

A Genealogical Profile of John Lyford

Birth: John Lyford was born about 1590, based on his estimated date of marriage.

Death: He died in Virginia about 1628.

Ship: 1624, possibly the *Charity*

Life in Ireland: Before coming to New England, John Lyford had been a minister at Levalleglish in the parish of Loughgall, county Armagh, Ireland. The family also owned land in county Tyrone. A scandal involving a young woman of the parish forced them to leave Ireland and return to England.

Life in New England: Reverend Lyford with his family arrived in Plymouth Colony in 1624. He had been sent by some of the colony's group of investors. One of the principle investors, James Shirley, described him: "The preacher we have sent is (we hope) an honest plaine man, though none of the most eminent and rare. Aboute chusing him into office use your owne liberty and discretion; he knows he is no officer amongst you, though perhaps custome and universalitie may make him forget himselfe." While his stay in the colony began well, Lyford soon collected a faction of discontented people, led by John Oldham. The two of them wrote a number of letters to the investors, which Governor William Bradford described as "full of slanders & false accusations, tending not only to their prejudice, but to their ruin and utter subversion." Bradford ultimately called a court, which convicted both Oldham and Lyford and expelled them from the colony. From Plymouth, Lyford and his family travelled to Nantasket and then to "Namkeke" [Salem]. From there they went to Virginia, where Lyford soon died. His wife and children returned to New England.

Family: John Lyford married Sarah _____ about 1617. She married (2) perhaps _____ Oakley. As Sarah Oakley, widow, she married Edmund Hobart on October 10, 1634 in Charlestown. She died in Hingham on June 23, 1649.

Children of John and Sarah Lyford:

Obadiah was born about 1617. He was a student at Trinity College, Dublin in 1635, and died, apparently unmarried, by 1639.

Ruth Lyford was born about 1619. She married James Bates on April 19, 1643 in Hingham and had eleven children. He died in Hingham on July 5, 1689. She died in Hingham on March 9, 1689/90.

Mordecai was born about 1625. He was about fourteen in 1639 when he chose his stepfather as guardian. On June 3, 1642 he acknowledged the payment by his stepfather, of his legacy from his father's will. There is no further record.

[possibly] Martha was born about 1628. She married Samuel Lincoln by 1650 and had eleven children.

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.