

A genealogical profile of Thomas Blossom

Birth: He was born about 1580, probably the son of Peter and Annabel Blossom of Great Shelford, Cambridgeshire.

Death: He died in Plymouth before March 25, 1633.

Ship: *Mayflower*, 1629

Life in England: If the above identification is correct, Thomas Blossom was one of at least seven children born to Peter Blossom and his second wife, Annabel _____. The Blossoms lived first at Great Shelford, then possibly Little Shelford, and moved to Stapleford, probably about 1582. He described himself as a "husbandman" [small farmer] in a 1585 deposition, but as a "labourer" in his 1597 will, indicating a lower economic status. After his death, his wife married (2) Richard Bracher at Stapleford on February 6, 1597/8, and moved with him to Cambridge. The educated language of Thomas Blossom's letters to William Bradford have led some to speculate that Blossom attended Cambridge University, but there is no mention of his name in university records.

Life in Holland: Thomas Blossom arrived in Leiden before October 27, 1609. His occupation while there was not recorded. He was one of the passengers of the *Speedwell* (companion of the *Mayflower* in the 1620 voyage) which turned back due to leakiness and was ultimately abandoned. He returned to Leiden until he and others emigrated to Plymouth Colony in 1629.

Life in New England: Thomas Blossom and his family sailed from England in March 1629 aboard the *Mayflower* (not the original ship) and arrived in Salem on March 15, 1629. They were brought to Plymouth by boat and lived there until Thomas died in the "infectious fever" of 1632/3.

Family: Thomas Blossom married Anne Elsdon on November 10, 1605, at St. Clement, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire and had six children. She married (2) Henry Rowley at Plymouth on October 17, 1633.

Children of Thomas and Anne Blossom:

- A child was buried at Pieterskerk in Leiden on February 15, 1617.
- A child was buried at Pieterskerk in Leiden on April 12, 1617.
- A son was born by 1620. He died in Leiden by December 15, 1625.
- Elizabeth was born about 1620 in Leiden. She married (1) Edward FitzRandolph in Scituate on May 10, 1637, and had nine children. He died in Piscataway, New Jersey, about 1675. She married (2) John Pike in Piscataway but had no known children.
- Thomas was born about 1623. He married Sarah Ewer on June 18, 1645, in Barnstable and had one daughter. He drowned off Nauset Beach on April 22, 1650.

- Peter was born after 1627. He married Sarah Bodfish on June 21, 1663, at Barnstable and had seven children. He died in July 1706.

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.

John Insley Coddington and Maclean W. McLean. "The Blossom Family of Cambridgeshire, England, and New England." *The American Genealogist* 63 (1989): 65–77, 238–246; 64 (1988): 23–31. 1988–1989.



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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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