral and I thought it was the hand of God pointing out that I should set it on fire.

I took the hangings from the throne, or cathedra, or whatever you call it and tore down the curtains. I took these things with me so that nobody else would be blamed for the fire.

I was quite happy and praised God because he helped me do such a great job!

I am not insane! Why would God choose a madman to do his work?

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## Robert Swinbank

My name is Robert Swinbank and I sing in the choir. On the 2nd of February I went to the Minster at 7 o'clock in the morning as usual. The doors weren't open (as usual!) and so I started to play on the ice. I was bored! Anyway I slid over and fell on my back and it was then I saw smoke coming out of the top of the Minster. I scrambled to my feet and ran to find old Job Knowles who carries the keys. He came and opened the door and we saw that everything was on fire!

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## Job Knowles, the Sexton\* at the Minster

I was the last man in the Minster on Sunday, 1st of February, or so I thought. The bells had been rung and I let the ringers out between six and seven o'clock. Looking at the prisoner, I can say that I know that man and have seen him about the Minster several times. The last time I saw him was on Sunday afternoon, the 1st of February. He was walking in the South Transept before the service.

\* The Sexton took care of the cathedral building, he had many jobs including keeping all the keys and ringing the prayer bell.

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## Mr Newman, Yorkshire Fire Officer

At ten past nine, part of the burning roof fell down with a massive crash. The whole area was bright with flames before smoke and ash filled the place with darkness. For the next hour, bits of the roof and molten lead rained down on us. Finally, all you could see above us was blue sky where the roof had been.

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## Robert Anderson – for the defence

- Jonathan thought God told him to set the Minster on fire.
- He said that God gave him the velvet and tassels that he took from the Minster.
- Many witnesses stated that he was insane, not of right mind.
- At the time Jonathan Martin was not able to tell right from wrong.
- I therefore state that because he is insane he can't be charged with these offences.

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## Paul Glenton – a Doctor for the defence

I am a Doctor at Newcastle-upon-Tyne and I have a lot of experience with insane\* patients. I saw Jonathan Martin for two and a half years as a patient and I would say that he is a man of unsound mind. I think he is delusional. On religion and the priests, he seems particularly insane. I am also completely convinced that he cannot distinguish between right and wrong.

\*Today we would use the term 'mentally ill' rather than 'insane'.



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## Mr Alderson – for the prosecution

- There is clear evidence he deliberately set the Minster on fire.
- Jonathan is not sorry for his actions.
- At the time he set the Minster on fire he understood right from wrong.
- Many people gave statements to say he was perfectly sane and rational. He was able to think clearly and act sensibly.
- Therefore because he is sane, he should be found guilty.

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## **Mrs Lawn – for the prosecution**

I remember Jonathan Martin. He behaved very well during the time he was at my house. I thought he was a nice young man and he seemed very sane. He sold his leaflets about his life to earn money and when he lived in my house I often heard him pray and read his Bible.

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## **Richard Martin - Jonathan's Brother**

Jonathan is my younger brother. He has definitely had some problems in life. He couldn't speak until he was six and he still has problems with speaking, reading and writing. But he is a good man! He loves God, he is truthful and he is a good brother and father. However, he sometimes has strange dreams and says strange things which makes me think he is insane.