

V18. Setting Sail to the Mayflower Society: The Silver Books As Your Guide

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Keeper of the Past Genealogy, LLC

The General Society of Mayflower Descendants (“GSMD”) is a lineage society founded in 1897. Membership requires proof of direct lineal descent from one of the passengers who traveled to America on the *Mayflower* in 1620. Located in Plymouth, Massachusetts, the GSMD headquarters sits on grounds overlooking Plymouth Harbor. The Mayflower Society maintains a lineage database that goes back to the 1620s and earlier. Its research is well respected and cited as proof for genealogy organizations the world over.

- General Society of Mayflower Descendants website:
<https://www.themayflowersociety.org>

The *Mayflower* set sail on September 6, 1620, with 102 “saints & strangers” from Plymouth, England. They landed at Provincetown, Massachusetts, on November 21, 1620. Twenty-six families have known descendants.

- The Pilgrims that sailed on the *Mayflower*: <https://www.themayflowersociety.org/the-pilgrims/the-pilgrims>
- NEHGS “Meet the Passengers”: <https://mayflower.americanancestors.org/passenger>
- FamilySearch: Mayflower Passenger List –
<https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/mayflower-passenger-list/>

What are the Silver Books?

The *Silver Books* are a collection of books published by the General Society of Mayflower Descendants. The project started in 1959 and was initially named the Five Generation Project. The goal of the project was to trace the five generations of each passenger. In 2013, it was renamed the Silver Books Project after the books’ signature silver color when the research went beyond five generations.

- The process of confirming lineage and applying to the GSMD often begins with reviewing the *Silver Books’* information.
- Each book starts with generation one, the *Mayflower* passenger(s), and documents the subsequent generations.
- “The work is based largely on carefully researched articles in genealogical journals and family histories, verified wherever possible by research in probate and land records, town and church vital records, and other primary sources.” *A Note to the Reader – GSMD Silver Books*

What information does a Silver Book contain?

- List of *Mayflower Families* Volumes
- History of the Silver Books Project
- Note to the reader
- About the author and editor
- Introduction
- Abbreviations Used in the Book
- Genealogy family sketches
- Appendix
- Bibliography
- Index of names

Purchasing *Silver Books*: <https://shop.themayflowersociety.org/shop/books-mayflower-families-silver-books/2>

Proving your line:

- Generation One is the *Mayflower* passenger.
- Generations 1-5 are in the Silver Books. Some of the books go beyond Generation 5.
- Prove your line with documentation from yourself to the Silver Books.
- Generations 6-9 can be tricky!
- Generations 10+ use more modern vital records (birth, marriage, death records).

Information on joining the GSMD: Mayflower Lineage Match Form:
<https://www.themayflowersociety.org/join/preliminary-review-form>

Resources:

- General Society of Mayflower Descendants Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/themayflowersociety>
- GSMD Membership Applications database, 1620-1920
<https://www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/2731/general-society-of-mayflower-descendants-membership-applications-1620-1920>
- *The Mayflower Quarterly* database:
<https://www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/2760/mayflower-quarterly-the>
- The Mayflower Descendant database:
<https://www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/407/mayflower-descendant-the>
- *Mayflower Families Fifth Generation Descendants*, 1700-1880 database:
<https://www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/2728/mayflower-families-fifth-generation-descendants-1700-1880>
- GSMD Mayflower DNA Project at Family Tree DNA
<https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/mayflowersociety/about>

FAMILY	MAYFLOWER PASSENGER(S)	MAYFLOWER CHILDREN WITH DESCENDANTS	MAYFLOWER CHILDREN W/O DESCENDANTS	LINK TO TREE ON NEHGS*
Alden & Mullins	John Alden & Pricilla Mullins	—	—	10 children Tree Part 1 Tree Part 2
Allerton	Isaac Allerton & Mary Norris	Mary & Remember	Bartholomew	Tree
Billington	John Billington & Elinor _____	Francis	—	Tree
Bradford	William Bradford			Tree
Brewster	William Brewster & Mary _____	Love	Wrestling	5 children Tree Part 1 Tree Part 2
Browne	Peter Brown	—	—	Tree
Chilton	James Chilton & Mrs. Chilton	Mary	—	Tree
Cooke	Francis Cooke	John		Tree
Doty	Edward Doty	—	—	Tree
Eaton	Francis Eaton & Sarah _____	Samuel	—	Tree
Fletcher	Moses Fletcher	—	—	Tree
Fuller, E.	Edward Fuller & Mrs. Fuller	Samuel	—	Tree
Fuller, S.	Samuel Fuller	—	—	Tree
Hopkins	Stephen Hopkins & Elizabeth Fisher	Constance, Giles	Damaris, Oceanus	Tree
Howland & Tilley	John Howland & Elizabeth Tilley	—	—	10 children Tree Part 1 Tree Part 2
More	Richard More	—	—	Tree
Mullins	William Mullins & Alice _____	Pricilla <i>(m. John Alden)</i>	Joseph	<i>See Alden</i>
Priest	Degory Priest	—	—	Tree
Rogers	Thomas Rogers	Joseph	—	Tree
Samson	Henry Samson	—	—	Tree
Soule	George Soule	—	—	Tree
Standish	Myles Standish	—	—	Tree
Tilley	John Tilley & Joan Hurst	Elizabeth <i>(m. John Howland)</i>		<i>See Howland</i>
Warren	Richard Warren	—	—	Tree
White	William White & Susanna Jackson	Resolved, Peregrine		Tree
Winslow	Edward Winslow	—	—	Tree

* Link from NEHGS with hyperlinks to family trees:

<https://www.americanancestors.org/search/databaserearch/2731/general-society-of-mayflower-descendants-membership-applications-1620-1920>

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