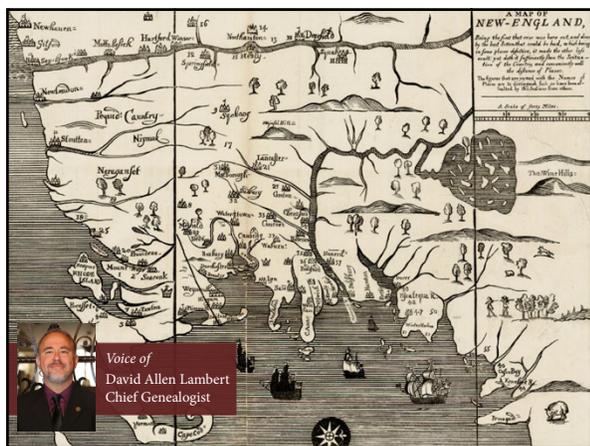




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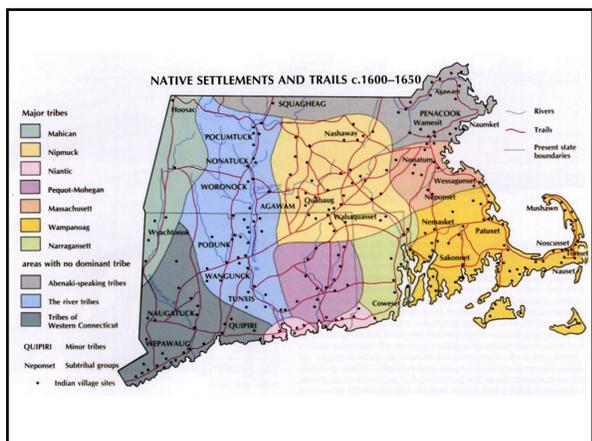
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History

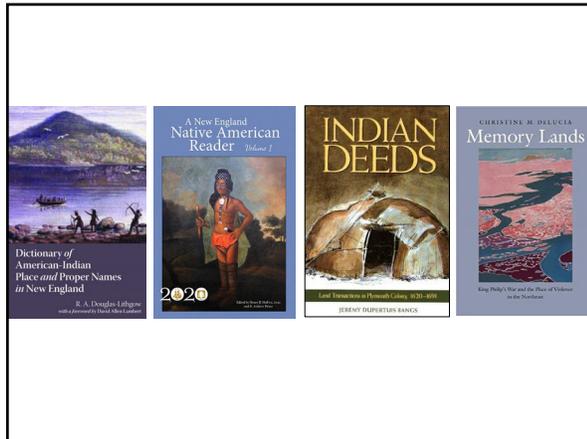
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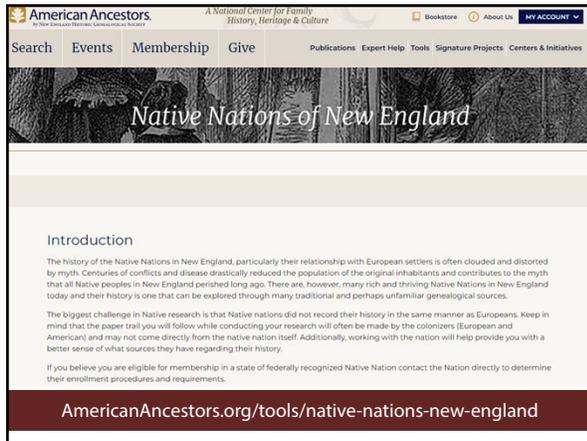
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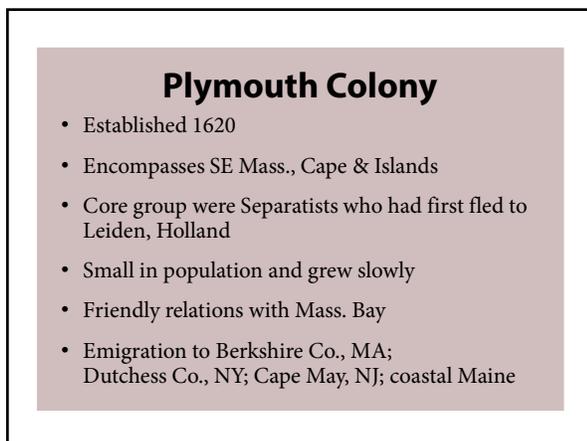
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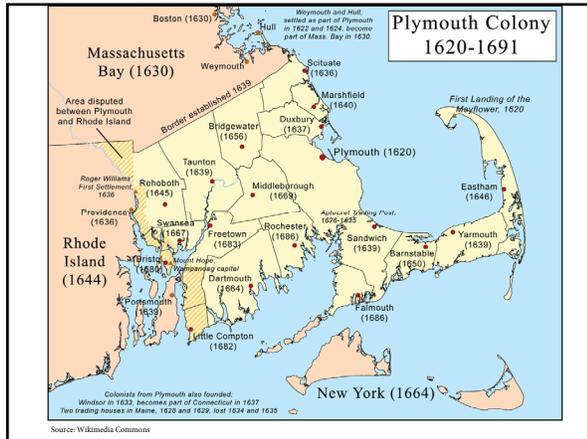
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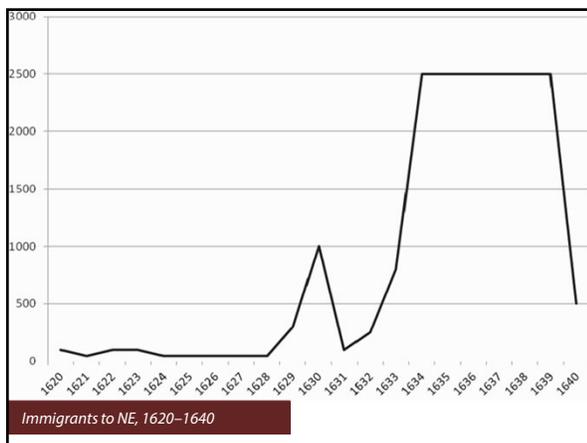


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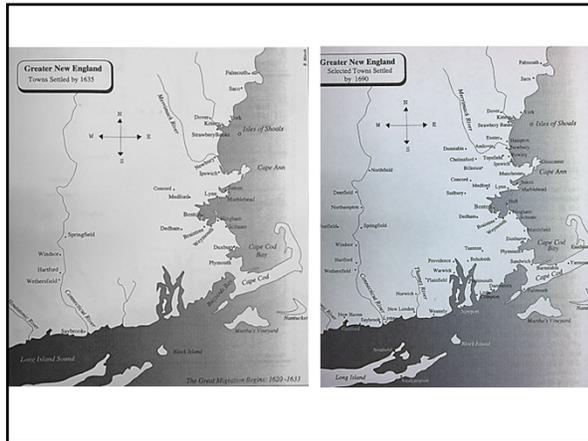
Massachusetts Bay Colony

- 1620s scattered settlements on Cape Ann
- 1628 Endicott group to Salem
- 1630 Winthrop Fleet to Boston
- Established and led by Puritans
- By far the most populous and influential colony in New England
- Dissidents soon founded NH, Providence, Conn, and New Haven Colonies

11



12



13

History of Colonization

- Always the largest and most influential New England colony
- Plymouth Colony and Massachusetts Bay Colony merge in 1691
- Maine part of Mass. until 1820
- Major location point for migration north, west, and south

14

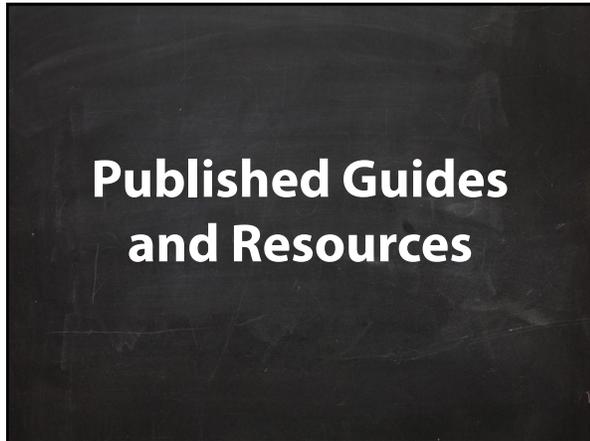
Histories and Genealogies

**OF
PLIMOTH
PLANTATION**
by William Bradford
THE 400th ANNIVERSARY
EDITION
Edited and Introduced by
KENNETH MINKKA
FRANCIS J. BREMER
JEREMY D. BANGS
With a Special Introduction by Paula Peters
Originally Published in 1630 and
Introduced by Eric D. Fennell

GENEALOGIES
OF THE
FAMILIES AND DESCENDANTS
OF THE
EARLY SETTLERS OF WATERTOWN,
MASSACHUSETTS,
BY
WALTER AND WENDY
THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE TOWN
OF
WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS,
BY
HENRY BROWN, M.D.
SECOND EDITION
WITH A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF WATERTOWN, U.S.A.
TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.
BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY THE NEW ENGLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
AND THE SOCIETY OF THE "MAY PILGRIMS"
1926.

THE
GENEALOGIES AND ESTATES
OF
CHARLESTOWN,
IN THE
COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX,
BY
FRANCIS BELLAMY WATSON
1872.

15



16

Types of Published Resources

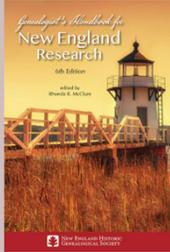
- How-to guides
- Finding aids
- Study projects
- Record compilations
- Genealogies
- Local histories
- Journals and periodicals



17

Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research

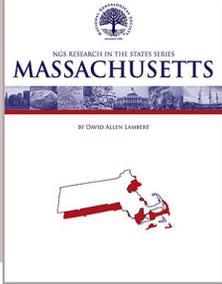
- Town and County Lists
- Detailed Maps
- Court Houses
- Library and Archives
- 6th Edition



18

NGS Research in the States: Massachusetts

- Bibliography of resources for various topics
- Websites and databases of primary resources for Massachusetts



19

New England Marriages Prior to 1700

- Enumerates approximately 99% of all pre-1700 marriages of New Englanders
 - includes marriages in Europe prior to migrating
- ★ Searchable database on AmericanAncestors.org



20

Torrey's New England Marriages prior to 1700

husband's name wife's name other spouse & date of that marriage

ABBY, Samuel (ca 1648-1698) & Mary KNOWLTON (1654-), m/2 Abraham MITCHELL 1699-1700; Wenham/Salem/Windham, CT place(s) of residence

marriage date Knowlton Supp. 3:21; Tingley-Meyers 793; 1:11C 1:33; DePew 47; Hale (1952) 660; Granberry 139, 267, 268; sources within ()

ADAMS, Peter (?1622, ?1621-1690+) & Rachel [NEWCOMB], ?dau Francis; ca 1650/2; Medfield (NYGBR 12:10; Reg. 48:191, 85:383; Braintree Anc. 7; McIntire Abs. 282; Bartlett, Adams 79; Adams (1898) 7; Sv. 1:14; Hall (#1) 40, 43; Vinton Mem. 297, 299; W. Cooke Gen. (ms) 14; Fellowes-Davis Anc. 88) other family member

place(s) of residence sources within ()

21

Great Migration Study Project

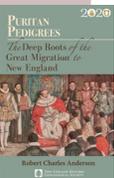
- Directed by Robert Charles Anderson, FASG
- Started in 1988
- Genealogical and biographical sketch for immigrants to New England from 1620 to 1640
- Thirteen published volumes
- Newsletter (bound versions available)
- Tours and other educational programs
- ★ Searchable online databases on AmericanAncestors.org



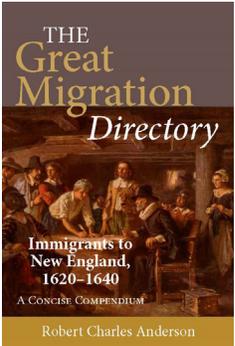
28

Great Migration Volumes

- ★ *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620-1633 (3 vols.)*
- ★ *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England 1634-1635 (7 vols.)*
- *The Pilgrim Migration: Immigrants to Plymouth Colony 1620-1633*
- *The Winthrop Fleet: Mass. Bay Company Immigrants to NE 1629-1630*
- *Puritan Pedigrees*
- *The Mayflower Migration*
- ★ *The Great Migration Newsletter, vols. 1-25*
- *The Great Migration Directory, 1620-1640*

29



C

Carpenter, William: Amesbury, Wiltshire; 1635 on *James*; Salem, Providence (Drake's Founders 56 (a) "Thomas Carpenter", NEHGR 19:24-68, 64-36-40, 296-97).

Carpenter, William: Wrentham, Hampshire; 1638 on *Beza*; Weymouth (Drake's Founders 60; WP 4:232; MBGR 1:313, 375; BGR 1:2; TAG 10:193-204; NEHGR 139:54-68). (Some of these records are probably for William Carpenter, son of the immigrant, who soon moved to Rhode Island.)

Carr, Caleb: Unknown; 1635 on *Elizabeth & Ann*; Newport (GM 2:21-64).

Carr, George: Unknown; 1634; Ipswich, Salisbury (GM 2:217-221).

Carr, Richard: Unknown; 1635 on *Abigail*; Ipswich, Salisbury (GM 2:223-24).

Carr, Robert: Unknown; 1635 on *Elizabeth & Ann*; Portsmouth, Newport (GM 2:224-27).

Carrington, Edward: Unknown; 1633; Charlestown, Malden (GMB 315-18).

Carrington, Thomas: Unknown; 1632 on *Lyon*; passenger list only (GMB 318).

Carole, William: Unknown; 1637; Hingham, Barnstable (HBRGP 97); MBGR 2:206, 372; PCR 1:125, 137, 141, 8:376, 193, 209; NEHGR 9:283, 286, 180-81; OHS 147).

Carter, Joseph: London; 1639; Newbury; returned permanently to England soon after 1640 (BWP 4:114; ITR 79; KQC 1:386; NEHGR 35:373-74; Abandoning 75-76).

Carter, Joshua: Unknown; 1633; Dorchester, Windsor (GMB 318-20).

Carter, Martha: Unknown; 1635 on *Hopewell*; passenger list only (with name) (GM 2:223).

Carter, Richard: Unknown; 1639; Boston (BTR 1:41, 49, 53; Lockford 228; MBGR 1:317; NEHGR 18:156; SPR 3:201; TAG 40:82-84).

Carter, Robert: Unknown; 1620 on *Mayflower*; Plymouth (GMB 320; P4 93).

Carter, Thomas: Unknown; 1635 on *Planter*; Ipswich, Salisbury (GM 2:221-30).

30

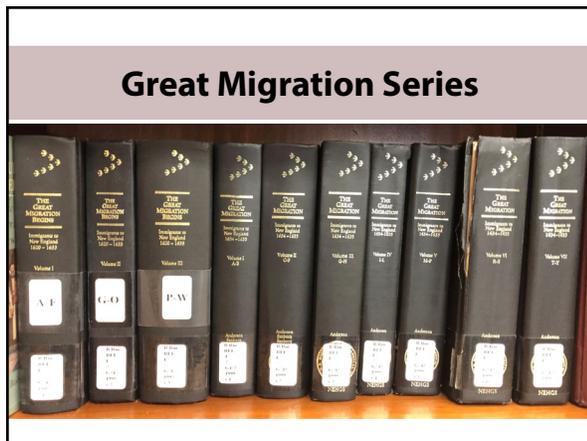
An entry from *The Great Migration Directory*

Name	English origin	Year of arrival in New England	New England residences
↓	↓	↓	↓
<p>Norris, Edward: Horsley, Gloucestershire; 1639; Boston, Salem [BChR 24; WP 4:168; SChR 9; EPR 1:34; MBCR 1:377; WJ 1:197, 2:78; TAG 84:200-11]. (His daughter Mary preceded him to New England by 1635 [GM 2:5:266-67].)</p>			

Citations: *The Records of the First Church in Boston, 1630–1868; Winthrop Papers, 1498–1654; The Records of the First Church in Salem, Massachusetts, 1629–1736; The Probate Records of Essex County, Massachusetts, 1635–1681; Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, 1628–1686; John Winthrop, The History of New England from 1630 to 1649, James Savage, ed.; and The American Genealogist*

Additional comment with a citation to *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1634–1635.*

31



32

Who is included?

- If person appeared in a record
- Direct or indirect implication of arrival
- Appearance of an immediate family of a person known to have arrived

33

<p>92 The Great Migration</p> <p>Alice Ashby</p> <p>"Alice Ashby," aged 20, maid servant to William Holman, was enrolled at London on 20 June 1635 as a passenger for New England on the <i>Difow</i> [Hotten 89].</p> <p>COMMENTS: Not found in any New England record.</p> <p>In the London port book, Alice Ashby's name comes between that of WILLIAM HOLMAN's wife and his five children. As a result the indorse of Holten fall into the error of giving to the five Holman children the surname Ashby.</p> <p>JOHN ASTWOOD</p> <p>ORIGIN: Little Hadham, Hertfordshire</p> <p>MIGRATION: 1635 on the <i>Hopewell</i></p> <p>FIRST RESIDENCE: Roxbury</p> <p>REMOVES: Milford by 1639</p> <p>RETURN TRIPS: To England by 1654</p> <p>OCCUPATION: Husbandman [Hotten 46]</p> <p>CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: Admitted to Roxbury church as member #132, among the 1635 arrivals [RCR 81].</p> <p>FREEMAN: 3 March 1635 [MRCR 137]</p> <p>EDUCATION: Signed his will [NEHGR 38:42], citing FCC Akhin 505; The inventory of his widow's estate included two Bibles valued at £1 1s, "one parcel of books" valued at £2 6d, and a pair of spectacles [Miford LR 1:78, 82, 87, 92, 95, 105].</p> <p>OFFICES: Deputy for Milford, 27 October 1643, 5 April 1644 [NHCR 1:112, 129]; Assize, 8 October 1649 [NHCR 492].</p> <p>ESTATE: In the 1648 inventory of Milford land John Astwood held six parcels: a seven-and-a-half-acre house lot, twenty-one acres and one rood at the west field in creek sholt, twenty-one acres and one rood at west field in fence about, ten acres at Shubby Plain, twenty-three acres at the Great Meadow and five his own acres ... on the Great Meadow [Miford LR 1:78, 82, 87, 92, 95, 105].</p> <p>In his will, dated 27 June 1654 and proved 31 August 1654, John Astwood of Milford bequeathed to "my loving wife Sarah Astwood" all</p>	<p>John Astwood 93</p> <p>the estate in New England, "of my estate here in England in Ashbury" to "my brother William Astwood ten pounds"; to "my loving mother five pounds sterling and the use of two rooms of my house"; to "my brother Robert Astwood" five pounds; to "John Rafe" 5s; residue to executor "my son Samuel Astwood" [NEHGR 38:42], citing FCC 505 Akhin.</p> <p>In her will, dated 9 November 1659 [no date of proving recorded], "Mrs. Sarah Astwood of Milford, widow," bequeathed to "my daughter-in-law Hannah Freeman wife of Stephen Freeman" a pair of sheets "formerly Capt. Astwood's"; to "my grandchild John Baldwin" livestock, personal household goods, to "my grandchild Mary Woodruffe" her choice of goods to "Reverend Pastor Mr. Roger Newton" 20s; to "my grandchild Sarah Burwell" 5s; to "my grandchild Meherabel Fane" 5s; to "my grandchild Martha Newton" 5s; to "my daughter Elizabeth Baldwin, widow"; all household goods not spoken for; to "my grandchild Mathew Woodruffe my great Bible"; to "my son John Baldwin" 20s; to "my grandchild Sarah Rigson" a pewter platter; to "my grandchild Temperance Baldwin" a hat; to "my grandchild Mary Baldwin" a petticoat; to "my great-grandchild Sarah Burwell" a pewter platter; to "my beloved daughter Mary Plumb" a book called <i>The Sinner's Conflict</i>; "my beloved brothers Richard Pratt & Thomas Wheeler" overzeers [DHRF 1:23-34].</p> <p>The inventory of the estate of "Mrs. Sarah Astwood of Milford" was taken 20 November 1659 and totaled £108 2s. 9d., of which 65% 8d. was real estate: "10 acres of land in the Indian side in the old field" [NHFR 1:23-34].</p> <p>BIRTH: About 1609 (aged 26 in 1635 [Hotten 46]).</p> <p>DEATH: "Ashley," England, between 27 June 1654 (date of will) and 31 August 1654 (probate of will) [NEHGR 38:42]. ("Ashley" has not been satisfactorily identified.)</p> <p>MARRIAGE: (1) 13 February 1633/4 Mismenden, Hertfordshire, Dinis Stalworth. She was buried at Little Hadham, Hertfordshire, on 26 December 1634 (not long after the baptism of their only child).</p> <p>(2) By 1635 Martha ____ "Martha Astwood the wife of John Astwood" was admitted to Roxbury church as member #132, among the arrivals of 1635, and shortly after the admission of her husband [RCR 81]. (Possibly she was the Martha Carter, aged 27, on the <i>Hopewell</i> with John in 1635 [Hotten 46]).</p> <p>(3) By 2 August 1640 Sarah ____ Baldwin, widow of Sylvester [TAG 16:29, citing Milford Church Records, p. 1]. She was buried at Milford on</p>
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34

<p>94 The Great Migration</p> <p>13 November 1669 [TAG 16:26, citing Milford Church Records, p. 1].</p> <p>CHILDREN:</p> <p>With first wife</p> <p>i SAMUEL, bp. Little Hadham, Hertfordshire, 19 December 1634; no further record.</p> <p>With second wife</p> <p>ii HANNAH, b. say 1636; m. (1) by 1653 Stephen Freeman [Parke-Gilenslove 49, citing Milford church records in which Hannah is called "wife of brother Stephen Freeman and daughter of Capt. Astwood"] m. (2) after 1659 Robert Porter [Parke-Gilenslove 49, citing Milford LR 1:258, 37 (correct date for which is 23 November 1683)] m. (3) after 1689 (possibly) Clark (on 10 March 1690?) Hannah Clark is called "now widow formerly the wife of Robert Porter" [Milford LR 3:57].</p> <p>ASSOCIATIONS: Brother James Astwood came a few years later and settled in Roxbury, leaving a 1653 will bequeathing £5 to "brother John Astwood" [RFR Cas #132].</p> <p>On the same day and in the same parish, John Astwood married Dinis Stalworth and William Fowler married Grace Stalworth. Astwood and Fowler were long associated in New England, and it is apparent that Parke and Jacobus, who noted this pairing of familiar names, but denied they were the New England immigrants, did not see the baptism of Astwood's son Samuel or the burial of his first wife Dinis in Little Hadham [Parke-Gilenslove 71].</p> <p>COMMENTS: On 3 April 1635, "husbandman Jo: Astwood," aged 26, was enrolled at London on the <i>Hopewell</i> as a passenger for New England [Hotten 46]. Enrolled at the same time were Jo: Ruggles", aged 30; "Martha Carter," aged 27, and "Marie Elliot," aged 13 [Hotten 46].</p> <p>"Captain Ashwood" petitioned the marriage between Joseph Peck and Widow Burell at Milford 12 September 1650 and was still performing marriages in 1652 [NHFR 1:2, 10].</p> <p>On 3 July 1655, Susan Clarke, daughter of James, charged Ellis Mew with indecent assault. During the course of the case, Susan's mother stated "that the girl should have gone to Milford to dwell with Capt. Astwood," but her good disposition had caused John Jones to keep her in his service instead [NHFR 1:182,83]. It is probable that John Astwood was still in Connecticut at this date. It seems likely that he went to England,</p>	<p>John Astwood 95</p> <p>planning to return after a brief visit, since he calls himself of Milford in his will, implying he had not changed his residence to "Ashbury."</p> <p>BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE: In 1959 Nathan Crier Parke and Donald Lines Jacobus compiled a brief account of the family of John Astwood [Parke-Gilenslove 71-72].</p> <p>JOHN ATHERSON</p> <p>"[John] Atherson" was enrolled on 18 April 1635 at London as a passenger for New England on the <i>Susan & Ellen</i> [Hotten 63].</p> <p>COMMENTS: Not seen in any New England record.</p> <p>THEODORE ATKINSON</p> <p>ORIGIN: Unknown</p> <p>MIGRATION: 1634</p> <p>FIRST RESIDENCE: Boston</p> <p>OCCUPATION: Feltmaker, hatter, beavermaker [SLR 6:37-38]. On 17 December 1652, Theodore Atkinson recorded a number of legal documents, including deeds and debt instruments, most of which were probably related to his business activities. In one of these records, on 7 October 1652, "Thomas Wheeler, master of the good ship called the <i>Mayflower</i> ... now riding at anchor in the river at Boston" sold to "Theodore Atkinson of Boston feltmaker" one-sixteenth of the ship and its furnishings [SLR 1:208-9].</p> <p>CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: "Theodorus Atkinson servant to our brother John Newport" was admitted to Boston church on 11 January 1634/5 [RCR 19].</p> <p>FREEMAN: 18 May 1642 [MRCR 2:29].</p> <p>EDUCATION: Signed his deeds.</p> <p>OFFICES: Boston constable, 12 March 1648/9 [BTR 1:94]. Clerk of the market, 12 March 1648/9 [BTR 1:12].</p> <p>ESTATE: On 31 August 1640, "Theodor Atkinsons" is granted his Great Lot, for two heads at Mudde River, if it be there to be had after others are served that had their grants before him" [BTR 1:55].</p>
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35

Sources Used

- Passenger lists (original, published, and reconstructed)
- Lists of Freeman
- Colony and court records
- Notarial records
- Town records
- Vital records
- Land records
- Church records
- Journals and letters
- Citation in brackets with abbreviated source; see *Key to Titles*

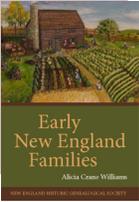
36



37

Early New England Families

- Directed by Alicia Crane Williams
- Genealogical and biographical sketch for those who married in New England from 1641 to 1700 (uses Torrey as guide)
- Grouped by year of marriage
- Two published volumes
- ★ Searchable at AmericanAncestors.org
- New sketches posted online



38

What information is included?

• Name of groom	• Married	• Personal
• Migrations/residences	– Name of bride	• Estate
• Parentage/family	– Bride's parentage/family	• Children
• Birth/baptism	– Bride's death/burial	• Resources
• Death/burial	• Church	• Commentary
• Land	• Military	
• Community	• Court	
	• Occupation	

39

Early Massachusetts Records

- Vital and church records: birth, baptism, marriage, death, burial, divorce, gravestone
- Land records: grants, deeds, mortgages, gifts
- Probate records: will, inventory, guardianship
- Civil records: lawsuits, individual vs individual
- Criminal records: prosecution by authorities
- Military records: Colony, town militia

46

Overview of Colonial Government

- Colony – Records of General Court, laws, appeals, border disputes, diplomacy, war
- County or Jurisdictional Courts – Criminal and Civil actions
- Towns – Selectmen, elected officers (Town Clerk), vital records, town grants of land

47

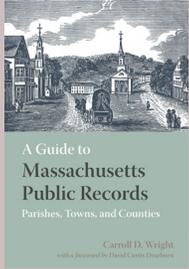
Access to 17th century original records

- Originals not often available to the public
- Microfilm images
- Digital images online – replacing microfilm
 - Americanancestors.org
 - Familysearch.org
 - Ancestry.com

48

A Guide to Massachusetts Public Records

- List all town and church records available as of 1884
- Invaluable tool to determine when records were lost or destroyed
- Reprinted in 2014



49



Town Guides

Research towns throughout New England and New York

Town guides will help you in identifying research strategies for towns throughout New England and New York. They include information on name changes for towns, settlement and incorporation dates, parent towns or counties and much more. Villages, smaller sections of towns, are not included in these guides.



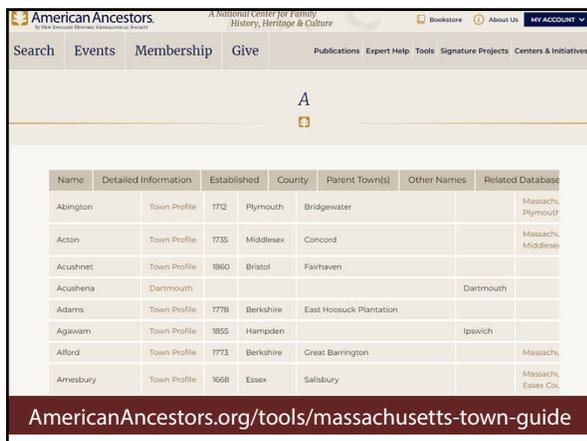
RESEARCH GUIDE



RESEARCH GUIDE

AmericanAncestors.org/tools/town-guides

50



A

Name	Detailed Information	Established	County	Parent Town(s)	Other Names	Related Database
Abington	Town Profile	1712	Plymouth	Bridgewater		Massach, Plymouth
Acton	Town Profile	1735	Middlesex	Concord		Massach, Middlesex
Acushnet	Town Profile	1860	Bristol	Fairhaven		
Acushena	Dartmouth					Dartmouth
Adams	Town Profile	1778	Berkshire	East Hoosuck Plantation		
Agawam	Town Profile	1855	Hampden			Ipswich
Alford	Town Profile	1773	Berkshire	Great Barrington		Massach,
Amesbury	Town Profile	1668	Essex	Salisbury		Massach, Essex Co.

AmericanAncestors.org/tools/massachusetts-town-guide

51

Vital Records

- Mass. has the most complete set in the nation
- Kept by towns beginning in 1620s
- Generally are well-kept, but not always complete
- VRs up to 1850 published for over 200 towns, the majority in eastern Massachusetts
- For other towns, use the Corbin Collection, Rollin H. Cooke Collection, Holbrook microfiche, or manuscripts (all available at NEHGS)

52

Vital Records to 1850

- Systematic History Fund series = “Tan Books”
- Births, marriages, deaths arranged alphabetically
- May include VRs from church, cemetery, Bible or private records
- ★ Most online at AmericanAncestors.org

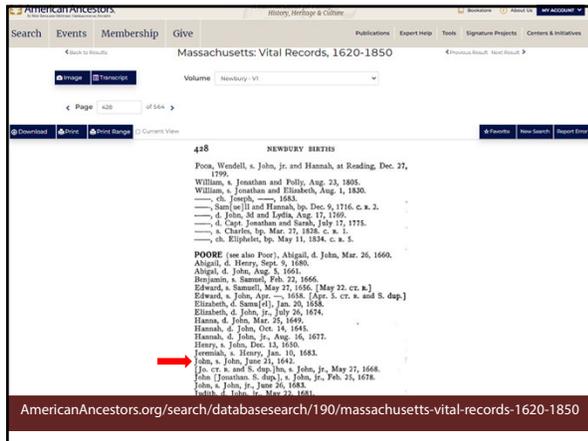


53

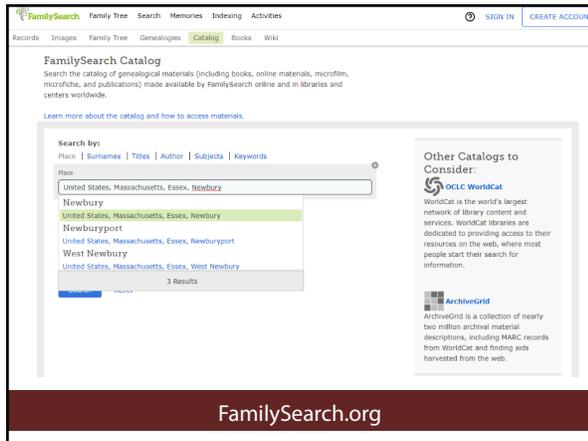
VOLUME ONE.
DEDHAM.

1655 A Register of the Births, Marriages and Deaths in this Towne, in which the year is accounted to begin the first day of the first m^o. called March.
 Marv. Daughter of Jⁿ. & Hana Dwigth, borne 25 of y^e 5 m^o.
 1656 John, the Son of John Balden & Joana his wife, was borne the 24th of the 4 m^o.
 1657 Ruth, the Daughter of John & Annis Morse, was borne 3^o of 4 m^o.
 Mary, the Daughter of Joseph & Millicent Kingsbury, was borne the 1 of 7 m^o.
 1658 Sarah, the Daughter of John & Hana Dwigth, was borne the 17th of y^e 4 m^o.
 Elizabeth, the Daughter of Joseph & Millicent Kingsbury, was borne the 14 of y^e 7 m^o.
 Elizabeth, the Daughter of Francis & Amy Chickering, was borne the 20th of the 7 m^o.
 Mary, the Daughter of Richard & Mary Euerard, was borne the 28 of the 7 m^o.
 Elizabeth, the Daughter of Thomas & Mary Alcock, was borne the 14th of y^e 8 m^o.
 Isaac, the Son of John & Prudence Fray, was borne the 29th of the 10 m^o.
 1659 Rachell, the Daughter of John & Alice Roper, was borne the 18th of the 1 m^o.
 Samuel, the Son of Richard & Mary Euerard, was borne the 31 of the 1 m^o.
 Samuel, the Son of John & Joanna Gay, was borne the 10th of the 1 m^o.
 Joseph, the Son of William Bartow & [An] his wife, was borne the 6th of the 4 m^o.
 Obadiah, the Son of Daniell & Lidia Morse, borne the 8 of the 6 m^o.
 Mary, the Daughter of Edward & Susan Richards, was borne the 29th of y^e 7th m^o.
 Abigail, the Daughter of Ferdinando & [Ann] Adams, was borne the 15th of the 7th m^o.
 John, the Son of John & Annis Morse, was borne the 8 of the 4th m^o.
 Daniell, the Son of Henry & Elizabeth Smith, was borne the 13 of the 8 m^o.
 John, the Son of James & Ann Allen, was borne the 4th of the 10 m^o.
 Sarah, the Daughter of Thomas & Margeriet Alcock, was borne the 28th of the 10 m^o.
 Barnabas, the Son of Rob^t & Ann Hinstell, was borne the 13th of the 9 m^o.
 Benjamin, the Son of Ralph & Rebecca Wreslock, was borne the 8 of the 10 m^o.
 Samuel, the Son of John & Rebecca Bachelor, was borne the 8th of the 11 m^o.
 Abigail, the Daughter of John & Abigail Eaton, was borne the 6 of the 11 m^o.
 Samuel, the Son of Thomas & Alice Wight, was borne the 5 of the 12 m^o.
 Samuel, the Son of Joseph & Hannah Morse, was borne the 10th of the 11 m^o.
 Elizer, the Son of John & Prudence Eray, was borne the 14th of the 12 m^o.

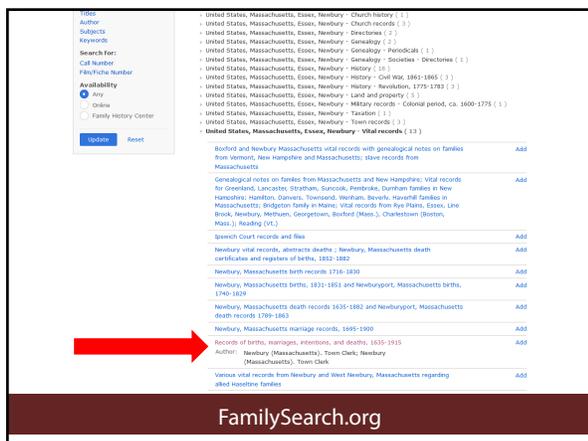
54



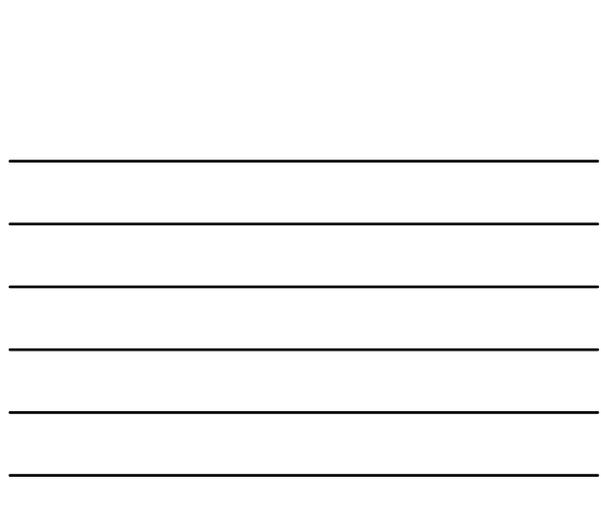
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59



60



Why are town records important?

- They are one of the most underutilized resource from 17th to 19th century Town Clerks
- Offer clues to when an ancestor arrived in a town and often when they leave
- Learn about town offices your ancestor held and military service
- Valuable resource for female ancestors

76

Where are they located?

- Often not indexed and occasionally in print
- Local town & city clerk's offices, or historical societies have originals
- Some have been imaged on microfilm or digitally from the FHL Library

77

Freeman Lists

- Lists establish date of residence
- Free of indenture
- Church membership required prior to freemanship in Massachusetts Bay
- Freeman were allowed to vote for colony officers
- Abstracted in Great Migration series

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Proprietors' Records

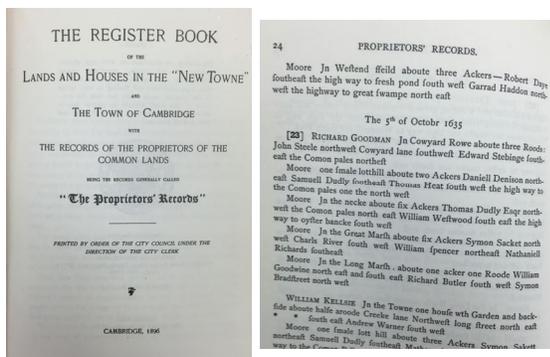
- Proprietors were responsible for the improvement of the land and were required to enlist settlers and newcomers, assigning lots, building highways, and subdividing land/meadow/forest
- Early record of community
- Can include land grants and early deeds

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Where to locate Proprietor Records

- Town Halls: Town clerk, tax office or assessor
- County Registry of Deeds
- Libraries and local historical Societies
- FamilySearch.org microfilm and online
- Published transcriptions of Proprietor records

83



Cambridge, Mass Proprietors' Records

84

Massachusetts Land Deeds

- Organized by county
- Berkshire, Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, and Worcester have multiple deeds registries
- NEHGS has microfilm for some counties to 1800s or later
- For married male grantors, wife usually signs as well
- Usually lists occupations
- Barnstable County deeds burned in 1827 (only partially reconstructed)
- Be aware of changing county boundaries

85

Records of deeds, 1639-1885; indexes to deeds, 1639-1920

Authors: Suffolk County (Massachusetts), Register of Deeds (Main Author); Suffolk County (Massachusetts), Register of Deeds (Repository)

Format: Manuscript/Manuscript on Film

Language: English

Publication: Salt Lake City, Utah : Filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1969

Physical: 1128 microfilm reels ; 35 mm.

References: (Digital Collection) Massachusetts, land records, 1620-1965

Notes: Massachusetts, Land Records are available online, click here.

Microfilm of original records in the Registry of Deeds, Boston Massachusetts.

Includes indexes to grantors, 1639-1920; indexes to grantees, 1639-1920; and an index to persons other than grantors and grantees, 1639-1799.

View this catalog record in WorldCat for other possible copy locations

86

Film/Digital Notes (This family history center has 1128 of 1128 films/fiche.)

Note	Location	Collection/Shelf	Film	DGS	Format
Index-Grantor A-By v. 1-4, 1639-1799	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579922	7453721	☺
Index-Grantor Ca-Gy v. 5-7, 1639-1799	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579923	7453722	☺
Index-Grantor Ea-Gy v. 8-9, 1639-1799	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579924	7453723	☺
Index-Grantor Ha-Ky v. 10-12, 1639-1799	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579925	7453724	☺
Index-Grantor La-Ox v. 13-15, 1639-1799	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579926	7453725	☺
Index-Grantor Pa-Ry v. 16-18, 1639-1799	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579927	7453726	☺
Index-Grantor Sa-Us v. 19-21, 1639-1799	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579928	7453727	☺
Index-Grantor Va-Zu v. 22-23, 1639-1799	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579929	7453728	☺
Index-Grantor A-Al v. 1-4, 1800-1899	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579930	7453729	☺
Index-Grantor Al-Az v. 5-8, 1800-1899	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579931	7453730	☺
Index-Grantor B-Bar v. 9-12, 1800-1899	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579932	7453731	☺
Index-Grantor Bar-Bea v. 13-16, 1800-1899	Family History Library	United States & Canada Film	579933	7453732	☺

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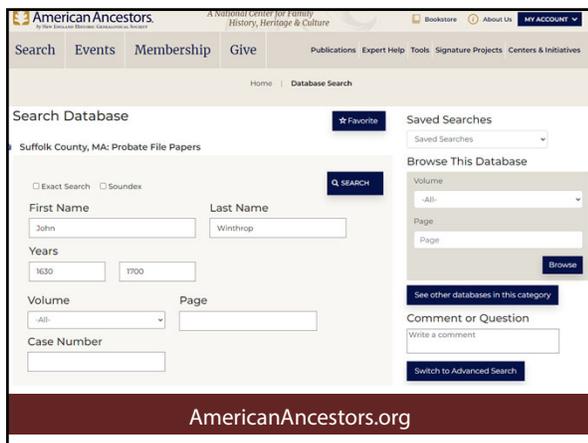


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**Massachusetts Probate Files Papers
AmericanAncestors.org**

- Barnstable 1685-1789
- Bristol 1686-1880
- Essex 1638-1881
- Hampshire 1660-1889
- Middlesex 1648-1871
- Plymouth 1686-1881
- Suffolk 1630-1841 *
- Other counties available for later years

92



93

Criminal Abstracts

Essex County Quarterly Court
 provisions, to be severely whipped,
Guido Baly* admonished for beating his wife.†
Thomas Tuck* fined for drunkenness and common tipping.§
John Peach sr. * fined 20s. for giving Trustring Dolliver oppo

Plymouth County court – Warning Out

Constable Edward Hobbs of Bridgewater reported that by warrant from Brantree selectmen Nicholas Byram, Joseph Hayward and David Perkins he warned Samuel Gurney "an inhabitant of the Town of Brantree now being at the house of Goodman Bayley Intending to Reside there," to depart the town of Brantree, 1 March 1698.

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Civil Abstracts

Plymouth County, Common Pleas

2. **Thomas Macomber v. Ephraim Wood, "alias Atwood,"** Case, for spoiling a pair of cart wheels which defl. was hired to repair. Defl. pleaded that "he did the Work to the Utmost of his Capacity, as well as the Srecks and Wheels. would bear." Jury verdict for pltf., £3 and costs, taxed at £4.13s.3d. Appealed by defl. [No further record.]

3. **Gershom Ewell v. Joseph Green.** Debt, on bill for £3. Defl. pleaded not indebted. Jury verdict for defl., costs, taxed at [blank]. Appealed by pltf. [No further record.]

4. **Thomas Jenkins v. Humphrey Turner.** Debt, on bill. Default by defl. Judgment for £4.3s. and £1.15s.5d. costs.

98

Divorce Records

- 1639-92 – county courts, General Court, Court of Assistants (40 known cases)
- 1692-1786 – Governor & Council (229 cases at Judicial Archives at Mass. State Archives)

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**Massachusetts Archives Collection
1629–1799**

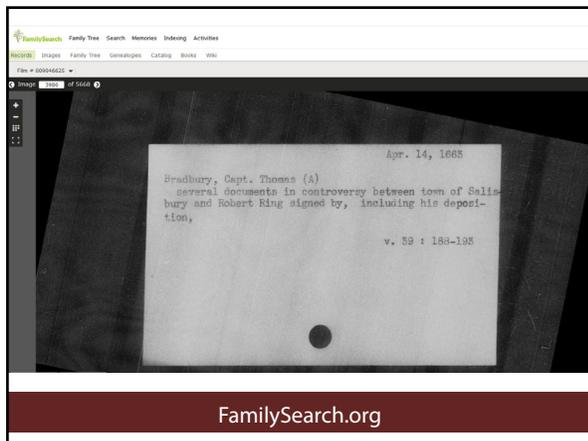
- 328 volumes about early Massachusetts history (also called the Felt Collection)
- Access the collection at the Massachusetts Archive or browse on FamilySearch.org
- Some of the volumes pertaining to the 17th century:
 - Volume 9: Domestic Relations, 1643-1774
 - Volume 10: Ecclesiastical, 1637-1679
 - Volume 11: Ecclesiastical, 1679-1739
 - Volume 15A: Emigrants, 1651-1774
 - Volume 30: Indian, 1603-1705
 - Volume 112: Towns, 1632-1693
 - Volume 113: Towns, 1693-1729
 - Volume 303: Petitions, 1659-1786

100



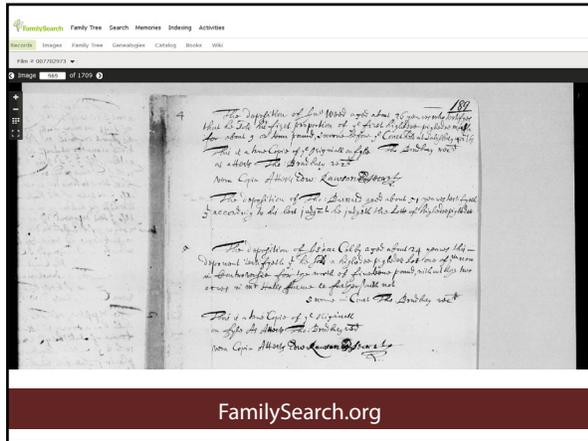
A screenshot of the FamilySearch.org website showing a grid of search results. The grid contains numerous small thumbnail images of document pages. The FamilySearch.org logo is visible at the bottom of the screenshot.

101

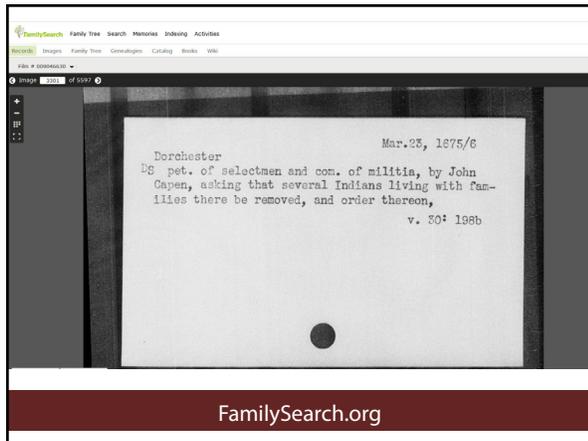


A screenshot of the FamilySearch.org document viewer showing a scanned document page. The text on the page reads: "Apr. 14, 1685", "Bradbury, Capt. Thomas (A)", "several documents in controversy between town of Salisbury and Robert Ring signed by, including his deposition,", and "v. 59 : 188-198". The FamilySearch.org logo is visible at the bottom of the screenshot.

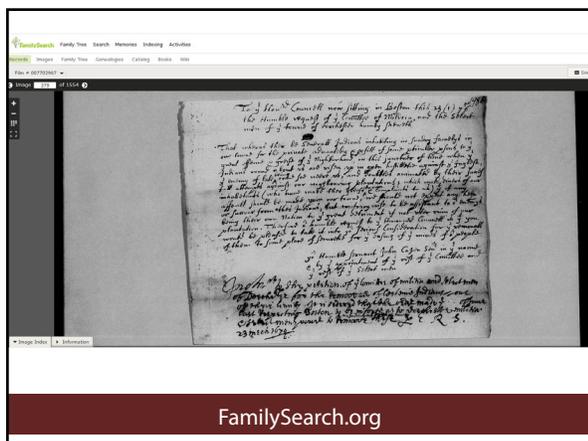
102



103



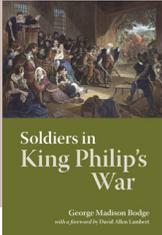
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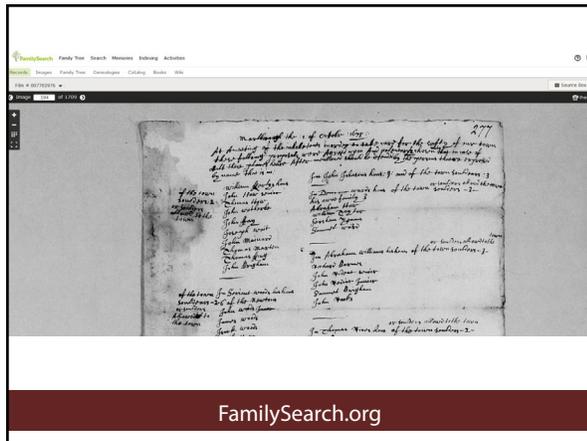
105

Military Records

- Few details for 17th century muster rolls
 - Mostly Colony records, originals at State Archives
 - Town records – local militia
- Military history chapters appear in many published town histories



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FamilySearch.org

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Earliest Passenger Lists to Mass.

- *Mayflower* from Bradford's account 30 years later
- *Fortune* (1621), *Anne* and *Little James* (1623) from land records
- Surviving London port book 1632 and 1635
- Post-1636 very limited
- Rely on published sources



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Common Challenges

- Distinguishing between people of the same name in the same community
- Determining parentage when multiple marriages are involved
- Finding women's maiden names
- Origins

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General Considerations and Suggestions

- You may not find one “smoking-gun” record; you may need to rely on a number of records to build a case
- Some records may be less reliable than others
- May have several working theories
- Know when your town was established and if there are any parent/daughter towns that would affect record keeping

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General Considerations and Suggestions

- Create a complete timeline with probate, land records, military, or any possible record
- While not culturally consistent, some families used naming patterns
 - Surnames as first names or less common first names can be clues of earlier kinships and origins
- Do not assume a woman's name at marriage is her maiden name; could be a first married name

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And keep in mind . . .

- Terms of kinship may have different meanings in 17th-century Massachusetts:
 - Nephew and nieces may be referred to as “cousins”
 - Sometimes “brother” or “sister” can be indications of brothers and sisters within a faith
 - “Father” and “Mother” could refer to in-laws
- Use of “Jr” and “Sr” don’t necessarily mean kinship

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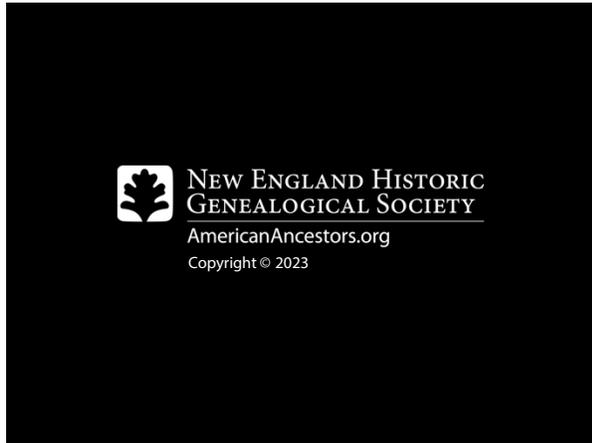
Summary

- Don’t rely on just one record set
- Don’t reinvent the wheel - look at published sources in combination with originals
- Keep up with scholarly publications
- More and more records are being indexed and digitized everyday

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