

A genealogical profile of William Bradford

Birth: William Bradford was baptized in Austerfield, Yorkshire March 19, 1589/90, the son of William and Alice (Hanson) Bradford.

Death: He died in Plymouth May 9, 1657, and was buried at Burial Hill.

Ship: *Mayflower*, 1620

Life in England: Orphaned young, Bradford was raised first by his grandfather, then by uncles. At the age of twelve, he became an avid reader of the Bible, and began attending Separatist services in Scrooby. Against the wishes of his family he joined the Separatist church at sixteen and went with the congregation to Holland two years later.

Life in Holland: The Scrooby congregation, lived first in Amsterdam, then in Leiden. He worked as a weaver, and in 1612 became a citizen of Leiden. In 1617, he was appointed one of the organizers of the voyage to “Virginia” (America).

Life in New England: Appointed governor after the death of John Carver in the summer of 1621, Bradford held the office from 1621 to 1656, except for five years service as Governor’s Assistant. The colony’s most prolific author, he wrote the journal known as *Mourt’s Relation* with Edward Winslow, three “Dialogues,” and the colony’s history.

Family: William Bradford married Dorothy May (1) in Amsterdam on December 10, 1613. They had one son. She drowned in Cape Cod harbor on December 7, 1620. On August 14, 1623, he married (2) Alice (Carpenter) Southworth in Plymouth and had three children. She died in Plymouth on March 26, 1670.

Child of William and Dorothy Bradford:

- John was born in Leiden about 1617. He married Martha Bourne by 1650, but had no known children. He died in Norwich, Connecticut before September 21, 1676.

Children of William and Alice Bradford:

- William was born on June 17, 1624, in Plymouth. He married (1) Alice Richards after April 23, 1650, and had ten children. She died in Plymouth on December 12, 1671. He married (2) Sarah (____) Griswold about 1674, and had one son. He married (3) Mary (Wood) Holmes about 1676 and had four children. He died in Plymouth February 20, 1703/4.
- Mercy was born before May 22, 1627. She married Benjamin Vermayes on December 21, 1648, in Plymouth, but had no

known children. She was not mentioned in her father’s 1657 will and was probably dead by then.

- Joseph was born about 1630. He married Jael Hobart on May 25, 1664, in Hingham and had three children. He died in Plymouth on July 10, 1715.

For Further Information:

Robert C. Anderson. *The Great Migration Begins*. Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1995.

Robert C. Anderson. *The Pilgrim Migration*. Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2004.

Mayflower Families through Five Generations: Volume 22: William Bradford. Ann Smith Lainhart and Robert S. Wakefield, compilers. Plymouth: General Society of Mayflower Descendants, 2004.



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Where do I go from here?

Researching your family's history can be a fun, rewarding, and occasionally frustrating project. Start with what you know by collecting information on your immediate family. Then, trace back through parents, grandparents, and beyond. This is a great opportunity to speak to relatives, gather family stories, arrange and identify old family photographs, and document family possessions that have been passed down from earlier generations.

Once you have learned all you can from family members, you will begin to discover other sources. A wide variety of records can help you learn more about the lives of your ancestors. These include birth, marriage, and death records; immigration and naturalization records; land records; census records; probate records and wills; church and cemetery records; newspapers; passenger lists; military records; and much more.

When you use information from any source — an original record, a printed book, or a website — always be careful to document it. If you use a book, you should cite the author or compiler, the full title, publication information and pages used. Also be sure to record the author's sources for the information. If the author's sources aren't provided, you will have to try to find the original source. Many genealogical works contain faulty information, and the Internet also contains many inaccuracies. In order for your work to be accepted — by lineage societies and other genealogists — it must be properly documented.

IMPORTANT GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES

New England Historic Genealogical Society

Founded in 1845, NEHGS is the country's oldest and largest genealogical society. The library contains over 200,000 books, plus significant manuscript and microfilm collections, and a circulating library by mail. NEHGS members receive two periodicals, the *Register* and *New England Ancestors*, and can access valuable genealogical data online.

NEHGS, 101 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116;
888-296-3447; www.NewEnglandAncestors.org.

Plimoth Plantation: *Bringing Your History To Life*

As a non-profit, educational organization our mission is: to offer the public powerful experiences of history, built upon thorough research of the Wampanoag and Pilgrim communities. We offer multiple learning opportunities to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship of historical events to modern America. Members have access to our Research Library.

Plimoth Plantation, 137 Warren Avenue, Plymouth, MA 02632;
508-746-1622; www.plimoth.org

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

- www.PlymouthAncestors.org
- www.CyndisList.com
- www.FamilySearch.org
- www.USGenWeb.org



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GENEALOGICAL LIBRARIES IN PLYMOUTH

General Society of Mayflower Descendants Library

A collection focused principally on the genealogies of the descendants of the *Mayflower* passengers.

4 Winslow St., Plymouth; 508-746-3188; www.mayflower.org

Plymouth Collection, Plymouth Public Library

Over 1200 items relating to the descendants of the Pilgrims, as well as the many other immigrants who settled in the area.

132 South St., Plymouth; 508-830-4250;
www.plymouthpubliclibrary.org

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Genealogy by Christine Rose and Kay Germain Ingalls, Alpha Books, 1997.

Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research by Marcia Melnyk, NEHGS, 1999.

Shaking Your Family Tree: A Basic Guide to Tracing Your Family History by Ralph J. Crandall, NEHGS, 2001.

Unpuzzling Your Past by Emily Croom, Betterway Books, 2003.

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