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### The Enchantress of Ipswich

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Sturgill, Beverly. *The Enchantress of Ipswich*. Anchorage Press, Inc, 1998. ISBN 0876023596. \$40.00. 95 pp.

Reviewer: Sarah Ratliff

Reading Level: all

Rating: excellent

Genre: Historical fiction; Plays; Fairy Tale;

Subject: Drama--Reviews; Honesty; Salem Witch Trials;

Theme: Honesty is the way to go.

Production Requirements: Period costumes, create a small town

Acts: 3

Run Time: an hour and a half

Characters: 18

Cast: adults

Time Period: 1692 New England

In the little town of Ipswich, near Salem, Massachusetts, trouble is brewing. Revenge and greed drive the citizens to cry "witch." A group of young girls decides to copy those in Salem by accusing a local woman of witchcraft. In addition, the town's authority figures stole all of the town's money to invest in a venture that literally sank, thus losing everything. If a townsman is convicted of witchcraft, then the town can seize their property, which leads to more accusations. Meanwhile, Grandfather (also known as The Wise One) and his granddaughter Megan arrive in Ipswich to save the day. Posing as a judge and his daughter just passing through on their way to Salem, the magical pair stay at the town inn, where Megan falls in love with the innkeeper's son, Nathaniel. In order to stay with a mortal, she must give up her powers by confessing that she is magical. Things get out of hand as the townspeople get caught up in the idea of witchcraft, but the Grandfather and Megan come to the rescue.

This is a very entertaining play. The characters are interesting and fully developed. The story mixes magic with reality. It provides a wonderful opportunity to discuss the issues that happened in Salem, while also providing an opportunity to see the way things could have been. It addresses the issues of honesty in a way that doesn't beat the audience over the head. It is also very amusing. Audiences of all ages will enjoy this magical play.