

JOSEPH³ CARPENTER (*WILLIAM*²⁻¹) OF REHOBOTH
AND SWANSEA, MASSACHUSETTS

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JOSEPH³ CARPENTER (*William*² of Rehoboth, *William*¹) was baptized at Shalbourne, Berkshire, England, on 6 April 1634 and died at Swansea, Plymouth Colony, between 3 May 1675 (date of will [not 1676]) and 6 May 1675 (date of burial). He is said to have been buried near the “100-acre cove,” in that part of Swansea now Barrington, Rhode Island. Joseph married at Rehoboth, Plymouth Colony, on 25 November (not May) 1655, **MARGARET SUTTON**, who was baptized at Attleborough, Norfolk, England, on 30 November 1637 and died, probably at Swansea, between 21 March 1675[/6] and 4 October 1676 (not in 1700), daughter of John¹ and Julian/Judith (Adcocke) Sutton of Great Snoring and Attleborough, Norfolk; Great Saxham, Suffolk; Hingham, Massachusetts Bay Colony; and Rehoboth (TAG 70:194, 204; RVR 1:44; AttParReg 1:65v; MD 19:165; PCR 5:116; PCPR 3:2:33, 36, 37; SwVR A:147; NEHGR 15:26–27, 91:61–64; 143:299–300, 159:44–45, 167:7–14; 172:30–32; Carpenter [1898] 45 [burial place]; see also MARRIAGE and COMMENTS sections, below). [Sources are cited in full in KEY TO SOURCE NOTES, at the end of this sketch. The format below is patterned loosely after that used by Robert Charles Anderson in his *Great Migration* series.]

MARRIAGE: The month of Joseph and Margaret (Sutton) Carpenter’s marriage, which Amos B. Carpenter mistakenly gives as May, is November (Carpenter [1898] 45; RVR 1:44).

IMMIGRATION: Joseph was the youngest of four Carpenter children who accompanied their parents and paternal grandfather to Massachusetts on the *Bevis* in 1638 (see [William² of Rehoboth sketch](#), IMMIGRATION).

RESIDENCES: Shalbourne; Weymouth (probably 1638); Rehoboth (1644); and Swansea (by 22 February 1669/70). Amos Carpenter has Joseph removing to Swansea in 1661 or 1662, but the town was not established until fall of 1667, and Joseph was still living at Rehoboth on 2 April 1669 (Carpenter [1898] 45; PCR 4:169, 175; NEHGR 159:44, 45).

OCCUPATION: House-carpenter/joiner. Joseph’s estate inventory contains an extensive list of house-carpenter’s tools (PCPR 3:2:35–36; JC Inv [transcr]).

EDUCATION: He signed his will, and his estate inventory includes several Bibles and other books (PCPR 3:2:33–36; JC Inv [transcr]).

OFFICES: Rehoboth: coroner's jury, 1662. Swansea: way warden (surveyor [overseer] of highways), 1671; grand juror (Plymouth Colony Grand Enquest), 1673; appointed to preserve the town's timber and wood, 1673 (PCR 4:13, 5:58, 114; SwTM 9, 19, 20).

WILL/ESTATE: Joseph Carpenter's will, dated 3 May 1675 (three days before his burial), mentions sons Joseph (eldest), Benjamin, and John, "my five daughters" (names not given), "my beloved wife" (executrix), and his brothers William and Samuel Carpenter (overseers). (William and Samuel probably became guardians of the children.) The will also acknowledges the impending birth of another child: "if hee be a son; that now my wife is with child withall; hee shall have his p[or]t[i]o[n] . . ." (PCPR 3:2:33). The day after the will was written, Joseph's sixth surviving daughter, Margaret, was born (SwVR A:33). Only four daughters have been identified.

Joseph's estate (movable goods only), inventoried on 20 May 1675 and exhibited on 2 November 1676, was valued at £137 (not £437) 10s. 6d. (PCPR 3:2:33–36; JC Inv [transcr]; see also OCCUPATION and EDUCATION, above).

Widow Margaret's estate—the inventory was taken less than a year and a half after her husband's (see MARRIAGE, above)—amounted to £87 1s. 6d. While only £23 13s. remained after payment of debts, expenses for the children, etc., £38 8s. was nevertheless divided among eight children (a daughter had apparently died) on an unspecified date (probably in 1681 or 1682) (PCPR 3:2:37–38, 4:2:121 [see record dates at 4:2:120, 122]; MC Inv [transcr]).

CHILDREN: Numbers i–iv born at Rehoboth, viii–x at Swansea (RVR 1:10; SwVR A: 17, 33, 59).

- i. JOSEPH⁴ CARPENTER, b. 15 Aug. 1656, d. Swansea 26 Feb. 1717/8, aged 63 [*sic*]; m. Swansea 23 Feb. 1681[?/?], MARY _____, b. ca. 1659, d. Swansea 1 or 12 March 1718[9?] (not 1713), aged abt. 59; both bur. Kickemuit Cem., Swansea (that part now Warren, R.I.) (SwVR A:94, B:130/249; NEHGR 48:442, 70:25; RI Cems 69).
Corrections (to Carpenter [1898] 73–74, 122) concerning their son Joseph⁵, b. Swansea 20 June 1688: Rather than declaring marriage intentions at Bristol, Mass. (now in R.I.), on 16 February 1723, he married there (Rev. John Usher presiding) on 16 February 1723/4, Abigail Newton, daughter of Thomas² and Martha (_____) Newton of Bristol. Joseph⁵ did not die in Surinam on 4 February 1745 but drowned with three others in passage from Hog Island to Bristol on 21 December 1728, when their canoe "sunk under them." His widow, Abigail—not his sister of that name, who died at Swansea 1 February 1683 (not 1783)—married second, at Bristol on 29 (int. 16) February 1735/6, Obadiah Papill(i)on. Abigail Papillon, "widow, of Rehoboth," where she had moved between 1763 and 1769, was buried at Providence, R.I., 16 February 1776. Joseph⁵ and Abigail (Newton) Carpenter had two (not three) children: 1. *Sarah*⁶, b. Bristol 3 Feb. 1724/5, d. probably Bristol 24 Feb. 174[7/]8; 2. *Joseph*, b. Bristol _ Oct. 1726, d. Surinam (rec. Bristol) 4 (not 24) Feb. 1745, aged 19 (SwVR A:22, 137; RIVR 6:1[Bristol]:13, 121, 8:150, 202, 224, 10:152; RIRoots 41: 62, 66–67; NEHGR 124:177, 179; MQ 67:139).

- ii. BENJAMIN CARPENTER, b. 15 (not 19) Jan. 1657[8], d. Swansea 22? May 1727, aged 69, bur. Knockum Hill Cem., Barrington, R.I.; m. (1) prob. Dorchester, Mass., by 1680 (1st child b. 27 Jan. 1680[1?]), RENEW WEEKS, b. Dorchester 12 6th mo. [Aug.] 1660, d. Swansea 29 July 1703, aged 43, bur. Knockum Hill Cem., dau. of William and Elizabeth (_____ [not Atherton]) Weeks; m. (2) Swansea 27 Nov. 1706, MARTHA (BLISS) TOOGOOD (widow of Nathaniel), b. Rehoboth __ April 1663, d. there 22 March 1735, in 73rd yr., dau. of Jonathan and Rachel (Puffer) Bliss (wife not Miriam Harmon/Wilmarth) (RI Cems 68, 69; Stevens–Miller 46, 266–67, 273; DChR 194 [“Jotham ye son of Benjamen Carpenter ye mothers name was Renew ye daughter of William Weeks”]; DVR 7; SwVR B:81/173, 138/257; NEHGR 151:31–37, 159:361–62, 171:315–17; BrCoPR [abstr] 1:240; RVR 1:5).
- For major corrections of the secondary literature pertaining to Benjamin’s son John and his family, see NEHGR 159:49–53.
- iii. ABIGAIL CARPENTER, b. 15 March 1659[60?], d. perhaps Swansea, 1 Feb. 1683[4?] (SwVR A:137). The death record gives Abigail’s parents as Joseph Jr. and Mary Carpenter (no. i, above), but their first recorded child is Mary, born 27 Dec. 1683 (SwVR A:35). If the Abigail who died in 1683[4?] had been born to that couple (eight children are recorded for them at Swansea between 1683 and 1704), the logical explanation of the failure to record her birth is that she died at that time or so soon thereafter that only her death was recorded. This, however, probably conflicts with the birth date (late 1683) of the couple’s aforementioned daughter Mary: the date 1 Feb. 1683 probably represents Old Style dating (year beginning 25 March), which puts it only slightly more than one month after Mary’s birth. (To allay any possible confusion, the Abigail Carpenter who married Jonah Palmer Jr. in 1692 was William² and Abigail (Briant) Carpenter’s dau. Abigail (Carpenter) Titus [see [Abigail³ sketch](#), first par.])
- iv. ESTHER CARPENTER, b. 10 (not 6) March 1661[2?], d. Norton, Mass., 20 Dec. 1730; m. Swansea 19 March 1687, SAMUEL BRETNALL/BRINTNELL, b. Boston 2 Dec. 1665, d. Norton between 19 Nov. 1735 (will, in 70th yr.) and 16 Dec. 1735 (est. inv.), son of Thomas and Esther (_____) Brentnall of Boston, Norton, and Taunton, Mass. Samuel m. (2) Wrentham, Mass. (also rec. Norton) 23 May 1734, Elizabeth (Candage) Blake (widow of Jonathan²) (NoVR 202, 360; SwVR A:123; BVR 95, 250; BrCoPR [abstr] 1:246; BrCoPR 1:225; Norton Hist 78; Blake Gen 35; WrVR 2:260).
- v. DAUGHTER, b. between 1662 and 1671; place in birth order uncertain. The Martha Carpenter who was born ca. 1663 and died at Swansea 22 March 1735, in her 73rd yr., is often said to have been Joseph and Margaret’s daughter (see, for example, Carpenter [1898] 58; Stevens–Miller 266). She was in fact their daughter-in-law Martha (Bliss) (Toogood) Carpenter, 2nd wife of their son Benjamin (no. ii, above) (NEHGR 159:361–62; see also WILL/ESTATE, above). Her proper identification eliminates the sole basis for the assertion that Joseph and Margaret had a daughter Martha.
- vi. JOHN CARPENTER, b. ca. 1667, prob. Rehoboth (father still res. there 2 April 1669), d. East Greenwich, R.I., 25 Aug. 1753, in 87th yr.; m. (1?) by 1705, _____ GRINNELL, d. before 1721, dau. of Matthew² Grinnell; m. (2?) by 1721 ELIZABETH _____; m. (3?) after 1726 ABIGAIL _____, living 12 Sept. 1753. Amos Carpenter mistakenly presents John and his sister Hannah (no. viii, below) as twins, born on 21 Jan. [*sic*] 1671/2. John’s birth is not recorded, however, and his age at death makes him about five years her senior (NEHGR 159:43–47 [also includes vital-event data about John’s children—Martha, Mary, Sarah, Diadema, Prudence, Cornel, Dinah, and Joseph—seven of whom Amos Carpenter mistakenly attributes (as he does two of John’s wives) to another John Carpenter, son of Oliver⁴ Carpenter (*Abiah*³) of Warwick and North Kingstown, R.I. (see Carpenter [1898] 75, 128–29)]; EGPR 2:67–73, at 67; see also Carpenter [1898] 58).
- vii. DAUGHTER, b. between 1662 and 1671; place in birth order uncertain (see WILL/ESTATE, above).

- viii. HANNAH CARPENTER, b. 21 1st mo. [March] 1671 [uncertain if 1670/1 or 1671/2], d. probably Norton, after 29 June 1757 (named in husband's will); m. probably Swansea, by 1695 (1st child b. 30 May 1695), THOMAS SKINNER, b. Malden, Mass., 3? Nov. 1668, d. Norton between 29 June 1757 (will, in 89th yr.) and 19 May 1758 (probate), son of Thomas and Mary (Pratt) Skinner (BrCoPR [abstr] 2:219; WrVR 1:189; MalVR 79; Skinner Kinsmen 8, 14–18; Ackley–Bosworth 277–78, 280; NEHGR 53:401–2; Norton Hist 88–89).

In the absence of documentary evidence that Thomas Skinner's wife, Hannah, was by birth a Carpenter, let alone this Hannah Carpenter, strong circumstantial evidence makes the case. Six children—Thomas, Solomon, Joseph, Hannah, Esther, and Mary—were born to Thomas and Hannah Skinner at Wrentham between 1695 and 1706; his will mentions all but Mary and adds Benjamin and Samuel (WrVR 1:189; Skinner Kinsmen 15–17; BrCoPR [abstr] 2:219). Four of these names—Solomon, Joseph, Esther, and Benjamin—are also those of siblings (and, in one instance, also the father) of the subject Hannah Carpenter (see nos. i, ii, iv, above; ix, below). A fifth, Samuel, is also the name of her sister Esther's husband, Samuel Brentnall/Brintnell (see no. iv, above). They, like Thomas and Hannah Skinner, settled in a part of Norton that is now Mansfield (Norton Hist 78, 89). Thomas Skinner's will describes his daughter Esther as the widow of Ebenezer Brintnall; they had married at Norton in 1728 (Skinner Kinsmen 16; BrCoPR [abstr] 2:219; NoVR 202). Ebenezer, who died at Norton about 1748, was the son of Samuel and Esther (Carpenter) Brentnall (BrCoPR [abstr] 1:246, 2:35; WrVR 1:36).

- ix. SOLOMON CARPENTER, b. 27 April 1673, d. Swansea 25 Oct. 1674 (PCR 8:51).
x. MARGARET CARPENTER (probably posthumous), b. 4 May 1675, d. Rehoboth 6 May 1751; m. probably Swansea (rec. Rehoboth), 4 June (not Jan.) 1695, THOMAS CHAFFEE, b. Swansea 19 Oct. 1672, d. Rehoboth 21 Feb. 1754, son of Nathaniel and Experience (Bliss) Chaffee (RVR 1:163 [not 95], 2:258, 3:358; SwVR A:63, 107).

COMMENTS: Joseph Carpenter was one of seven founding members of the Swansea Baptist Church. Formed at Rehoboth in the fall of 1666 (not in 1663), it was relocated to neighboring Swansea about a year later, when the latter town was established (NEHGR 139:23–24; Rehoboth Hist 63).

Widow Margaret Carpenter submitted her husband Joseph's estate inventory to the court on 21 March 1675/[6] (PCPR 3:2:36). In that her own inventory was taken on 4 October 1676, she died between those dates (see PCPR 3:2:37). The Old Rehoboth (Newman) Cemetery gravestone whose inscription Amos Carpenter presents as "M. C. D. Y. 1700 A. G. 65" and attributes to Margaret belongs to Mary (Kingsbury) Cooper, born at Dedham, Massachusetts, 1 September 1637, and died at Rehoboth, 18 September 1700, wife of Thomas² Cooper (NEHGR 159:45n13; RI Cems 63; Carpenter [1898] 45). This misidentification, caused Amos Carpenter to give Margaret's gravesite as the "East Providence burial ground," that is, the Old Rehoboth (Newman) Cemetery (Carpenter [1898] 45). Having died so soon after her husband, however, she was almost certainly buried next to him, in present-day Barrington (see par. 1, above).

For details of Margaret (Sutton) Carpenter's family of origin and the identities of all four of her grandparents, see Zubrinsky, "Julian Adcocke, Wife of John¹ Sutton of Hingham and Rehoboth, Massachusetts, and Their Family," NEHGR 167(2013):7–14; idem, "The

English Origin of John¹ Sutton of Hingham and Rehoboth, Massachusetts,” NEHGR 172 (2018):30–32.

KEY TO SOURCE NOTES:

- Ackley–Bosworth Nathan Grier Parke II, *The Ancestry of Lorenzo Ackley & His Wife Emma Arabella Bosworth*, ed. Donald Lines Jacobus (Woodstock, Vt., 1960); digital images online at www.ancestry.com
- AttParReg Parish Registers of Attleborough, Norfolk; digital images online at www.familysearch.org (*England, Norfolk Parish Registers, 1538–1900 > Attleborough > Baptisms, Marriages, Burials > 1552–1652*)
- Blake Gen Francis E. Blake, *Increase Blake of Boston, His Ancestors and Descendants, with a Full Account of William Blake of Dorchester and His Five Children* (Boston, 1898)
- BrCoPR Bristol County, Massachusetts, Probate Records, vols. 1–4 [Family History Library (FHL), Salt Lake City, film #461,882]
- BrCoPR [abstr] H. L. Peter Rounds, *Abstracts of Bristol County, Massachusetts, Probate Records*, 2 vols. (Baltimore, 1988)
- BVR *Boston Births, Baptisms, Marriages, and Deaths, 1630–1699*, Ninth Report of the Boston Record Commissioners (Boston, 1883; repr. Baltimore, 1978)
- Carpenter [1898] Amos B. Carpenter, *A Genealogical History of the Rehoboth Branch of the Carpenter Family in America* [informal title: *Carpenter Memorial*] (Amherst, Mass., 1898)
- DChR *Records of the First Church at Dorchester in New England, 1636–1734* (Boston, 1891) [FHL film #856,696]
- DVR *Dorchester Births, Marriages, and Deaths to the End of 1825*, Twenty-first Report of the Boston Record Commissioners (Boston, 1890)
- EGPR East Greenwich, Rhode Island, Probate Records [FHL film #926,804, item 3]

IGI	International Genealogical Index, online at www.familysearch.org
JC Inv [transcr]	Joseph Carpenter estate inventory (transcription), online at www.histarch.uiuc.edu/plymouth/P239.htm , a Plymouth Colony Archive Project webpage (contains errors [as of 8/25/11])
MC Inv [transcr]	Margaret Carpenter estate inventory (transcription), online at www.histarch.uiuc.edu/plymouth/P278.htm , a Plymouth Colony Archive Project webpage (contains errors [as of 8/25/11])
MD	<i>Mayflower Descendant</i> , vol. 1 through present (1899–1937, 1985–)
MQ	<i>Mayflower Quarterly</i> , vol. 1 (1935) through present
MalVR	Deloraine Pendre Corey, <i>Births, Marriages and Deaths in the Town of Malden, Massachusetts, 1649–1850</i> (Cambridge, Mass., 1903)
NEHGR	<i>New England Historical and Genealogical Register</i> , vol. 1 (1847) through present
Norton Hist	George Faber Clark, <i>A History of the Town of Norton, Bristol County, Massachusetts, from 1669 to 1859</i> (Boston, 1859); digital images online at http://books.google.com
NoVR	<i>Vital Records of Norton, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850</i> , 2 vols. (Boston, 1906)
PCPR	Plymouth Colony Probate Records [Wills and Inventories, 1633–1686], vols. 1–4 [FHL film #567,794]
PCR	<i>Records of the Colony of New Plymouth in New England</i> , ed. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff and David Pulsifer, 12 vols. in 10 (Boston, 1855–1861)
Rehoboth Hist	Leonard Bliss Jr., <i>The History of Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts</i> (Boston, 1836)

RI Cems	Rhode Island Historical Cemeteries Transcription Project Master Index, online at <i>www.rootsweb.com/~rigen web/cemetery</i>
RIRoots	<i>Rhode Island Roots</i> , vol. 1 (1975) through present
RIVR	James N. Arnold, <i>Vital Record of Rhode Island, 1636–1850</i> , 21 vols. (Providence, 1891–1912)
RVR	Rehoboth, Massachusetts, Vital Records, vol. 1 [FHL film #562,559 (personal copy; no longer cataloged), item 3], vols. 2–3 [FHL #562,558 (old loan copy; no longer cataloged), items 5–6]; citations of vol. 1 in text, above, include any necessary corrections to page numbers cited in James N. Arnold, <i>Vital Record of Rehoboth, 1642–1896</i> (Providence, 1897)
Skinner Kinsmen	Natalie R. Fernald, <i>The Skinner Kinsmen: Descendants of Thomas Skinner of Malden, Massachusetts</i> (Washington, D.C., 1939); digital images online at <i>www.ancestry.com</i>
Stevens–Miller	Mary Lovering Holman, <i>Ancestry of Colonel John Harrington Stevens and His Wife Frances Helen Miller</i> (Concord, N.H., 1948)
SwTM	Swansea, Massachusetts, Town Meetings, 1670–1718 [FHL film #903,396, item 5]
SwVR	Swansea, Massachusetts, Vital Records [FHL film #903,395, items 5, 7]
TAG	<i>American Genealogist</i> , vol. 9 (1932) through present
WrVR	<i>Vital Records of Wrentham, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850</i> , 2 vols. (Boston, 1910)

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