A genealogical profile of Edward Burcher aka Vircher

**Birth:** If Emmanuel Altham can be believed (see below), Edward Burcher was born about 1543.

**Death:** Edward Burcher and his wife received two acres in the 1623 division of land. Their names did not appear in the 1627 division of cattle, so they had died or left the colony by then.

**Ship:** *Little James*, 1623

**Life in England:** Nothing is known of his life in England.

**Life in New England:** The Burchers appeared in a letter of 1623 by the master of the *Little James*, John Bridge, and Mrs. Burcher was the probable individual referred to by another passenger, Emmanuel Altham, in another letter written that year. In the first, Bridge said that “father Vircher and his wife were as heartly as the youngest on the ship.” Both “father,” used in this case as a term of respect, and the comparison imply significant age. Altham referred to “an old woman in our ship about four score [80] years of age, which was in good health.” Edward Vircher gave the two acres received in 1623 to another Plymouth colonist, Samuel Fuller, who mentioned them in his 1633 will. The Burchers do not again appear in Plymouth Colony records, and may have returned to England.

**Family:** The only two members of the family known are Edward and his wife, whose first name is unknown.

**For Further Information:**


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

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


A collaboration between Plimoth Plantation and the New England Historic Genealogical Society®
www.PlymouthAncestors.org