

## FRANCIS EATON OF THE *MAYFLOWER*

Among those on board the ship *Mayflower* when it finally arrived in New England in November, 1620 was Pilgrim Francis Eaton.

Francis was baptized in England on 11 September 1596. He married his first wife, Sarah (----), who died during the unidentified epidemic in Plymouth the first winter. He soon married a second wife, Dorothy (----), but she soon died without leaving a known child. Then he was married for a third time in Plymouth in 1624/25 to Christian Penn. William Bradford's observation on this family in his later years: "his first wife dyed in the general sickness, and he married againe, and his 2 wife dyed, and he married the 3 and had by her 3 children. One of them is married and hath a child; the other are living, but one of them is an ideote. He dyed about 16 years agoe. His son Samuell, who came over a sucking child, is also married, and hath a child."

Francis was a carpenter. He died in the autumn of 1633, possibly as the result of an epidemic that spread through the colony that year and also claimed the lives of fellow Mayflower passengers Peter Browne and Samuel Fuller. Prior to his death, due apparently to his shortage of finances, Eaton had sold off all his lands and house. At his death what was left of his estate was only his livestock, household goods and carpentry tools, the total of which only made up 1/3 of the value of his total debts. But Christina, his widow, apparently was not held liable for his debts by the Court which proclaimed that "... the widow be freed and acquitted from any claim or demand of all or any his creditors whatsoever."

Francis Eaton was buried on Burial Hill in Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Children of Francis and Sarah (----) Eaton:

1. Samuel

Children of Francis and Christian (Penn) Eaton:

2. Rachel
3. Benjamin
4. Child (name is unknown)

Which child of Pilgrim Francis Eaton  
is your Mayflower ancestor?

Robert Charles Anderson, *The Pilgrim Migration: Immigrants to Plymouth Colony 1620-1633*, (2004)

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Jeremy Dupertuis Bangs, *Strangers and Pilgrims, Travellers and Sojourners: Leiden and the Foundation of Plymouth Plantation*, (2009)

Nathaniel Philbrick, *Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War*, (2006)