

A Genealogical Profile of Phineas Pratt

Birth: Phineas Pratt was born in England about 1593.

Death: He died in Charlestown on April 19, 1680, and was buried in the Phipps Street Burying Ground, Charlestown.

Ship: *Sparrow*, 1622

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

Life in New England: Phineas Pratt came to New England as one of Thomas Weston's men who settled Wessagusset (Weymouth). He fled to Plymouth after the dissolution of Wessagusset, and years later wrote of the experience in his *Declaration* (1662). He was a joiner. He and his family moved to Charlestown in 1648. He apparently fell on hard times in the 1660s, and petitioned the General Court for assistance in 1668. The petition was refused, but the Charlestown selectmen granted him several payments in money and goods between 1668 and 1679. The town later came to his widow's assistance. He has often been identified as the brother of Joshua Pratt, who came to Plymouth in 1623 but such kinship has not been proven.

Family: Phineas Pratt married Marah Priest by about 1633 and had eight children. She died in 1689 in Charlestown.

Children of Phineas and Marah Priest:

- Mary was born about 1633. She married John Swan on March 1, 1655/6, in Cambridge and had eight children. She died in Cambridge on February 11, 1702.
- John was born about 1635. He married Ann Barker by 1664 and had eight children. He died at Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York after March 14, 1697/8.
- Samuel was born about 1637. He married Mary Barker by 1668 and had two children. He was killed in King Philip's War near Rehoboth on March 26, 1676. She married (2) Francis Coombs in 1678.
- Daniel was born about 1641. He married Anna _____ by about 1680 and had one daughter. He died in Providence, Rhode Island between June 23, 1680, and June 2, 1690. She married (2) William Turpin on January 27, 1690/1.
- Peter was born about 1643. He married Elizabeth (Griswold) Rogers on August 5, 1679, in Lyme, Connecticut and had one son. He died March 24, 1688, in Lyme. She married (2) Matthew Beckwith by 1691.
- Mercy was born about 1645. She married Jeremiah Holman by about 1665 and had five children. She died between December 14, 1691, and March 14, 1694/5.

- Joseph was born about 1647. He married Dorcas Folger on January 12, 1674/5, in Charlestown and had nine children. He died on December 24, 1712, in Charlestown. She died sometime after July 8, 1728.
- Aaron was born about 1654 in Charlestown. He married (1) Sarah Pratt about 1684 in Woburn and had eleven children. She died in Hingham on July 22, 1706. He married (2) Sarah (Wright) Cummings on September 4, 1707, and had four children. He died in Hingham on February 23, 1735/6, and she died on December 13, 1752.

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.

George Bowman. "Phineas Pratt of Charlestown." *Mayflower Descendant* 4(3): 129–140. 1902.

Jayne P. Lovelace. *The Pratt Directory*. Rev. ed. Chandler, Ariz.: Ancestor House, 1995.

Mayflower Families through Five Generations: Vol. 8: Degory Priest. Robert S. Wakefield, ed. Plymouth: General Society of Mayflower Descendants, 1994.

Eugene A. Stratton. *Plymouth Colony: Its History and People, 1620–1691*. Salt Lake City: Ancestry Publishing, 1986.



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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

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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;
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RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

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



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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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