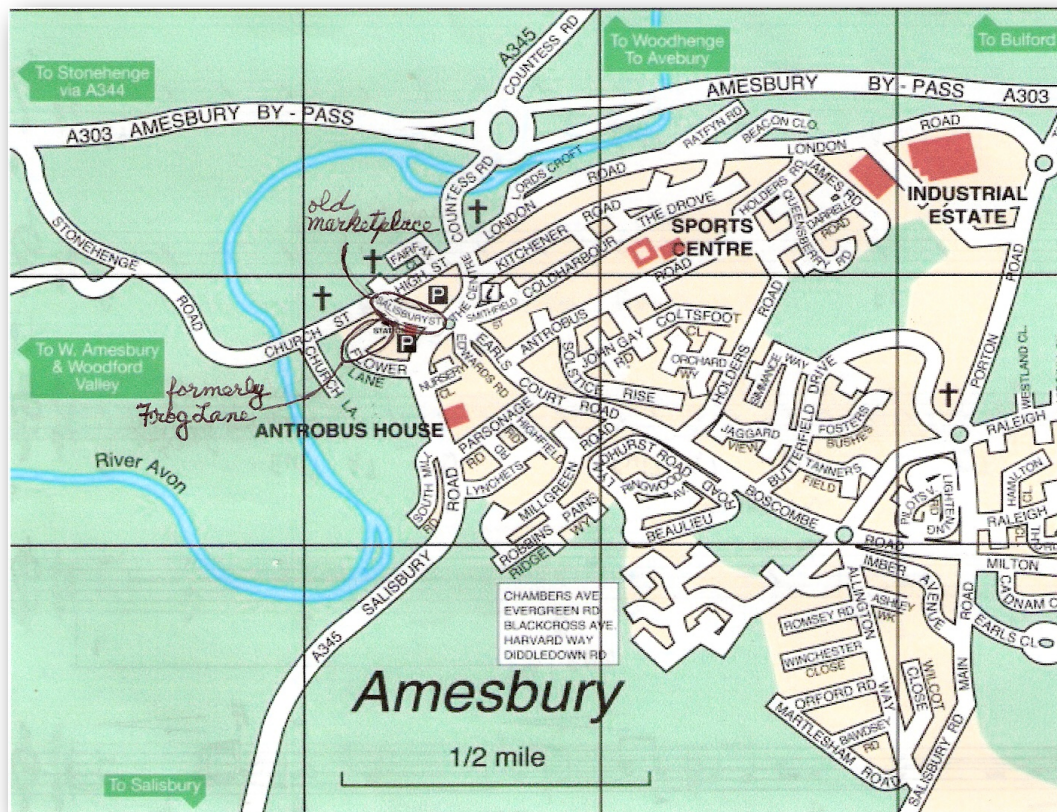




TOWN OF AMESBURY (far right), with Stonehenge 3 miles to the west (from *Andrews and Dury's Map of Wiltshire, 1773*, online at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getcom.php?id=7)



AMESBURY, with FORMER LOCATIONS OF FROG LANE AND MEDIEVAL MARKETPLACE (Amesbury Hist 23, 33, 86, 87; map online at www.this-is-amesbury.co.uk/enter.html → Street Map)



ST. MARY AND ST. MELOR CHURCH, Amesbury, where Richard Carpenter, probable father of William¹ of Providence, was buried in 1625 (online at www.this-is-amesbury.co.uk/enter.html → Churches; see also www.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getchurch.php?id=583; www.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getprinted.php?id=1083)



STONEHENGE, to which Amesbury is the nearest town

RICHARD^A CARPENTER OF AMESBURY, WILTSHIRE

Eugene Cole Zubrinsky, FASG

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RICHARD^A CARPENTER, father of William¹ Carpenter of Providence, Rhode Island, was born in England, probably in or near the Wiltshire town and parish of Amesbury or the adjacent parish of Newton Ton(e)y (not in Nettlecombe, Somerset). Probably the man of that name buried at Amesbury on 21 September 1625, he died intestate. It is possible but not confirmed that he was the Richard Carpenter who married at Newton Tony on 7 August 1603, Alice Knight (AmParReg 1:n.p.; NTParReg n.p.; see also MARRIAGE, OCCUPATION, 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.]

BIRTH: A Richard Carpenter, son of Thomas, was baptized in the parish church of St. Thomas the Martyr in the city of Salisbury on 17 December 1580 (ChrRecs). No known records connect father or son to seven-miles-distant Amesbury, however. Since, as above, it is not certain that the subject married in 1603 (see also MARRIAGE, below), there is nothing substantive on which to base a useful estimate of his birth year.

MARRIAGE: At Newton Tony on 7 August 1603, a Richard Carpenter married Alice Knight; another man so named married Ann Kent there on 31 October 1603 (NTParReg n.p.). The latter died at Newton Tony in 1614, leaving four children, none of whose names correspond to the known children of Richard of Amesbury (ibid.; ACS 8:226–27; see also CHILDREN and COMMENTS, below). The only Newton Tony record surely of the former man is that of his marriage to Alice Knight. (There is no support for the claim that this Alice Knight was the one baptized at South Bersted, Sussex, on 8 October 1583, daughter of Thomas and Katherine (_____) Knight [see CECD 2001; IGI extraction, citing SBParReg].)

Among the many legatees named in the 1598[/9] will of an apparently childless Robert Carpenter of Newton Tony is Richard Carpenter of “Aymsbury” (relationship not stated) (PCC 93 Kidd fol. 47). The latter is perhaps the man who married Alice Knight four years later, but evidence of this or of the couple’s being the parents of William¹ Carpenter of Providence is not found.

“[H]oping to assist further research,” Elisha Arnold (1935) introduces the 1606 marriage of Richard Carpenter and Susanna Trevelian, recorded at Nettlecombe, Somerset (seventy

plus miles from Amesbury), as “seem[ing] to connect in some way with a John and Richard at Salisbury, 7 miles from Amesbury” (Arnold Mem 35). So as to put the eventual William¹ and Elizabeth (Arnold) Carpenter of Providence in close proximity in England (she was from Ilchester, Somerset), overzealous researchers have converted this item into the assertions, now frequently seen online, that Richard and Susanna (Trevelian) Carpenter were Providence William’s parents and that Richard died at Ilchester in 1625. Trevelian’s husband, however, died at Loxhore, Devon, in 1627 and left neither a son William nor a daughter Frideswide, the only known children of Richard^A Carpenter of Amesbury (see OCCUPATION, ESTATE, and CHILDREN, below).

RESIDENCE: Amesbury (town and parish), probably by 4 January 1598[/9] (see PCC 93 Kidd fol. 47; AmParReg 1:n.p.; PrTR 5:323–25; MARRIAGE, above; COMMENTS, below).

The house and adjoining property that Richard’s son, the eventual William¹ of Providence, inherited from his father was on Frog Lane (now part of Flower Lane), which ran from the River Avon to the marketplace (PrTR 5:323–25; Amesbury Hist 23, 33, 86, 87; see also modern map of Amesbury, above).

Amesbury had a “Carpenter Street (perhaps named after an individual called Carpenter rather than implying a street of carpenters) . . . as early as 1321” (Amesbury Hist 23).

OCCUPATION: By the fourteenth century, Amesbury was seventh in both size and prosperity among Wiltshire towns (Amesbury Hist 24). “Most important of all to Amesbury’s prosperity was that it possessed a weekly market [and held annual fairs]. . . . This trading function . . . enabled specialist skills and crafts to develop in the town. According to the Antrobus Deeds, a carpenter, baker, washerwoman, fleshmonger, merchant, draper, cobbler, tailor, leatherworker, and chandler all existed in medieval or Tudor Amesbury” (Amesbury Hist 22). A resident freeholder of the town, Richard was probably a tradesman, perhaps a carpenter like his son.

Daniel Hoogland Carpenter, convinced that Richard was a dissenting clergyman, relates that he was rector at Sherwell (in rural Devon); spent five years in France; upon his return became vicar of Poling, a Sussex parish; and was in 1670 living at Amesbury (see Carpenter [1901] 351). His account, however, merges (and mangles) the biographies of two clergymen named Richard Carpenter, neither of whom is the subject of this sketch. One entered Exeter College, Oxford, in 1592; became rector of Sherwell (now Shirwell) in 1605 and of adjacent Loxhore in 1611; married Susan Trevelyan of Nettlecombe, Somerset, in 1606; received a Doctor of Divinity degree in 1616/7; and died at Loxhore in 1627, aged 52 (DNB 1072; Exeter Reg1 86–87, 370; Exeter Reg2 26–27;). His will mentions several children but none named William or Frideswide (Somerset Will Abstr 2:109–10). The other entered Kings College, Cambridge, in 1622 (making him only a few years older than the subject’s son, William¹ of Providence); twice lived in Europe for a few years; was vicar of Poling from 1635 to about 1642; married in middle age; and finally

settled not in Amesbury but Aylesbury, in Buckinghamshire, where he died about 1670 (DNB 1073; DPP 542–43).

ESTATE: Lacking an inventory of Richard’s estate, we have only the 1671 deed from his son, William, to the latter’s sister, Frideswide, indicating that their father had died in possession of a “dwelling house with . . . Land . . . adjoyneing to the sayd house” on Frog Lane in Amesbury (see PrTR 5:323–25; RESIDENCE, above; COMMENTS, below).

CHILDREN: Both born probably at Amesbury; birth order uncertain.

- i. WILLIAM¹ CARPENTER, b. say 1610, d. Pawtuxet (Providence), Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 7 Sept. 1685; m. ca. 1637, probably Providence (not by 1635, in England), ELIZABETH ARNOLD, b. Ilchester, Somerset (not Cheselbourne, Dorset), England, 23 November 1611, d. after 10 February 1679/80 (date of husband’s will), dau. of William¹ and Christian (Peak) Arnold (PrTR 5:323–25, 6:141, 150, 17:62–63; NEHGR 33:428, 69:66–68, 159:67–68; Austin 36). For additional information about William and his family, see [his sketch](#).
- ii. FRIDESWIDE [pron. Friddusweed] CARPENTER (forename, from Old English *Fritheswith*, found in Amesbury and Providence records as Frittisweed, Fridizweed, Fridgesweet[e], and Fridgswett—never Fridgswith, as per Carpenter [1901] and others), bur. Amesbury 22 Nov. 1680; m. before 16 Sept. 1632 (dau. Joan baptized at Amesbury), NICHOLAS VINCENT, bur. Amesbury 17 July 1671 (AmParReg 1:n.p., 2:n.p.; PrTR 5:323–24; Carpenter [1901] 321 mistakenly gives Nicholas’s forename as Thomas).
Frideswide’s daughter, Joan, married at Providence on or about 26 March 1660, John Sheldon (PrTR 4:112–13, 5:49, 299–300; RIVR 2:1[Providence]:167, 190; Austin 176–77; Sheldon Gen 1). Joan’s brother William (bp. Amesbury, 17 June 1638), married at Providence, 31 May 1670, as his first wife, his cousin Priscilla Carpenter, daughter of his mother’s brother, William¹ of Providence (AmParReg 1:n.p.; PrTR 1:82–83, 5:294, 21:86; RIVR 2:1[Providence]:37).

Richard Carpenter may have fathered additional children, but evidence of it has not been found. Extant Amesbury parish records contain no entries pertaining to the baptisms of Richard’s children, nor do the more complete Newton Tony records. There is no support for the occasional claim that Dorothy Carpenter—married at Salisbury, Wiltshire, on 13 July 1618 to Stephen Rose—was Richard’s daughter (see CECD 2001; PR File).

COMMENTS: No will is found for Richard Carpenter. That he died intestate is confirmed by a deed of 4 December 1671 by which William¹ Carpenter of Pawtuxet (Providence), Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, gives to his sister, “Fridgesweete” Vincent of the town and parish of Amesbury, “my dwelling house” and adjoining land there that “did in y^e originall belonge unto my ffather Richard Carpenter (now deceased) but fell to be my Right as I was son and Heire unto my aforesaid ffather Richard Carpenter” (PrTR 5:323–25). The last-quoted passage makes it clear that the property had not been explicitly bequeathed to William but devolved to him according to law. This

deed, incidentally, is the sole source of our knowledge of the Amesbury origin of William¹ Carpenter of Providence and the identity of his father and sister.

The will of Robert Carpenter of Marden, Wiltshire, dated 12 January 1606[/7?] and proved 21 May 1607, names (among others) adult sons William and Richard (PCC 109 Huddleston fol. 42). It has been claimed that these brothers were William¹ Carpenter [of Shalbourne, Wiltshire], father of William² of Rehoboth, Massachusetts, and Richard^A Carpenter of Amesbury, father of William¹ of Providence (see, for example, News-Journal 1:3: n.p.; CECD 2001). While it is not impossible that William¹ of Shalbourne was the son of Robert of Marden, evidence of it has not been found. And with Robert's son Richard the implied recipient of his father's Marden real estate, his being the Amesbury man is extremely doubtful. (Robert makes specific bequests of money, animals, and barley; "All the reste of my goods moveable and unmoveable unbequeathed I geve to my welbeloved wife Elinor Carpenter and my sonne Richard.") The apparent family connection between Robert Carpenter of Newton Tony and his legatee Richard Carpenter, of Amesbury by 1598[/9], tends to diminish further the likelihood that Richard^A of Amesbury was the son of Robert Carpenter of Marden (see MARRIAGE, RESIDENCE sections, above). Genetic testing of agnate descendants of William of Shalbourne and Richard of Amesbury has established with a high degree of probability that the two were in fact related, but far more remotely than generally believed. For more-detailed discussions of these matters, see NEHGR 159(2005):64–66, 67n63; [William¹ of Providence sketch](#), COMMENTS section.

In CECD 2001, compiler John R. Carpenter presents an extensive ancestry for Richard^A Carpenter of Amesbury and William¹ Carpenter of Shalbourne, beginning with the aforementioned Robert Carpenter of Marden and his widow, Elinor, as the parents of both. Most of this ancestry—back from Rev. Richard Carpenter of Herefordshire and Wiltshire (d. 1503)—has been proven invalid (NEHGR 159:65n53–66n53[contd.]); as above, the remainder is unsubstantiated and, particularly for the Amesbury man, dubious. Earlier versions of this ancestry, which differ from it for the first few generations (beginning with parents), are even more improbable than the CECD 2001 version (see, for example, Carpenter [1898] 1, 34). *The ancestry of Richard^A Carpenter of Amesbury, including his parentage, is unknown (as is that of William¹ of Shalbourne).*

Amos B. Carpenter, the first to assert that Richard^A Carpenter and William¹ [of Shalbourne] were brothers, further claims that Alexander^A Carpenter of Wrington, Somerset, and Leiden, Netherlands, was another brother (see Carpenter [1898] 34). There is absolutely no support for this.

At the turn of the seventeenth century, Amesbury's neighboring parish of Newton Tony was home to several related Carpenter families; among them, identified in parish and probate records dated between 1590[/1] and 1612, were six Richard Carpenters. The eldest of these was the father, grandfather, or great-grandfather of the others (see [chart](#), upper

left). Among the many legatees named in his will, dated 12 March 1590[1] and proved 15 January 1591[2], are the children of his son William: *RICHARD* (as his name appears near center of [chart](#)), Matthew, Alice, and [illegible] (ACS box 16C). When we account for factors of age, children's names, and date and place of death, William's son is the only one of the six Richards not disqualified from consideration as the Amesbury man.

The grandchildren named in the will of the elder Richard Carpenter of Newton Tony, including his son William's four children and his son Richard's five, had of course been born by the date of the will, in 1590/1. The will lists the testator's daughter, Elizabeth, after her brothers Richard and William and before John, Robert, and Stephen. It is therefore likely that, with the probable exception of Stephen (residual beneficiary and executor), they are named in the order of their birth (rather than chronologically by sex, males first, as was often the case), and that William's four children are listed in the same fashion. It follows that Richard, by virtue of being the first-named of William's children, was the eldest, born probably by the early to mid 1580s. An obvious point of interest is that Richard's father's name, William, is also the name of the "son and Heire" of Richard of Amesbury (see par. 1, this section). Also, the 1598/9 will of Robert Carpenter of Newton Tony names Richard Carpenter of Amesbury immediately after Stephen Carpenter's son Robert (see MARRIAGE, above, and [chart](#)). The latter and William's son Richard were first cousins (testator Robert was their grand uncle).

Though suggestive, the foregoing facts are insufficient to establish that this Richard Carpenter (son of William, grandson of Richard of Newton Tony [d. 1591]) was the Amesbury man, that he fathered William¹ of Providence, and/or married Alice Knight in 1603 (see MARRIAGE, above). We cannot discount the possibility, for example, that it was this Richard's same-named uncle who, after the death of a previous wife, married Alice Knight (whose age and marital history are unknown). Or perhaps neither Alice Knight's husband nor Richard of Amesbury (whether or not they are the same person) appears on the chart. Though it might prove useful, a search of the wills of Knights living in or near Newton Tony has not been undertaken by this writer.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: "Thumbnail History [of Amesbury]," online at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getcom.php?id=7 (below map links); John H. Chandler and Peter S. Goodhugh, *Amesbury: History and Description of a South Wiltshire Town* (Amesbury, 1979); Hugh Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud: 1573–1645* (London, 1940; repr. 2000 [paperback]); Keith Wrightson and David Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525–1700*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, England, 1995 [paperback]).

KEY TO SOURCE NOTES:

ACS

Archdeaconry Court of Sarum, Registered Wills, vols. 8–9
[Family History Library (FHL), Salt Lake City, film
#994,489]; Original Wills, boxes 16C–17C [FHL film

#97,436]; digital images of ACS 8:226–27, 9:59B available online as P2/8Reg/226, P2/9Reg/59B at <http://history.wiltshire.gov.uk/heritage/>

Amesbury Hist	John H. Chandler and Peter S. Goodhugh, <i>Amesbury: History and Description of a South Wiltshire Town</i> (Amesbury, 1979)
AmParReg	Parish Registers of Amesbury, Wiltshire [FHL film #1,279, 337, items 25–26]
Arnold Mem	Elisha Stephen Arnold, <i>The Arnold Memorial: William Arnold of Providence and Pawtuxet, 1587–1675, and a Genealogy of His Descendants</i> (Rutland, Vt., 1935)
Austin	John Osborne Austin, <i>The Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island</i> , rev. ed. (Baltimore, 1969)
Carpenter [1898]	Amos B. Carpenter, <i>A Genealogical History of the Rehoboth Branch of the Carpenter Family in America</i> [informal title: <i>Carpenter Memorial</i>] (Amherst, Mass., 1898)
Carpenter [1901]	Daniel Hoogland Carpenter, <i>History and Genealogy of the Carpenter Family in America, from the Settlement at Providence, R.I., 1637–1901</i> (Jamaica, N.Y., 1901)
CECD 2001	John R. Carpenter, ed., <i>Carpenters' Encyclopedia of Carpenters 2001</i> , CD-ROM (La Mesa, Calif., 2001)
ChrRecs	<i>England & Wales Christening Records, 1530–1906</i> , online database at www.search.ancestry.co.uk
DNB	Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, eds., <i>Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to 1900</i> , vol. 3 (New York and London, 1908); digital images online at http://books.google.com
DPP	Charles Henry Timperley, <i>A Dictionary of Printers and Printing, with the Progress of Literature, Ancient and Modern . . .</i> (London, 1839); digital images online at http://books.google.com

Exeter Reg1	Charles William Boase, ed., <i>Registrum Collegii Exoniensis: Register of . . . Exeter College, Oxford</i> (Oxford, 1894); digital images online at http://books.google.com
Exeter Reg2	<i>Exeter College Association, Register 2005</i> ; digital images online at https://secure.dynamicupdate.co.uk/exeter/design/pdfs/Exeter_Register_2005.pdf
IGI	International Genealogical Index, online at www.familysearch.org
NEHGR	<i>The New England Historical and Genealogical Register</i> , vol. 1 (1847) through present
News-Journal	<i>The Carpenter Family News-Journal</i> , vols. 1–5 (1971–1976) [FHL microfiches #6,047,153]
NTParReg	Parish Register of Newton Tony, Wiltshire [FHL film #1,279, 336, item 13]
PCC	Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Registered Wills, vols. 93 Kidd [FHL film #92,005], 109 Huddleston [FHL film #92,029]; digital image of Robert Carpenter will transcription online at http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/c/a/r/John-R-Carpenter/PHOTO/0014photo.html
PR File	Pedigree Resource File, online at www.familysearch.org
PrTR	<i>The Early Records of the Town of Providence</i> , 21 vols. (Providence, 1892–1915); digital images online at http://books.google.com and www.ancestry.com
RIVR	James N. Arnold, <i>Vital Record of Rhode Island, 1636–1850</i> , 21 vols. (Providence, 1891–1912); digital images online at www.ancestry.com
SBParReg	Parish Register of South Bersted, Sussex
Sheldon Gen	Helen W. Brown, <i>Some Descendants of John Sheldon of Rhode Island</i> (College Park, Md., 1964); digital images online at www.ancestry.com
Somerset Will Abstr	<i>Abstracts of Somersetshire Wills, etc., Copied from the Manuscript Collections of the Late Rev. Frederick</i>

Brown, transcr. Frederick Arthur Crisp, 6 vols. (London, 1887–1890); digital images of vol. 2 (1888) online at <http://books.google.com>

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Gene Zubrinsky (GeneZub@aol.com) has contributed many articles, including four Carpenter pieces, to the leading genealogical journals and local-history magazines.