

# A genealogical profile of John Billington

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**Birth:** John Billington was born in England about 1582.

**Death:** He was hanged in Plymouth in September 1630 for the murder of John Newcomen.

**Ship:** *Mayflower*, 1620

**Life in England:** Nothing is known about John Billington's life in England. His son, Francis, was named in a lease of property in Cowbit, Lincolnshire in 1612 and either John or Elinor, or both, were probably associated with this area.

**Life in New England:** John, Elinor and their two sons, John and Frances, came to Plymouth in 1620. The Billington family appeared several times in the accounts of early Plymouth Colony. Francis made squibs and fired a musket in the *Mayflower* while the ship was anchored off Cape Cod. He went exploring soon after their arrival, and discovered the body of water now called Billington Sea. His brother, John, got lost in the woods for several days, eventually being returned home from Nauset, on Cape Cod. John Senior challenged Myles Standish's order in March of 1620/1 and was punished for it, the first of many confrontations. Finally, in 1630, he was tried and executed for the murder of John Newcomen, the first such execution in the colony.

**Family:** John Billington married Elinor \_\_\_\_\_ in England. They had two sons. After John's death, Elinor married Gregory Armstrong in September 1638. She died after March 2, 1642/3. Gregory Armstrong died in Plymouth on November 5, 1650.

## Children of John and Elinor Billington:

- John was born about 1604. He died in Plymouth between May 22, 1627, and his father's death in 1630.
- Francis was born about 1606. He married Christian (Penn) Eaton in Plymouth in July 1634 and had nine children. He died in Middleboro on December 3, 1684.

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## 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: Vol. 21: John Billington*. Harriet W. Hodge, compiler. Plymouth: General Society of Mayflower Descendants, 2001.



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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](http://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](http://www.plimoth.org)

## RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

- [www.PlymouthAncestors.org](http://www.PlymouthAncestors.org)
- [www.CyndisList.com](http://www.CyndisList.com)
- [www.FamilySearch.org](http://www.FamilySearch.org)
- [www.USGenWeb.org](http://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](http://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](http://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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