

RT3757 - Verifying Your Mayflower Lineage

Lindsay Fulton, Director of Research Services lindsay.fulton@nehgs.org

Step #1- Get organized

Use a five generation chart or genealogical software program to map out your ancestors-paying close attention to dates and geography. Templates at: AmericanAncestors.org/education/learning-resources/download

Step #2- Look for the best candidate

Review the family tree that you created using a five generation chart or genealogical software program. Who are the best candidates? Generally speaking, here are some geographical hot and cold spots for *Mayflower* ancestry.

Generation	Years (approx.)	Hot Spots	Cold Spots
1-5	1600's-1740's	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plymouth County, MA• Barnstable County, MA• New London, CT• Rhode Island (Little Compton area)• Coastal Maine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Essex County, MA• Quebec and Pacific Canada• Hartford, New Haven, and Fairfield, CT• Providence, RI
6-10	1750's-1880's	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Western Massachusetts• Midwest States (Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana)• New York State (not NYC)• Vermont and Maine• Nova Scotia and New Brunswick	
11-15	1880's-present	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less dependent on geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less dependent on geography

Step #3- Find at least one document to connect the generations until you reach a Mayflower passenger

Verified	Documented
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You will have <i>verified</i> the line when you locate at least one document (preferably an original) that connects each generation back to the Mayflower passenger• Creates the skeleton of your Mayflower line	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You will have <i>documented</i> the line when you locate documents for each individual in a generation (both blood line and spouse) using originals for every vital event• Required for an application to GSMD

Generations 11-16- Focus on vital records

While there is no one-stop-shop for vital records, here are a few resources that will direct you to record collections, by state, county, or town-

- *Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research*, 5th ed. (NEHGS, 2012)

- *Red Book: American State, County, and Town Sources*, 3rd ed. (Ancestry Pub., 2004)



American Ancestors
by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

- *The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy*, 3rd ed. (Ancestry Pub., 2006)
- Family Search Wiki: [FamilySearch.org/wiki](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki)

Generations 6-10- What to do when vital records do not exist:

New England

Church Records

Once you identify your ancestor's religion, search in church records for their baptism, marriage, confirmation, or burial. Dismissals and Membership may also be included in the records of the church. Some helpful resources for New England church records:

- *Connecticut Church Records Abstracts* (Congregational Church- 1630-1920) Available at Ancestry.com or CT State Library
- *Massachusetts: Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Records, 1789-1900* Available at AmericanAncestors.org
- Arnold Collection (RI), Tan Books (MA), Barbour Collection (CT), Picton Press books from Maine all culled some information from church records
- Catholic Church Repertoires in Vermont and Maine Available at NEHGS Library

Study Projects

Scholarly study projects are helpful because they often contain cited and peer reviewed material. Therefore, researchers can trust the information included in the following:

- Great Migration Study Project- Robert Charles Anderson- *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England, 1620-1633* (3 vols., Boston: NEHGS, 1995); *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England 1634-1635* (7 vols. to date; Boston, NEHGS, 1999-2011); *The Pilgrim Migration: Immigrants to Plymouth Colony, 1620-1633* (Boston: NEHGS, 2007) *The Winthrop Fleet: Massachusetts Bay Company Immigrants to New England, 1629-1630* (Boston: NEHGS, 2012); *The Great Migration Directory* (Boston: NEHGS, 2015) *The Great Migration Newsletter, vol. 1-25* (1990-2016)
- Early New England Families Study Project- Alicia Crane Williams- *Early New England Families* (1 vol. to date; Boston, NEHGS, 2015) Also available at AmericanAncestors.org as an updated database
- Maine Families in 1790-Ruth Gray- *Maine Families in 1790* (11 vols., Camden, ME, Picton Press, 1988)
- Early Vermont Settlers to 1784 Study Project- Scott Andrew Bartley- *Early Vermont Settlers to 1784* (1 vol. to date; Boston, NEHGS, 2017- Vol. 1—Southern Windsor County) Also available at AmericanAncestors.org as an updated database
- Western Massachusetts Families in 1790 Study Project- Helen Schatvet Ullmann, *Western Families in 1790* (3 vols. to date; Boston, NEHGS, 2017) Also available at AmericanAncestors.org as an updated database
- New Hampshire Families in 1790- Diane Florence Gravel and David Watson Kruger, *New Hampshire Families in 1790* (1 vol.; Concord, New Hampshire, New Hampshire Society of Genealogists, 2007)

Scholarly Journals

Like study projects, scholarly journals are helpful because they often contain cited and peer reviewed material. Therefore, researchers can trust the information included in the following:

- *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, vol. 1- (1847-) From its beginning the *Register* has been the most scholarly and important genealogical journal on both the New England



and the national level, thanks to many decades of consistently high-quality editorship. Available at AmericanAncestors.org

- *Mayflower Descendant*, vol. 1- (1899-) First published by George Ernest Bowman, *MD* is a highly regarded scholarly journal on *Mayflower* and related families, their English origins, and their lives and places of residence in America, from the earliest settlements to their migrations north and westward. Past volumes of *MD* can be searched on AmericanAncestors.org, while new issues are available by subscription or the NEHGS library.
- *The American Genealogist*, vol. 1- (1922-) Begun by Donald Lines Jacobus as the *New Haven Genealogical Magazine* (changing to the present title in 1932), *TAG*, as it is known, devotes most of its space to high-quality, problem-solving articles that focus primarily on New England families. Past volumes of *TAG* can be searched on AmericanAncestors.org
- *The New England Quarterly*, vol. 1- (1928-) is primarily an historical and literary magazine. It is useful for background and context and may contain articles of interest in certain instances.
- *The Connecticut Nutmegger*, vol. 1- (1968-) has been the “journal of record” of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists, Inc. for 40 years. Past volumes of the *Nutmegger* are available at AmericanAncestors.org
- *Rhode Island Roots*, vol. 1 (1975-) When Rhode Island Roots began publication in 1975, the publication served both as a newsletter for the newly formed Rhode Island Genealogical Society (RIGS) and as an aid to careful genealogical research. Past volumes of *Roots* are available at AmericanAncestors.org
- *The Maine Genealogist*- vol. 1 (1977-) Published since 1977, *The Maine Genealogist* is the quarterly journal of Maine Genealogical Society, founded in 1976, contains scholarly articles on Maine families, emphasizing the solving of long-standing problems and primary source documentation. Past volumes are available at AmericanAncestors.org

New York

Church Records

Because most interpreted early vital record laws as the responsibility of the church, records prior to 1880 may be located on the church level. Use the Guide to Vital Statistics Records of Churches in NY State or other inventories to identify possible churches where your ancestors may have been baptized, married, or buried (along with other religious events). Some helpful resources for New York church records:

- Vosburgh Collection- New York State Protestant Church records (101 vols. NEHGS microfilm)
- *Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy*, vols. 1-7 by William Wade Hinshaw (NEHGS library)
- *New York: Early Records of the Lutheran Church, 1697-1771* (AmericanAncestors.org)

Study Projects

- *Beekman Patent*- Frank Doherty (13 vols.- AmericanAncestors.org) Alphabetical genealogies of early inhabitants of Dutchess County’s Beekman Patent, including many that migrated from Mass and CT. *Hint*At the end of each surname sketch lists “other and unplaced” individuals.

Scholarly Journals

- *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, vol. 1- (1869-) Although the Record concentrates on the early families of Long Island, New York City and the lower Hudson River valley, a good number of these families had New England origins or connections. Past volumes of the *NYG&B* are available at AmericanAncestors.org



- *The National Genealogical Society Quarterly*, vol. 1-(1912-) Since 1912, the NGSQ has published material concerning all regions of the nation and all ethnic groups including compiled genealogies, case studies, essays on new methodology and little-known resources.
- *The Genealogist*, vol. 1-(1980-) In 1980 *The Genealogist* was founded by Dr. Neil D. Thompson. It publishes high-quality genealogical articles including single-family studies, compiled genealogies, and articles that solve specific problems.
- *Tree Talks*, vol. 1-(1961-) Unlike the *NYG&B*, *Tree Talks* focuses on the regions outside of New York City, Long Island, and the Hudson Valley. Published by the Central New York Genealogical Society, to preserving, publishing and sharing genealogical information and resources (49 upstate counties)

Nova Scotia/New Brunswick

Church Records

- For a complete list see Terrence Punch's *Genealogist's Handbook for Atlantic Canada Research*

Study Projects

- *Planters and Pioneers*- Esther Clark Wright- A go-to resource, *Planters and Pioneers*, contains biographical information on over 4000 heads of households that moved to Atlantic Canada between 1749 and 1775, including birth and death information, as well as spouses, parents, and children.
- *American Loyalist Claims*- Peter Wilson Coldham- a resource that is sometimes looked over when searching for *Mayflower* families. Though the claims largely describe property that was lost by loyalists during the American Revolution, some of the claims also contain information about family members, as well as a place of origin
- *New Englanders in Nova Scotia*- Fred E. Crowell- *New Englanders in Nova Scotia* is a collection of genealogical articles and research material concerning 48,165 names in more than 650 families of New England Planters and Loyalists who settled in Nova Scotia beginning in 1759. The complete database is available at AmericanAncestors.org
- *Loyalists of New Brunswick*- Esther Clark Wright- this resource primarily focuses on historical context, but it does provide names of individuals moved to land grants.

Scholarly Journals

- *Generations: The Journal of the New Brunswick Genealogical Society*, vol. 1 (1979-) - a quarterly newsletter published by the New Brunswick Genealogical Society.
- *Nova Scotia Historical Review*, vol. 1 (1971-)- Formerly known as *The Nova Scotia Historical Quarterly* (1971-1980), this journal offers historical and genealogical articles with a high standard of editing, as well as scholarly citations.
- *The Nova Scotia Genealogist*, vol. 1 (1971-)- Known prior as the *Genealogical Newsletter*, this journal offers research articles, primary sources, book reviews, readers' queries, family bible information, etc.

Generations 1-5- Well Documented Families

- *Mayflower Families through Five Generations* and *Mayflower Families in Progress* - a multivolume series that systemically traces the Mayflower passengers with known descendants through five generations (Fletcher, Mullins and Tilley excluded). This research relies on original material and is vetted by expert genealogists. The 5th generation is available as a database-AmericanAncestors.org

