



WILLIAM<sup>1</sup> CARPENTER OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND  
(JAMES, 1635)

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**WILLIAM<sup>1</sup> CARPENTER** (*Richard<sup>A</sup>*) was born in England, probably at Amesbury, Wiltshire (not Nettlecombe, Somerset), say 1610 and died at Providence (Pawtuxet section, now in Cranston), Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, on 7 September 1685. He married about 1637, probably at Providence (not by 1635, in England), **ELIZABETH ARNOLD**, born at Ilchester, Somerset (not Cheselbourne, Dorset), England, on 23 November 1611 and died after 10 February 1679/80 (date of husband's will) (ca. 1683?), daughter of William<sup>1</sup> and Christian (Peak) Arnold. William and Elizabeth were almost certainly buried on their homestead, in present-day Cranston (PrTR 5:323–25, 6:141, 150, 17:62–63; NEHGR 33:428, 69:66–68, 159:67–68; Austin 36; Arnold Mem 35, 52; see also BIRTH, MARRIAGE, IMMIGRATION, RESIDENCES, 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:** In 1671, William Carpenter of Pawtuxet, in the township of Providence, gave to his sister [and only known sibling], “Fridgsweete” (Carpenter) Vincent of the English town and parish of Amesbury, “my dwelling house” and adjoining land there, both inherited from his father, Richard Carpenter (PrTR 5:323–25). In 1598[/9], Robert Carpenter of the adjacent parish of Newton Toney named Richard Carpenter of “Aymsbury” among his legatees; a Richard Carpenter, presumably the same man and William's father, was buried at the latter place in 1625 (PCC 93 Kidd fol. 47; AmParReg.1:n.p.). It is therefore probable that William was born at Amesbury.

William's birth year is roughly estimated above as “say 1610.” *Say* is based on less-precise data than *about/circa*, and in this case we have nothing better from which to infer William's birth date than that of his wife, in late 1611. *No record of the birth or baptism of William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter of Providence has been found. Any specific date for either event appearing in the secondary literature (e.g., 23 May 1611) is either an invention or the result of confusion and should be ignored.*

**MARRIAGE:** For evidence that William Carpenter arrived in New England a single man and married about 1637 at Providence—not by 1635, in England—see IMMIGRATION, below.

William's will instructs sons Silas and Benjamin to "take y<sup>e</sup> whole & sole Care of Elizabeth my loveing wife their mother" (PrTR 6:144). That Elizabeth was an Arnold by birth is evident from another passage in the will referring to "my brother Stephen Arnold" (PrTR 6:141). Other records—a deed from William's son Joseph to "my uncle Stephen Arnold," for example—further confirm Elizabeth's identity (RILE 50).

**IMMIGRATION:** Elizabeth Arnold's brother Benedict, continuing the family record begun by their father, relates that "My father and his family . . . arrived in New England June 24 Anno 1635" (NEHGR 33:428). Daniel Hoogland Carpenter disputes the year, contending that it was actually 1636 (see Carpenter [1901] 9n). It will become apparent below, however, that 1635 is correct. Author Carpenter acknowledges that "[t]here is only 'tradition' to support the theory that along with [the Arnolds] came William Carpenter and his wife" (Carpenter [1901] 9). He nevertheless claims that William married Elizabeth Arnold in England, arguing that "the Arnolds and Carpenters were at Providence at the same early date" (Carpenter [1901] 8, 9). He later concludes that William and Elizabeth's eldest son, Joseph<sup>2</sup>, must have been an adult when he witnessed a deed on 3 May 1656 and thus had been born about 1635, in England (Carpenter [1901] 30, 31; see also Arnold Mem 9, 52; RI Roots 13:75). This, of course, is consistent with the assertion that Joseph and his parents immigrated to New England with the Arnolds.

There are, however, several reasons to doubt that William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter of Providence had any contact with the Arnolds in England. First, William's probable English home of Amesbury, Wiltshire, and that of the Arnolds, at Ilchester, Somerset, are more than forty miles apart. "[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." So as to put William Carpenter and Elizabeth Arnold in close proximity in England, 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 (or variants Fridgsweete, Frittisweed, etc.). The Richard Carpenter buried at Amesbury on 21 September 1625 is far more likely to have been William's father than one said to have died at Ilchester that year.

A second reason for skepticism as to Carpenter–Arnold contact in England is that while William<sup>1</sup> Arnold—like William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter, an original Providence proprietor—was granted a house-lot at Hingham, Massachusetts, on 18 September 1635, Carpenter was not. Had the latter man already married Elizabeth Arnold and immigrated with her family, he, too, almost certainly would have become a Hingham proprietor; the town's records fail altogether to mention him, however. William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter first appears in New England records at Providence, no earlier than mid-1637, under "Agrements & orders the second year

of ye Plantation” (begun in the spring of 1636 at Seekonk, on the east bank of the Seekonk River in present-day East Providence, and relocated that summer to the west bank).

Third, that Providence William’s son Joseph witnessed a deed at Providence on 3 May 1656 is mistaken as evidence that he was then an adult and must therefore have been born about 1635, presumably at Amesbury. Witnesses as young as fourteen are found in early New England records, however. (This was the *age of discretion*, at which one could witness documents, choose a guardian, testify in court, and indenture oneself without parental consent.) Fourth, a deposition given by Benjamin Smith and Joseph Carpenter on 16 October 1664 describes the latter man as “Aged 26 yeeres,” implying a birth year of about 1638. [This paragraph and the two preceding ones are taken almost verbatim from Zubrinsky, “[Abiah<sup>3</sup> Carpenter of Warwick, Rhode Island, and His Family: With Additional Material Concerning William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter of Providence . . .](#),” NEHGR 159(2005):55–68, at 67–68 (which see for specific source citations). In the course of preparing this sketch, the author has identified additional evidence, presented below, that William Carpenter’s path and that of the Arnold family did not cross until William’s arrival at Providence (see also Zubrinsky, “[The Immigration and Marriage of William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter of Amesbury, Wiltshire, and Providence, Rhode Island](#),” NEHGR 164(2010):36–40).]

Finally, certain Providence records, including the first two of William Carpenter in New England, strongly imply that he came to Providence not “at the same early date” as the Arnolds (as per Carpenter [1901]) but as much as a year or so later. The first of these, under the heading “Agrements & orders the second year of ye Plantation” [about June 1637 to June 1638], is an otherwise undated order that William Carpenter, Benedict Arnold, Francis Weekes, William Reynolds, Thomas Angell, Mrs. Daniel, and Mary Sweet “shold pay in consideration of Ground at present Granted vnto them” two shillings [and sixpence?] apiece; Edward Cope is assessed five shillings [and sixpence?] (PrTR 1:3; RICR 1:15 [“and sixpence”]). Immediately after this is another undated entry, ordering that Mr. Cole [Robert Coles], Francis Weston, and Richard Waterman are each to pay two shillings [one shilling and sixpence?] if “they do not Improue their Ground at present graunted to them . . . by preparing to fense to plaunt to build etc” (PrTR 1:3; RICR 1:15 [“one shilling and sixpence”]). Of those named above, only four—Carpenter, Coles, Weston, and Waterman—would subsequently be identified as original proprietors (see, for example, PrTR 3:90–91, 4:73, 14:274). The latter three, slow to take up their respective grants, presumably had received and paid for them at least several months previously. Carpenter and those named with him, on the other hand, were yet to pay for their lots and almost certainly had obtained them more recently. That none of the others listed with Carpenter was an original proprietor, moreover, suggests that he was one of the last of the thirteen men to earn that designation in later records. (Roger Williams recounts that “poor young fellow” Francis Weekes and “a lad of Thomas Waterman’s,” generally thought to have been Thomas Angell [both are named with Carpenter, above], were among the first to join Williams in the spring of 1636 [RWCorr 2:750; RI Hist 1:97]. It is generally supposed that land grants to them were delayed until they came of age.)

The Arnolds, by contrast, had joined Roger Williams more than a year earlier. Benedict Arnold recounts that “We came to Providence to Dwell the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, 1636” (NEHGR 33:428). First situated on the eastern bank of the Seekonk River, Williams and his friends removed about two months later to the other side of the river (beyond the jurisdiction of Plymouth Colony), where they built their permanent settlement. William Arnold stated in 1659 that “I was one that the very first day entred with some others vpon the land of Prouidence and so laid out my money to buy and helpe pay for it” (PrTR 15:77–78). (Despite having accompanied his father at that time, Benedict Arnold [named with Carpenter above], did not reach adulthood until 21 December 1636 and consequently, as with Weekes and Angell, was not an original proprietor [see NEHGR 33:428].)

The second Providence record naming William Carpenter, dated 10 4<sup>th</sup> month [June] (year not recorded), implies the order of arrival of two cohorts of settlers: “y<sup>e</sup> Severall portions of grasse & medow w<sup>ch</sup> our neighbour[s] Greene . . . Cole . . . Arnold & . . . Weston Layd out in y<sup>e</sup> Townes name vnto [our] neighbour[s] James . . . Olney . . . Waterman . . . Cole . . . Weston . . . Carpenter . . . Holyman were Confirmed as their proper Right & Inheritance to them & theirs as fully as the *former* portions appropriated to [our] neighbour Throckmorton neighbour Greene neighbour Harris Joshua Verin, neighbour Arnold and neighbour Williams were or are confirmed to them & theirs” (emphasis added) (PrTR 1:4–5, RICR 1:17). (Bartlett gives the year of this record as 1637 [see RICR 1:17]; other records suggest, and other writers conclude, that it was 1638 [see PrTR 1:4, “It was agreede . . .”; WP 30–31; DHRI 1:75; BQ 10:196–97].) The six men listed as having previously confirmed their allotments (including William Arnold) are evidently the earliest of the Providence settlers. In a letter written to the town of Providence in 1650, Joshua Verin speaks of “we six which Cam first” (PrTR 15:37; RICR 1:17n). (Verin, the only one named above who is not called “neighbour,” had recently been disfranchised and would soon leave Providence, forfeiting his lands there [PrTR 1:4; NEHGR 131:103–4]. He thus is not among the original purchasers named in subsequent records. The above-quoted record names all the original proprietors except Stukely Westcott [compare, for example, with PrTR 3:90–91, 14:274].) The seven men receiving confirmation of title (William Carpenter among them) had clearly arrived later than the six whose titles had already been validated. Based on the foregoing, we may reasonably estimate that Carpenter arrived at Providence at least a year after the Arnolds joined the group at Seekonk, in April 1636. It follows that he did not reach New England with and as an in-law of the Arnolds but came as a single man.

But if William Carpenter did not arrive with the Arnolds, on 24 June 1635, then when and with whom did he come to New England? Two records, one colonial and the other English, provide the probable answer. The following entry, dated 3 June 1635, appears in Massachusetts Bay Colony Governor John Winthrop’s journal: “heere [at Boston] arived . . . the Iames a shippe of 300: t. with Cattle & passingers which came all safe from Southampton within [about five weeks and three days]” (WJ 147). Two months earlier, at Southampton “in & aboute the vj<sup>t</sup> of April 1635,” fifty-three “men, youthes, & boyes . . .

besides the wives & Children of Dyvers of these” had registered for passage to New England on the *James* of London (PRO/TNA CO1/8/183–85, at 185; Coldham 133–34; NEHGR 14:332 erroneously has *v<sup>t</sup>* of April). (The passengers’ dockside arrivals probably occurred over a period of days. But the ship’s departure—calculated as about 26 April—was likely delayed while a replacement for the original master was found. The passenger list names William Cooper, but Winthrop identified the ship’s master as a man named Graves, with whom he was familiar.)

Among the names on the *James*’s passenger list are “Thomas” Carpenter of Amesbury, carpenter; “Josuah Verren” (Joshua Verin), roper; and John Greene, surgeon. The latter two are listed (beginning with the third name below Carpenter’s) in a cluster of nine men “late of New Saru[m]” (NEHGR 14:333 erroneously says “late of New England”). If the Amesbury carpenter was not already acquainted with Verin and Greene—New Sarum (Salisbury) is only seven miles south of Amesbury—he certainly got to know them during the voyage. Verin settled first at Salem, and Greene soon followed (after a brief stay at Boston, where he forfeited a grant of land for not building on it) (NEHGR 131:101, 103, 164:296–97; RWCorr 1:108–9; GM 3:142; GMN 19:3:21). The first Thomas Carpenter to appear in New England records, on the other hand, was not born until 1692 (RVR [pub] 572). Greene (“neighbor Greene,” above) was probably, like Verin, among the six men “which Cam first” to Providence, in 1636; William Carpenter settled there a year or so later (see above; also GM 3:142, 145; NEHGR 131:103, 164:36–40).

It is thus a fact that an Amesbury carpenter surnamed Carpenter emigrated on the same ship as two men from nearby Salisbury who became early associates of Roger Williams at Providence, as did an Amesbury carpenter surnamed Carpenter not long thereafter (see OCCUPATION and WILL/ESTATE, below). If passenger Carpenter were listed as William rather than Thomas, we would not hesitate to conclude that he and William of Providence were one. While the forename conflict gives pause, it is the only ill-fitting puzzle piece. It is likely that the *James* passenger was actually William Carpenter—inadvertently recorded with the same forename as Thomas Davyes (Davis), who is listed immediately above the Amesbury man. That William Carpenter’s first appearance in New England records does not occur until 1637 or 1638 is not significant; many early immigrants went unrecorded for some years after their arrival (see PrTR 1:3, 4). The aforementioned Thomas Davis, for example, does not appear in New England records until 1641 (GM 2:310, 316). It is therefore highly probable that the eventual William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter of Providence arrived at Boston on 3 June 1635 aboard the *James* from Southampton (NEHGR 164:36–40).

**RESIDENCES:** Amesbury (probably from birth, say 1610); probably Salem (1635); Providence (ca. 1637; Pawtuxet section by 1642) (PrTR 1:3; DHRI 1:42–43; BIRTH and IMMIGRATION, above).

All the former Salisbury men whose names are grouped near that of “Thomas” (i.e., William) Carpenter on the *James* passenger list settled at Salem soon after arriving in Massachusetts (see above and, for the others, GM 1:69, 204, 438–39, 6:250–51, 345, 359–60). It is widely recognized, moreover, that almost all those granted home lots at Providence during the plantation’s first two years had come from Salem. We may therefore assume that William Carpenter’s first New England residence was probably in Salem also (NEHGR 164:296–97; GMN 19:3:20). His absence from surviving Salem town and church records is a condition shared by the aforementioned John Greene and also, ironically, Roger Williams.

D. H. Carpenter’s assertion that William Carpenter and four others “at once made settlement” at Pawtuxet after receiving their respective shares of land there in 1638 is open to debate (see Carpenter [1901] 17). In the distribution agreement, dated 8 8th month [October] 1638, Roger Williams states that “all the Meddow ground at Patuxett, bounding vpon the fresh River on both sides is to be impropriated vnto those 13 persons now Incorporated together in our Towne of providence . . . and to be equally divided among them” (PrTR 15:31; RICR 1:20–21). The boundary between the Pawtuxet lands and the “Gennerall Comon” of the town of Providence was established on 27 5th month [July] 1640 (followed by many years of controversy) (PrTR 15:2). On 30 11th month [January] 1641[2], “Socononoco Sachem of Patuxset, . . . granted vnto W<sup>m</sup> Arnold, Robert Cole & William Carpenter all the lands Marshes medowes, Islands Rivers ponds lyeing betweene the great fresh or salt River called Patuxset River both aboue & below the fall, the River called Pachasett, & the river called Wanasquatuckett, and the great salt River that is between Providence & Patuxit” (SLR 1:63 [witnessed at Boston in 1645]). (Arnold had obtained this deed—to land already purchased by Roger Williams, who [as above] had agreed to divide the Pawtuxet portion among the thirteen first comers—as part of a bid to remove the troublesome Samuel Gorton and his company, who had settled on the west side of Pawtuxet, and also invalidate the claims of other original proprietors [Irrepressible Democrat 134].) Shortly before 28 October 1642, “W<sup>m</sup> Arnold of Patuxet & Robert Cole & others [having] lately put themselvs & their families lands & estates vnder the protection & Government of [Massachusetts Bay Colony] . . . complained to [colony authorities] that [the Gortonists] haue since (vppon pretence of a late purchase from the Indians) gone about to deprive them of their lawfull interest confirmed by 4 yeares possession . . .” (SLR 1:33; NEHGR 4:219). If *possession* is taken to mean *occupancy*, then settlement of Pawtuxet probably occurred sometime between late 1638 and spring 1639. In a contemporaneous account of this dispute, Edward Winslow does indeed state that “William Arnold & William Carpenter . . . had dwelt [at Pawtuxet] 4 year[s] before [Gorton and company] came there” (NEHGR 4:218).

There is, however, no record indicating precisely when the Pawtuxet lots were laid out. On 14 2nd month [April] 1641, “the Towne of P[ro]vidence . . . Confirmed . . . vnto William Arnold one of the ffree Inhabetantes of the Towne of Providence” his various land holdings in the town proper but not in Pawtuxet (PrTR 1:109–11). Not until 2 2nd

month [April] 1642, when Thomas Olney of Providence leased most of his Pawtuxet land to Arnold, was the latter man recorded as “of providence, or of pautuxett” (PrTR 1:103–4). On 8 September 1642, the Pawtuxet inhabitants, “upon their petition, were taken under [the] government & p[ro]tection” of Massachusetts Bay Colony (MBCR 2:26–27). (The Pawtuxet men, apparently then six in number—William Arnold, Robert Coles, William Carpenter, Benedict Arnold, Zachariah Rhodes, and William Harris—sought thus to avert encroachment by the Gortonists.) Given the ambiguity surrounding the settlement date, it seems prudent to say that William Carpenter and his Pawtuxet neighbors established themselves there sometime between 1638 and 1642.

Pawtuxet—not to be confused with the town of Pawtucket, originally in northeast Providence—is a village lying on both sides of the Pawtuxet River at its mouth. On the north side of the river, Pawtuxet was the southern section of the township of Providence and is now in the town of Cranston. South of the river, Pawtuxet was/is in northern Warwick (PawWeb; see maps, above).

**OCCUPATION:** Housewright and planter. His estate inventory contains many house-carpenter’s tools, and a daughter of William Harris’s recounts in a letter dated in 1708 that William Carpenter had built her father’s house (PrTR 6:149–50; PubRIHS 4:195, 196; WILL/ESTATE, below). Weeden’s history of Rhode Island calls him “an English-bred carpenter . . . from Amesbury” (Early RI 87).

D. H. Carpenter recalls the family tradition “that William Carpenter was ‘a preacher’ in England, and the fact that he performed the marriage ceremony at the wedding of his daughter [Priscilla, in 1670] is, I think, ample proof that he was recognized by his church as one of its ‘lay ministers’” (Carpenter [1901] 17, 321). There is no evidence to support this statement, however (see COMMENTS, par. 1, below). Marriage in early New England, moreover, was a civil union, a contract, not a sacrament. Weddings were performed by magistrates rather than clergymen and took place in private homes, not in churches. William’s authority to perform marriages derived not from a position in the church but from his office as general assistant for Providence to the Rhode Island General Assembly (see EDUCATION and OFFICES, below).

**FREEMAN:** William is in the Providence section of the 1655 list of Rhode Island freemen and is also on a 1665 list of Providence freemen (RICR 1:299; PrTR 15:73).

**EDUCATION:** William Carpenter, Assistant, submitted for entry in the town book written records of marriages he performed in 1669, 1670, and 1671/2 (PrTR 3:106 [“I have joined”], 5:294 [“married . . . by me”]). In 1671/2, marriage banns were “published . . . by a wrighting fixed upon a publick place of the Towne of providence under the hand of Mr William Carpenter Assistant” (PrTR 5:329–30). In 1674[/5], he wrote a letter to the town of Providence declaring land-title transfers (PrTR 4:21–22).

**OFFICES:** One of four appointed by Boston authorities “to keepe the peace in [Pawtuxet],” 1642[–1658?]; commissioner/deputy for Providence to Rhode Island General Court/Assembly, 1657/8, 1659, 1660, 1661, 1662, 1663, 1664, 1665, 1675, 1676, 1679; juror, General Court of Trials, 1657/8 (did not serve), 1661[/2], 1663, 1664; juror, Grand Inquest, 1658/9, 1663, 1665; warden (magistrate), General Court of Trials, 1660/1; Providence town-meeting moderator, June 1662, June 1665, September 1665, April 1666, September 1666, October 1670, December 1670, February 1670/1, April–September 1671; general assistant for Providence to Rhode Island General Assembly, 1665, 1666, 1667, 1668, 1669, 1670, 1671, 1672; Providence justice of the peace, 1665/6, 1667, 1668; Providence town councilman, January 1670/1, June 1673 (MBCR 2:26–27, 4:1:332, 333; PrTR 1:28, 2:110, 114, 118–19, 128, 131, 3:2–247 passim, 4:52, 6:103–4, 7:227, 8:11, 47, 15:84–149 passim; RICR 1:366, 419, 428, 468, 480, 492, 501, 504, 508, 2:38–449 passim, 3:28–29; RICT1 1:39, 50–51, 70, 2:42–75 passim; RICT2 1, 6, 7, 8; WarTR 159). For other assignments, activities, etc., see PrTR 2:123–24, 3:19, 28, 31, 42–43, 58; RICR 1:430, 444, 482, 507, 2:151–537 passim; RICT2 46).

**WILL/ESTATE:** The will of William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter “of Pautuxett in y<sup>e</sup> townshipp of Providence,” dated 10 February 1679/80 and proved (with codicil) 1 October 1685, names the following legatees (in order of first appearance): eldest son Joseph; daughters Lydia Smith and Priscilla Vincent; sons Silas (co-executor), Benjamin (co-executor), Timothy, and Ephraim; grandsons Ephraim Carpenter (eldest son of aforesaid son Ephraim, by first wife), William Carpenter [son of eldest son Joseph], and Joseph Smith (son of daughter Lydia); wife Elizabeth; granddaughter Susanna (sister of grandson Ephraim); and grandson Simon Smith (brother of grandson Joseph Smith) (PrTR 6:135, 138–46, 148 [also 4:21–22, 14:218, which identify grandson William as Joseph<sup>2</sup>’s son]). Others mentioned include brother-in-law Stephen Arnold and deceased son William. A codicil to the will, dated 15 March 1683/4, includes a section indicating that son Joseph is deceased and leaving his bequest to grandson Joseph [son of the deceased Joseph] (PrTR 6:147–48).

Almost all bequests are of land, rights to subsequent land divisions, and rights of commoning (entitlements to pasturage on and/or divisions of common land). In only one instance—twenty acres of upland to grandson Ephraim—is parcel size specified (PrTR 6:141–42). Another bequest hints at the amount of acreage: “out of [sons Timothy, Silas, and Benjamin’s share of rights to certain lands and meadows] one hundred acres of land to be [set out to grandson Ephraim Carpenter] . . . ; y<sup>e</sup> sayd hundred acres of land to be part thereof Meadow proportionably to Each hundred acres Contained in y<sup>e</sup> aforesd [share]” (PrTR 6:143–44). This and the large number of bequests imply that the testator’s lands and rights thereto amounted to many hundreds of acres. (For details of Carpenter’s land allotments, purchases, and sales, see PrTR 1:3, 4–5, 44–45, 71–72, 74–78, 79–80, 82–86, 91–92, 96–99, 101–3, 107–8, 2:21, 3:71–72, 90–91, 169–74, 249, 250, 4:18–19, 21–22, 24–26, 45–46, 47–48, 64–66, 73–76, 112–13, 115–20, 314–15, 5:306–9, 11:144, 14:64–66, 185–86, 273–76, 15:31, 75, 86, 94–95, 96–97, 21:53; WarTR 45, 81; RILE 52; also PrLR.)

William’s estate (moveable goods only) was inventoried on 30 September 1685 and appraised at £22. Included are many carpenter’s implements: various types and sizes of saws and augers; chisels, plane irons, gouges, drawing knives, and adzes; a wainscot

plough; a burr (drill or chisel); and a spokeshave (PrTR 6:149–50, 17:62–63). Despite the modest value of William’s personal estate, his tax assessments—on land and livestock (and by 1679, a saw mill he apparently owned with sons Silas and Benjamin)—were by 1650 among the highest in Providence (PrTR 15:33, 135–36, 185–91, 206–14, 223–25, 17:44–47, 48–52).

**CHILDREN:** All born in the township of Providence, at least iv–viii (perhaps as many as ii–viii) born at Pawtuxet; birth order slightly tentative.

- i. JOSEPH<sup>2</sup> CARPENTER, b. ca. 1638 (aged 26 in 1664), d. Musketa Cove, Oyster Bay, Long Island, Province of New York, between 15 or 17 February 1682[3] and 15 March 1683/4; m. (1) probably Rehoboth, Plymouth Colony, ca. 1658 (not 21 April 1659), HANNAH<sup>3</sup> CARPENTER, b. Weymouth, Mass. Bay Colony, 3 2nd month [April] 1640, d. probably Musketa Cove, by 8 June 1673, dau. of William<sup>2</sup> and Abigail (Briant) Carpenter; m. (2) probably Oyster Bay, by 2 Sept. 1674, ANN WEEKES, bp. New Amsterdam, Colony of New Netherland, 9 July 1651, d. Musketa Cove after 24 4th month [June] 1713, dau. of Francis and Elizabeth (\_\_\_\_\_) Weekes (NEHGR 159:64n47, 67–68; PrTR 6:138, 141, 144, 147–48; PubRIHS 4:197; TAG 70:201, 204; RILE 1:47, 50–51; NYChR 29; WMM-MM A:24; FMM-VR 78; OBTR 1:99, 411–12, 640–41, 642–44, 2:702). For additional information about Joseph and his family, see [his sketch](#) and that of [first wife Hannah](#).
- ii. LYDIA CARPENTER, b. say 1640, d. Warwick 1 Oct. 1711; m. probably Pawtuxet (Providence), ca. 1660 (eldest son, Benjamin, in 69th yr. in 1729 [will]), BENJAMIN SMITH, b. ca. 1631–1632 (aged about 43 on 17 March 1674/5 [deposition]), d. Warwick 23 Dec. 1713, probable son of Christopher and Alice (\_\_\_\_\_) Smith (WarVR 1:2:18; WarPR 1:95–100, 309–10 [misnumbered 209–10]; Angell Anc 469; Austin 376; PrTR 6:139, 143, 145, 15:146).  
When on 9 Feb. 1657[8?] she signed by mark in witnessing (with brothers Joseph and Ephraim) a deed of Pawtuxet (Warwick) land from an Indian sachem to her father, Lydia was in her teens (the *age of discretion* was 14) (see WarTR 80–81; IMMIGRATION, par. 4, above).
- iii. EPHRAIM CARPENTER, b. say 1642, d. probably West Neck (in south Oyster Bay), between 20 Feb. 1697/8 and 8 Jan. 1702/3; m. (1) probably Pawtuxet (Providence), by 1666 (perhaps by 1663), SUSANNAH HARRIS, d. before 3 Dec. 1677, dau. of William<sup>1</sup> and Susannah (Hyde) Harris; (2) Oyster Bay, 3 Dec. 1677, SUSANNAH (WOOD) ENGLAND (widow of Josiah), b. probably Portsmouth, R.I., perhaps about 1647, d. probably Musketa Cove, before 1 July 1693 (in 1684?), dau. of John<sup>1</sup> and Elizabeth (\_\_\_\_\_) Wood of Portsmouth; (3) by 1 July 1693, LYDIA \_\_\_\_\_, said (not proved) to be Lydia Dickinson, b. 5 Oct. 1662, dau. of John and Elizabeth (Howland) Dickinson (OBTR 1:235, 2:41–43, 71–73, 76–77, 613–14, 624–25; PrTR 5:42–44, 7:190–96, 10:43–44, 14:61, 202; TG 20:168–69; John Wood 10–16; MD 54:27–28; Austin 36).

D. H. Carpenter mistakenly asserts that Ephraim’s first recorded appearance is as a witness to a Providence deed on 5 Feb. 1661 (see Carpenter [1901] 314; PrTR 1:82–83). Implicit in author Carpenter’s estimate of Ephraim’s birth year as about 1640 is the false assumption that to have witnessed this deed he must have been at least 21 years old. On 9 Feb. 1657[8?], he witnessed (with siblings Joseph and Lydia) a deed of Pawtuxet (Warwick) land to his father; Ephraim was unquestionably a teenager at the time (as above, children as young as 14 could witness documents) (see WarTR 80–81). He was most likely still a minor when he witnessed a deed in each of May and August 1660 and March 1660[1?] (WarTR 81; PrTR 4:112–13, 14:254). Ephraim had certainly come of age, however, by the time he was

admitted a Providence freeman, on 2 May 1666 (PrTR 15:73). Ephraim and his father were the only Carpenters among Providence householders who swore allegiance to King Charles II on 31 May 1666 (PrTR 3:101, 15:104–5).

In his will, dated 20 Feb. 1697/8, Ephraim<sup>2</sup>'s namesake son, of Pawtuxet (Providence), bequeaths all his real estate to “my Hon<sup>rd</sup>: ffather Ephraim Carpenter, now inhabtant at long Jsland” (PrTR 7:190–91). Except for his clothing, horse, saddle, bridle, and 4 bushels of oats (all willed to his uncle Silas's widow, Sarah), he also leaves his personal estate to his father. On 8 Jan. 1702/3, however, “Susannah Arnold sister of . . . [testator] Ephraim Carpenter, & wife of Elisha Arnold of Providence . . . the Reall, true, & lawfull heires of the Estate of y<sup>e</sup> deceased Testator” acknowledged receipt of “all y<sup>e</sup> Remnant of the Estate . . . which was left after all charges was Defraied” (PrTR 5:42–44). Although Ephraim<sup>2</sup> is not mentioned, it seems clear that his son's bequests to him had been invalidated by the father's death and intestacy, prompting the distribution of Ephraim<sup>3</sup>'s estate to his sister and only surviving heir at law. Supporting this interpretation is that on 4 Sept. 1703, Josias Carpenter (presumably Ephraim<sup>3</sup>'s half-brother, named for the latter's mother's first husband, Josiah England) sold several parcels of land at West Neck whose descriptions match those of lots previously acquired by Ephraim<sup>2</sup> Carpenter (OBTR 1:387–89, 2:41–43, 71–73, 76–78, 624–25). And on 2 Nov. 1703, George Hewlett of Hempstead, L.I., deeded to Capt. Thomas Jones of Fort Neck (in south Oyster Bay) 1¾ meadow lots at the latter place that were “formerly Daniel Harcuts and after In possession of Ephraim Carpenter Deceased” (OBTR 2:613–14).

D. H. Carpenter states that Ephraim<sup>3</sup> Carpenter was admitted a Musketa Cove [*sic*] inhabitant “in 1683 (at 21 years of age)” (see Carpenter [1901] 316). This is apparently the author's basis for estimating the younger Ephraim's birth date as about 1662 and his father's marriage date as about 1661 (see Carpenter [1901] 314, 316). Despite Ephraim<sup>2</sup>'s having settled permanently in Oyster Bay about 1676, however, Ephraim<sup>3</sup> was in Providence by 1684 and lived there (probably on land his father gave him in 1685) until 1693, when he took up residence at Musketa Cove; he was admitted an inhabitant of Oyster Bay on 5 Sept. 1694 (“to settle here at his own cost and Charge in order to Trading or [ ]”) (PrTR 5:278–79, 14:202–3, 217–18, 259–63, 15:147, 17:44, 47, 48, 52, 102, 103, 21:33–35; OBTR 1:235, 575–76, 2:362). He bought a dwelling house and parcels of land in Oyster Bay on 30 March 1695 and sold them on 29 June 1696 (OBTR 2:192–93, 279–80). He then returned to Pawtuxet, where he died about a year and a half later (PrTR 7:190–96).

The earliest records of Ephraim<sup>3</sup> at Providence are in 1684 tax lists and a 1685 deed of Providence lands from his father (of Musketa Cove), which “I . . . deliver into the actual possession of my [eldest] son Ephraim Carpenter” (PrTR 14:202–3, 17:44, 47, 48, 52 [compare relative amounts with 17:102, 103]). Ephraim<sup>3</sup>'s taxation and receipt of land in these years, however, do not rule out the possibility that he was then a minor. Not until 27 May 1687, when Ephraim Carpenter of Providence sold to Clement King land left to Ephraim by his grandfather, William Carpenter, was he unquestionably 21, the legal age for disposing of property (PrTR 21:33–35; Blackstone 1:451). Based on these considerations, we infer that Ephraim<sup>3</sup> had been born by 1666, perhaps by 1663. Logic dictates that we estimate the first marriage of our subject, Ephraim<sup>2</sup>, as having occurred by the same time.

In a testamentary deed dated 10 Nov. 1670, William Harris calls his daughter Susannah the wife of Ephraim Carpenter (PrTR 14:61). On 1 July 1693, Ephraim—with his then wife Lydia consenting—sold his Musketa Cove lands, including his home-lot (OBTR 2:72–73).

Ephraim is said to have been constable at Oyster Bay from 1681 or 1682 to 1687, but the township's records indicate otherwise (see Austin 36; Carpenter [1901] 315; OBTR 1:240, 253, 264, 265; 2:323, 330, 334). The only occasion on which he was named to a related office was on 2 April 1681, when Caleb Wright was named

constable, and Ephraim became deputy constable for the plantation at Musketa Cove (OBTR 1:240–41).

- iv. PRISCILLA CARPENTER, b. say 1644, d. probably Providence about 15 Nov. 1690; m. Providence (probably Pawtuxet), 31 May 1670, [her cousin] WILLIAM VINCENT, bp. Amesbury, Wiltshire, 17 June 1638, d. Providence between 21 Dec. 1695 (will) and 1 Feb. 1695/6 (estate inv.), son of Nicholas (not Thomas) and Frideswide (Carpenter) Vincent. William m. (2) before 21 Dec. 1695, Jemima \_\_\_\_\_ (PrTR 5:294, 7:176–79, 20:231–33; RIVR 2:1[Providence]:37; AmParReg 1:n.p; Austin 213–14, 459).

The deed by which William Vincent sold to Timothy Carpenter a quarter share of a meadow lot inherited by William’s wife Priscilla from her father, William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter, ends with the following: “In Wittness . . . I the said William Vinsent & Priscilla My Wife doe hereunto set our handes & seales this fiteene day of November . . . 1690” (PrTR 6:144, 20:231–33; PrLR 2:95–96). Only William’s name is subscribed, however, suggesting that Priscilla had died before she could formally consent to the sale of her legacy.

William Vincent’s will, dated 21 Dec. 1695 and proved 3 March 1695/6, names “my wife Jemima” and “my three sonnns, Thomas Nicholas & the youngest [William]” (PrTR 7:176–77). D. H. Carpenter claims that Vincent made another will, also dated in 1695 but previous to the official one, naming a son Jonas before the three children listed above (see Carpenter [1901] 321). No such document is found, however. (Perhaps Carpenter viewed both the “original,” clerk’s copy and the published transcription, misread *Thomas* as *Jonas* in the former, and in reviewing his notes, concluded that the two copies were of separate origin.)

In a deed of 64 acres to William Vincent, dated 5 Feb. 1661[/?], William Carpenter calls Vincent his “Cousen” (i.e., nephew) (PrTR 1:82–83, 21:86).

- v. TIMOTHY CARPENTER, b. say 1646, d. Pawtuxet (Providence) 19 August 1726; m. probably Providence 1670–1671, HANNAH BURTON, d. probably Pawtuxet (Providence) before 1 Dec. 1724 (not mentioned in husband’s will), dau. of William and Hannah (Wickes) Burton (RIVR 2:1[Providence]:263; PrTR 7:170–73; WarTR 19, 140; PrPR 3:3–6; Austin 36, 266, 268, 420–21).

Timothy’s three eldest siblings were minors when they witnessed a deed to their father on 9 Feb. 1657[/?] (PrTR 80–81). Had Timothy then been at least 14 (the legal minimum age for witnessing documents), he, as a male, almost certainly would have replaced his sister Lydia in attesting to the document’s legitimacy (see IMMIGRATION, par. 4, above). Timothy fails to appear on Providence freemen’s lists (the last dated in 1669) and was not among that township’s householders who swore allegiance to the king between 31 May 1666 and 29 April 1670 (PrTR 3:101–2; 15:104–5). He evidently became a householder sometime between the latter date and the last Monday in May 1671, when he (along with his brothers Silas and Benjamin and 20 other young men) affirmed his loyalty to the crown (see PrTR 3:199–200). That Timothy appears first in all documents in which he and his brothers Silas and Benjamin are named in succession (including their father’s will and codicil) implies that he was older than they (PrTR 4:21–22, 5:115–16, 201–2, 6:141, 142, 143, 147, 21:33).

In his will, dated 30 (not 20) March 1703, William Burton mentions daughters Hannah Carpenter and Ethlannah Clarke (PrTR 7:170–72). In Timothy Carpenter’s will, dated 1 Dec. 1724 and proved 19 Sept. 1726, he names daughters Ethalannah Sweet and Hannah Arnold among his legatees (PrPR 3:3–5; Austin 36).

- vi. SILAS CARPENTER (twin?), b. ca. 1650–1651 (aged 24 in 1675), d. Pawtuxet (Providence) 25 Dec. 1695 (leaving 4 children, all minors); m. probably Pawtuxet (Providence) say 1685–1688, his cousin SARAH ARNOLD, b. 26 June 1665, d. Pawtuxet (Providence), widow, 22 April 1742 (not 26 Nov. 1727), dau. of Stephen and Sarah (Smith) Arnold (PrTR 6:156–59, 194–209, 7:157–59, 10:61–62, 15:146; RIVR 2:1[Providence]:7, 209, 263). For evidence suggesting that Silas and his brother Benjamin were twins, see the latter’s listing (no. vii), below.

Silas was a householder—though not necessarily 21 and evidently not married—when he made oath of his fidelity to the king on the last Monday in May 1671 (PrTR 3:199–200, 15:104–5 [“all hovse hovldereres inhabiting this Colloney take the : oath of allegiance . . . March : 4<sup>th</sup> : 1664”]). In a deposition taken on 28 April 1675 (not in 1674, as per Carpenter [1901]), Silas describes himself as aged 24 (PrTR 15:146; see also Carpenter [1901] 30n). He was admitted a Rhode Island freeman on 3 May 1681 (RICR 3:98). Despite D. H. Carpenter’s claim that both the aforementioned deposition and Silas’s gravestone give his birth year as 1650, the former simply has his age in 1675, and the latter’s location, let alone inscription, is unknown (see Carpenter [1901] 30n; no mention of gravestone at 322–23 [Silas’s detail pages]).

In his will, dated 22 Dec. 1695 (three days before his death) and belatedly presented for probate by widow Sarah on 8 April 1701, Silas calls Stephen Arnold his father-in-law (PrTR 6:157, 7:157–58, 10:61–62). Stephen Arnold’s will, dated 2 June 1698, mentions daughter Sarah Carpenter (PrTR 6:205, 206, 210). D. H. Carpenter gives Sarah’s date of death as 26 Nov. 1727 (see Carpenter [1901] 323). This, however, was another Sarah (Arnold) Carpenter: the daughter of Israel and Mary (Barker) (Smith) Arnold, she had married Silas’s namesake son on 21 Dec. 1708 (RIVR 2:1[Providence]:7; PrBMD, citing PrVR 1:86, 434).

- vii. BENJAMIN CARPENTER (twin?), b. say 1650–1652, d. Pawtuxet (Providence) 3 March 1710/1; m. probably Providence say 1680 or later, MARY TILLINGHAST, b. probably Newport, R.I., perhaps in Oct. 1661 (Aug. 1659?), d. probably Providence, after 15 Dec. 1715 (named in father’s will), dau. of Rev. Pardon and \_\_\_\_\_ [not Sarah, dau. of John; perhaps Mary] (Butterworth?) Tillinghast (RIVR 2:1[Providence]:263; PrTR 5:120, 7:39–42, 65–66, 16:37–42; Tillinghasts 1, 1n3, 10, 13; NEHGR 41:191–94; TAG 84:79–80).

While D. H. Carpenter estimates that brothers Silas and Benjamin might have been born up to three years apart (1650 and 1650–1653, respectively), he leaves open the possibility that, as family tradition has it, the two were twins (see Carpenter [1901] 31, 322, 326). A survey of town and colony records reveals a pattern highly consistent with this proposition. In records dated before Silas’s death, he and Benjamin almost always appear together (with Benjamin second in most instances). For example: Both men (with brother Timothy and 20 other new, though not necessarily married, householders) swore allegiance on the last Monday of May 1671, and both were admitted Rhode Island freemen on 3 May 1681 (PrTR 3:199–200, 15:104–5; RICR 3:98). Their father’s will makes 12 bequests to Silas and Benjamin, of which 8 are joint (3 of these include their brother Timothy) and 2 each are individual (PrTR 6:138–145). One of the bequests to Silas and Benjamin (item 14) is of “lands & meadows . . . whereon *theire dwelling house* now standeth” (emphasis added) (PrTR 6:141). The will instructs the two to care for their mother and names them “whole & sole Exsecutors” (PrTR 6:144–45). On 29 May 1693, Silas and Benjamin Carpenter jointly purchased from Nathaniel Waterman and Joseph Williams “a percell of Boggy Meaddow” and a 6-acre “Neck of upland,” the latter bounded on the south “with the land of ye said Carpenters” (14:220–21). Among the parcels Waterman conveys to his son Richard in a testamentary deed, dated 28 Feb. 1710/1, is “that part of my Meaddow at Mashapague . . . which I bought of Mr Silas Carpenter and Mr Benjamin Carpenter” (PrTR 21:25–26). In an account of “our [taxable] Estate,” dated 12 March 168[6/7], Silas and Benjamin list all lands and livestock as jointly owned (PrTR 17:80–81). A similar account of “our estates Ratable,” dated 6 Aug. 1688, lists all but a few livestock and one tract of land as jointly owned (PrTR 17:120).

Tax lists appear in Providence town records only for the years 1650, 1671, 1679–1681, 1684, 1687, and 1688 (PrTR 15:33–223 passim, 17:44–127 passim). The two brothers appear (with their father) as joint owners of a saw mill on the lists of 1679–1681 and 1684; in those years and also in 1687 and 1688, they are listed together and taxed as one (PrTR 15:187–223 passim, 17:44–122 passim).

A deed dated 1 July 1701, by which Benjamin sold 93 acres inherited from his father, mentions his “now wife Mary” (5:120). Probate records of April and May 1711 describe Mary Carpenter as widow of the deceased Benjamin Carpenter of Pawtuxet in Providence (PrTR 7:39, 65–66). The will of Pardon Tillinghast, dated 15 Dec. 1715, names daughter Mary Carpenter (PrTR 16:38). Neither of the birth dates given for Mary Tillinghast in the secondary literature is documented (Tillinghasts 13). It is believed, though not documented, that Pardon Tillinghast’s first wife (Mary’s mother) was the sister or niece of Samuel Butterworth of Rehoboth, Mass. (Tillinghasts 1n3; NEHGR 41:191–92; TAG 84:79–80). Sarah, daughter of Butterworth’s nephew John, is sometimes said to have been Mary’s mother but has been shown to have married William Hayward (NEHGR 41:192, 193). While neither of the two married children of Pardon’s first marriage named a daughter Sarah, each named one Mary (Tillinghasts 1n3).

- viii. WILLIAM CARPENTER, b. probably by 2 Sept. 1653 (father 1st calls himself Wm. Sr. on 2 Sept. 1674), d. probably Pawtuxet (Providence) between 27 April 1676 (last rec. of father as Wm. Sr.) and 10 February 1679/80 (father’s will calls him deceased); unmarried (PrTR 4:21–22, 6:143, 145, 8:11; RILE 51).

Considerable circumstantial evidence implies that William was the youngest of William<sup>1</sup> and Elizabeth (Arnold) Carpenter’s children. On 4 Dec. 1671, four of William<sup>1</sup>’s sons witnessed the deed by which he gave his Amesbury message to his sister, Frideswide (PrTR 5:323–25). If true to custom, the sequence in which they signed the instrument—Timothy, Silas, Benjamin, and William “Junr:”—reflects their birth order. (William Jr. was then presumably a minor but old enough to witness a document, for which the legal minimum age was 14.) When on 2 Sept. 1674 Joseph Carpenter of Musketa Cove sold several Pawtuxet (Providence and Warwick) holdings to his uncle Stephen Arnold, the deed was witnessed by Joseph’s brothers Silas (first) and William “junr” (RILE 50–51). Signing in “assent” were William Carpenter “Senr.” and Joseph’s second wife. This earliest self-identification by the elder Carpenter using a generational identifier suggests that his namesake son (the subject William) had reached adulthood. On 8 12 mo. 1674 [Feb. 1674/5], William Carpenter “Senr” gave to certain family members his rights to several shares of soon-to-be-divided common lands (PrTR 4:21–22). This declaration of title transfer names the recipients, in order, as sons Timothy, Silas, and Benjamin; grandsons Joseph Smith and “my sone Joseph sone William”; and (again last) “my sone William.”

The will of Zachariah Rhodes Sr., dated in 1662, names William Carpenter “senior” as an overseer (PrTR 4:80, 82). This use of a generational identifier when William<sup>2</sup> was unquestionably still a child is a departure from custom and a chronological outlier. All other instances in which *Sr.* or *Jr.* is used to distinguish these two Williams from one another are clustered between 1671 (when, as above, the latter was probably still a minor) and 27 April 1676 (see PrTR 4:21–22, 23 [6 April 1675], 5:323–25, 8:11; RILE 51).

Quoting from Hubbard’s *Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New England* (1677) and Austin’s *Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island* (1887), D. H. Carpenter claims that on 27 January 1675/6, during an Indian attack upon William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter’s house, his namesake son was killed (see Carpenter [1901] 18–19, 320). Hubbard’s narrative says that “[t]wo that belonged to the said [Mr.] Carpenter were wounded, and one of the Enemies slain” (Hubbard 1:164). Austin, drawing from Hubbard and also from an unattributed account published in 1676—whose only mention of casualties is the death of “a Negro Servant” of “young Mr. [Toleration] Harris”—distorts both by relating that “two of [William Carpenter’s] household were killed” (see Chronicle 58; Hubbard 58n259; HP 162n; Austin 37; see also Carpenter [1901] 18). The eminent antiquarian Samuel Gardner Drake regarded the anonymous version, which he felt was written from personal knowledge, as more reliable than Hubbard’s (see Hubbard 58n260). The most personally knowledgeable

source, however, is William Harris, who wrote the following to Sir Joseph Williamson on 12 Aug. 1676: “I haue lost a deer son : a dillegent engenious Just man : temperate in all things, whom y<sup>e</sup> Indeans lay in waite for by y<sup>e</sup> way syd & killd him, and a negro man, and burnt our houses . . . ” (HP 162–63). A record of William Carpenter’s election as Providence deputy to the Rhode Island General Assembly, dated 27 April 1676, refers to him as “Sen” (PrTR 8:11). This implies that, three months after the aforementioned Indian attack, William Jr. was still living. He had died by 10 Feb. 1679/80, the date of his father’s will, which refers to “my son William deceased” (PrTR 6:143, 145).

William is not named on any of the Providence tax lists (the only ones recorded between 1650 and 1680 are dated in 1671 and 1679) or lists of the township’s householders who swore allegiance (the last is dated in late May 1671). This, together with the lack of a probate record for him or of any evidence that he married, suggests that he lived his entire life in his father’s household.

**COMMENTS:** Repeating (imperfectly) Benedict’s history of the Baptists, D. H. Carpenter names eleven men, including William Carpenter, as founders, at Providence between 3 August 1638 and 16 March 1638/9, of the first Baptist church in America (see Baptist Hist 1:473, 475; Carpenter [1901] 16). Benedict’s account of the baptisms that occurred on the latter date, however, does not accurately represent the description in Massachusetts Governor John Winthrop’s journal (the only known contemporaneous record). The latter identifies the participants only as Roger Williams, “one [Ezekiel] Holyman, . . . and some ten more” (see WJ 286). An 1876 article about Roger Williams (John C. C. Clarke, “The Pioneer Baptist Statesman”) challenges Benedict: “Who those ten were, is entirely unknown. . . . No records of their society or church remain. Mr. Benedict gave twelve names, and his error has been widely copied without questioning. Mr. Benedict gives the names of twelve of the first thirteen proprietors, as named in Williams’s deed, omitting, however, Mr. Throckmorton, who was an undoubted Baptist. Mr. [Isaac] Backus [*A History of New England with Particular Reference to the . . . Baptists*, 2nd ed. (1871)] is against Benedict as to Waterman and Weston; and Roger Williams sets aside Arnold and Carpenter. Probably the first twelve were of the following names, viz., Messrs. Brown, Olney, Scott, Throckmorton, Westcott, Holiman, Williams, and their wives and the widow Reeves” (BQ 10:199, 204). Williams, in a letter to the General Court at Boston, depicts Arnold and Carpenter as “very far allso in religion from you, if you knew all” (RWCorr 2:444). The assertion that William Carpenter was a founder of the church at Providence is therefore groundless.

In letters to Massachusetts Governor Endicott in 1656, Roger Williams indicates that William Carpenter and [his brother-in-law] Stephen Arnold were illegally selling gunpowder to the Indians (RWCorr 2:471–74). These letters also relate that William Arnold [Carpenter’s father-in-law] was having an adulterous relationship with his maid, Katherine (Mrs. Thomas) Doxey (RWCorr 2:471–75).

In May 1660, “William Carpenter and Zachariah Roades gave notice that they had Landed one Ancor of Liquors” (PrTR 2:26). (An *anker/anchor* was a cask or keg containing 8½ imperial gallons.)

The honorific *Mr* (no period), for *Master* (designating a gentleman), was first prefixed to William Carpenter's name in 1657/8, in the record of his initial appearance as a commissioner for Providence at the Rhode Island General Court (RICR 1:366). Though he appears in General Court of Trials records in 1657/8 and 1658/9, they do not refer to him as *Mr* until 1660/1, when he served on the court as a magistrate (RICT1 1:70). Last to grant him that appellation were the townsmen of Providence, whose records do not begin doing so until 1667 (PrTR 1:28–29, 3:121). (Ordinary townsmen were apparently slower to refer honorifically to men of higher status with whom they had longstanding, informal relationships than were colony-level functionaries in mentioning each other.)

Over the years, William Carpenter joined with William Arnold, “most ruthless of the Pawtuxet proprietors,” and with the contentious, “inordinately ambitious” William Harris, another Pawtuxet proprietor, in various land-grabbing schemes and political maneuvers (Irrepressible Democrat 134, 258–60, 269, 278).

It is often said (though not by reliable sources) that William<sup>1</sup> Carpenter of Providence (*Richard*<sup>A</sup> of Amesbury) was a first cousin of William<sup>2</sup> Carpenter of Rehoboth (*William*<sup>1</sup> of Shalbourne [*Bevis*, 1638]) and also of the daughters of Alexander<sup>A</sup> Carpenter of Wrington, Somersetshire, and Leiden, Netherlands, four of whom came to Plymouth. This derives from Amos B. Carpenter's unsupported claim that Richard<sup>A</sup>, William<sup>1</sup> of Shalbourne, and Alexander<sup>A</sup> Carpenter were brothers (see Carpenter [1898] 34; [William<sup>1</sup> of Shalbourne sketch](#), COMMENTS). No evidence has been found even hinting at a link between the Wrington Carpenters, on the one hand, and either of the other two aforementioned families, on the other; a connection is highly improbable. Traditional genealogical research methods provide good reasons to doubt also that Providence William and Rehoboth William were closely related (see NEHGR 159:64–66, 67n63). Results of recent genetic testing coordinated by the [Carpenter Cousins Y-DNA Project](#) support this conclusion: Based on a number of 67-marker tests, “we can state with 95% confidence that the most recent common ancestor of the two groups [descendants of the Providence and Rehoboth Carpenters, respectively] was more than 2 generations before the immigrants and less than about 20. Therefore, the DNA testing has very nearly ruled out the often-repeated claim that the Williams were first cousins. The most likely estimate is about 7 generations, but that is a very rough estimate, and the 95% confidence interval is a more reasonable description of what the DNA is telling us” (Carpenter Cousins).

An inscription in Mineral Springs Cemetery, Pawtucket, gives Elizabeth (Arnold) Carpenter's date of death as 7 September 1685 (see RI Cems 68). It presumably appears on the same monument—almost certainly a cenotaph, erected many generations later—as that bearing inscriptions memorializing her brothers, Benedict (buried in Newport) and Stephen (buried in Pawtuxet, later removed to Swan Point Cemetery, Providence) (see RI Cems 13, 15, and unpaginated descriptions of cemeteries CR084, NT011, PV003, PW001). The date of death in Elizabeth's inscription (repeated in a comparatively recent Arnold genealogy) almost certainly reflects confusion with that of husband William, whose death is twice re-

corded as having occurred on that date (see Arnold Rec 6; PrTR 6:150, 17:62–63). Since these Arnolds and Carpenters have no known connection to Pawtucket, the monument's very location is likely the result of further confusion—between that place and the village of Pawtuxet (see RESIDENCES, last par., above).

Benedict Arnold records that “my father and his family Sett Sayle ffrom Dartmouth in Old England, the first of May . . . 1635 (NEHGR 33:428). The oft-repeated (online) assertion that the ship on which they did so was the *Plain Joan* is mistaken. Among that ship's passengers, enrolled on 15 May 1635 at London (more than 200 sea miles from Dartmouth, in the opposite direction from New England) and “to *Virginia*: embarked,” was Thomas Arnold, 30 (emphasis added) (Hotten 78–79) This was almost certainly neither William's half-brother (then 36 and with a family, he apparently never left England) nor a same-named man of Watertown, Mass., by mid-1636 (NEHGR 33:428, 69:68–69). There is no known record of the ship on which the Arnolds sailed to New England.

An 1879 journal article presenting material compiled by the notorious fraud Horatio G. Somerby claims an ancient, royal ancestry for William<sup>1</sup> Arnold going back sixteen generations into Wales (NEHGR 33:432–38; see also Carpenter [1901] 28). Despite Edson Salisbury Jones's 1915 refutation of Somerby's work—Jones identifies the immigrant's father as Nicholas Arnold of Ilchester, Somerset (not Thomas Arnold of Cheselbourne, Dorset, as per Somerby)—the discredited pedigree lives on, particularly in online databases and on personal webpages (NEHGR 69:64–69; for an expanded account of Jones's research, see RIHSC 14:33–49, 68–86).

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:** See, for example, Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *New England's Generation: The Great Migration and the Formation of Society and Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (New York, 1991; repr. 1992 [paperback]); Francis J. Bremer, *The Puritan Experiment: New England Society from Bradford to Edwards*, rev. ed. (Lebanon, N.H., 1995 [paperback]); Carl Bridenbaugh, *Fat Mutton and Liberty of Conscience: Society in Rhode Island, 1636–1690* (Providence, 1974) (caveat [see below]); Samuel Hugh Brockunier, *The Irrepressible Democrat Roger Williams* (New York, 1940); Bruce C. Daniels, *Dissent and Conformity on Narragansett Bay: The Colonial Rhode Island Town* (Middletown, Conn., 1983); Stephen Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture, 1570–1700* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1991); *Harris Papers*, Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, vol. 10 (Providence, 1902); Anne Keary, “Retelling the History of the Settlement of Providence: Speech, Writing, and Cultural Interaction on Narragansett Bay,” *The New England Quarterly* 69(1996):250–86; Glenn W. LaFantasie, ed., *The Correspondence of Roger Williams*, 2 vols. (Providence, 1988); Patricia E. Rubertone, *Grave Undertakings, An Archeology of Roger Williams and the Narragansett Indians* (Washington, D.C., 2001); William R. Staples, *Annals of the Town of Providence* (Providence, 1843; digital images online at <http://books.google.com>); 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]). The Bridenbaugh volume is a good general introduction to Rhode Island history but nevertheless misinterprets Weeden (Early RI 87) in saying that, to build William Harris's Pawtuxet house, William Carpenter was brought from Amesbury in Massachusetts Bay Colony (see Bridenbaugh 38, 141).

**KEY TO SOURCE NOTES:**

AmParReg	Amesbury, Wiltshire, Parish Register [Family History Library (FHL), Salt Lake City, film #1,279,337, item 25]
Angell Anc	Dean Crawford Smith, <i>The Ancestry of Emily Jane Angell, 1844–1910</i> (Boston, 1992)
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)
Arnold Rec	Ethan L. Arnold, <i>An Arnold Family Record: 323 Years in America</i> (Elkhart, Ind., 1958); digital images online at <a href="http://www.ancestry.com">www.ancestry.com</a>
Austin	John Osborne Austin, <i>The Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island</i> , rev. ed. (Baltimore, 1969)
Baptist Hist	David Benedict, <i>A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World</i> , 2 vols. (Boston, 1813)
Blackstone	William Blackstone, <i>Commentaries on the Laws of England</i> , 1st ed., 4 vols. (Oxford, 1765–1769); transcr. of Book 1, Ch. 17 (pp. 448–54), online at <a href="http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/blackstone/bk1ch17.htm">www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/blackstone/bk1ch17.htm</a>
BQ	<i>The Baptist Quarterly</i> , 11 vols. (Philadelphia, 1867–1877); digital images of vol. 10 (1876) online at <a href="http://books.google.com">http://books.google.com</a>
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, *History and Genealogy of the Carpenter Family in America, from the Settlement at Providence, R.I., 1637–1901* (Jamaica, N.Y., 1901)
- Carpenter Cousins [Carpenter Cousins Y-DNA Project website](#), maintained by John F. Chandler (13 March 2008 update); see [discussion of Carpenter descendant groups 2 \(Providence\) and 3 \(Rehoboth\)](#)
- Chronicle Samuel Gardner Drake, *The Old Indian Chronicle; Being a Collection of Exceeding Rare Tracts Written and Published in the Time of King Philip's War, by Persons Residing in the Country; to Which Are Now Added Marginal Notes and Chronicles of the Indians from the Discovery of America to the Present Time. By S. G. Drake* (Boston, 1836); digital images online at <http://books.google.com>
- Coldham Peter Wilson Coldham, *The Complete Book of Emigrants, 1607–1660* (Baltimore, 1987)
- DHRI Howard M. Chapin, *Documentary History of Rhode Island*, 2 vols. (Providence, 1916–1919)
- Early RI William B. Weedon, *Early Rhode Island: A Social History of the People* (N.Y., 1910); digital images online at <http://books.google.com>
- FMM-VR Flushing, Long Island, Monthly Meeting [of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)], Vital Records 1640–1796 [FHL film #17,376, item 1]; all Flushing Monthly Meeting records are catalogued at Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College and in Hazard Index ([www.swarthmore.edu/Library/friends/hazard/index.html](http://www.swarthmore.edu/Library/friends/hazard/index.html)) as New York Monthly Meeting (Pre [i.e., pre-Separation])
- GM Robert Charles Anderson, George Freeman Sanborn Jr., and Melinde Lutz Sanborn, *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1634–1635*, Volume II C–F (Boston, 2001); Anderson (only), Volume III G–H (Boston, 2003), Volume VI R–S (Boston, 2009)

- GMN *Great Migration Newsletter*, online at [www.greatmigration.org](http://www.greatmigration.org) (subscription website; printed issues available)
- Hotten John C. Hotten, ed., *The Original Lists of Persons of Quality . . .* (London, 1874)
- HP *Harris Papers*, Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, vol. 10 (Providence, 1902)
- Hubbard William Hubbard, *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New England* (1677), reprinted in Samuel Gardner Drake, ed., *The History of the Indian Wars in New England*, with extensive notes by Samuel G. Drake, 2 vols. in 1 (1865; reissued in facsimile, Bowie, Md., 1990)
- Irrepressible Democrat Samuel Hugh Brockunier, *The Irrepressible Democrat Roger Williams* (New York, 1940)
- John Wood Bertha W. Clark, *John Wood of Rhode Island and His Early Descendants on the Mainland*, prepared and edited by Dorothy Wood Ewers (Crete, Ill., 1966); digital images online at [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
- MBCR *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, 1628–1886*, ed. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, 5 vols. in 6 (Boston, 1853–1854); digital images of vol. 2 online at <http://books.google.com>
- MD *The Mayflower Descendant*, vol. 1 through present (1899–1937, 1985–)
- NEHGR *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, vol. 1 (1847) through present
- NYChR *Baptisms from 1639 to 1730 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New York*, Collections of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, vol. 2 (New York, 1901); improved version online at [http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~rbillard/na\\_baptisms\\_1639-1730.htm](http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~rbillard/na_baptisms_1639-1730.htm)
- OBTR *Oyster Bay Town Records*, 8 vols., ed. John Cox (New York, 1916–1940); vol. 1 (digital images online at <http://>)

	<i>books.google.com</i> ) includes Musketa Cove Proprietors' Book
PawWeb	Pawtuxet-related websites: "Pawtuxet Village History" (with map), online at <a href="http://pawtuxet.com/pvhistory.htm">http://pawtuxet.com/pvhistory.htm</a> ; "Pawcatuck, Pawtucket, Pawtuxet: Three Places in Rhode Island?" at <a href="http://www.whipple.org/docs/paws.html">www.whipple.org/docs/paws.html</a> ; "Pawtuxet-Pawtucket," at <a href="http://www.bucklinsociety.net/Pawtucket_Pawtuxet.htm">www.bucklinsociety.net/Pawtucket_Pawtuxet.htm</a>
PCC 93 Kidd	Prerogative Court of Canterbury, England, Registered Wills, vol. 93 Kidd [FHL film #92,005]
PrBMD	<i>Alphabetical Index of the Births, Marriages and Deaths Recorded in Providence, Rhode Island</i> (database, New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2003; online at <a href="http://www.newenglandancestors.org">www.newenglandancestors.org</a> ); originally published as City of Providence, <i>Alphabetical Index of the Births, Marriages and Deaths Recorded in Providence, Rhode Island</i> , 25 vols. (1879–1945)
PrLR	Providence, Rhode Island, Deeds, vols. 1–2 [FHL film #901,254]
PRO/TNA	Public Record Office, The National Archives, London, England; images of <i>James</i> passenger list (ref. CO 1/8, pp. 183–85) available for purchase online at <a href="http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/">www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/</a> → Shop online → Order copies of documents
PrPR	Providence, Rhode Island, Wills, vols. 3–4 [FHL film #915,007, item 1]
PrTR	<i>The Early Records of the Town of Providence</i> , 21 vols. (Providence, 1892–1915); digital images online at <a href="http://books.google.com">http://books.google.com</a> and <a href="http://www.ancestry.com">www.ancestry.com</a>
PrVR	Providence, Rhode Island, Vital Records
PubRIHS	<i>Publications of the Rhode Island Historical Society: New Series</i> , 8 vols. (1893–1901); digital images of vol. 4 (1896) online at <a href="http://books.google.com">http://books.google.com</a>

- RI Cems                      The Rhode Island Historical Cemeteries Transcription Project Master Index, online at [www.rootsweb.com/~rigenweb/cemetery](http://www.rootsweb.com/~rigenweb/cemetery)
- RICR                         *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England*, 10 vols., ed. John Russell Bartlett (Providence, 1856–1865); digital images of vols. 1 and 3 online at [www.familysearch.com](http://www.familysearch.com)
- RICT1                        *Rhode Island Court Records: Records of the Court of Trials of the Colony of Providence Plantations, 1647–1670*, 2 vols. (Providence, 1920–1922); digital images online at [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
- RICT2                        *Rhode Island General Court of Trials, 1671–1704*, transcr. Jane Fletcher Fisk (Boxford, Mass., 1998)
- RI Hist                        Samuel Greene Arnold, *History of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*, 2 vols. (New York, 1859–1860); digital images online at <http://books.google.com>
- RIHSC                        *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections*, vols. 11–34 (1918–1941)
- RILE                         *Rhode Island Land Evidences, Volume I, 1648–1696* (Providence, 1921); digital images online at <http://books.google.com>
- RI Roots                     *Rhode Island Roots*, vol. 1 (1975) through present
- RIVR                         James N. Arnold, *Vital Record of Rhode Island, 1636–1850*, 21 vols. (Providence, 1891–1912); digital images online at [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
- RVR [pub]                    James N. Arnold, *Vital Record of Rehoboth, 1642–1896* (Providence, 1897)
- RWCorr                      *The Correspondence of Roger Williams*, ed. Glenn W. LaFantasie, 2 vols. (Providence, 1988)
- SLR                         *Suffolk Deeds*, 14 vols. (Boston, 1880–1906); digital images of vol. 1 online at <http://books.google.com>

TAG	<i>The American Genealogist</i> , vol. 9 (1932) through present
TG	<i>The Genealogist</i> , vol. 1 (1980) through present
Tillinghasts	Wayne G. Tillinghast, <i>The Tillinghasts in America: The First Four Generations</i> (Greenville, R.I., 2006)
WarPR	Warwick, Rhode Island, Wills, 1703–1745 [FHL film #925,455]
WarTR	<i>More Early Records of the Town of Warwick, Rhode Island</i> , ed. Cherry Fletcher Bamburg and Jane Fletcher Fiske (Boston, 2001)
WarVR	Warwick, Rhode Island, Vital Records, 1649–1750 [FHL film #925,490, item 2]
WJ	<i>The Journal of John Winthrop, 1630–1649</i> , ed. Richard S. Dunne, James Savage, and Laetitia Yeandle (Cambridge, Mass., 1996); digital images online at <a href="http://books.google.com">http://books.google.com</a> (limited preview includes cited pages)
WMM-MM	Westbury, Long Island, Monthly Meeting [of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)], Men's Minutes [FHL film #18,033]
WP	<i>Winthrop Papers, Volume 4, 1638–1644</i> , ed. Allyn Bailey Forbes (Boston, 1944)

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