

= Simon Bradstreet =

Simon Bradstreet (baptized March 18 , 1603 / 4 ? March 27 , 1697) was a colonial magistrate , businessman , diplomat , and the last governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony . Arriving in Massachusetts on the Winthrop Fleet in 1630 , Bradstreet was almost constantly involved in the politics of the colony but became its governor only in 1679 . He served on diplomatic missions and as agent to the crown in London , and also served as a commissioner to the New England Confederation . He was politically comparatively moderate , arguing minority positions in favor of freedom of speech and for accommodation of the demands of King Charles II following his restoration to the throne .

Bradstreet was married to Anne , the daughter of Massachusetts co @-@ founder Thomas Dudley and New England 's first published poet . He was a businessman , investing in land and shipping interests . Due to his advanced age (he died at 93) Cotton Mather referred to him as the " Nestor of New England " . His descendants include the famous jurists Oliver Wendell Holmes , Jr. and David Souter .

= = Early life = =

Simon Bradstreet was baptized on March 18 , 1603 / 4 in Horbling , Lincolnshire , the second of three sons of Simon and Margaret Bradstreet . His father was the rector of the parish church , and was descended from minor Irish nobility . With his father a vocal Nonconformist , the young Simon acquired his Puritan religious views early in life . At the age of 16 , Bradstreet entered Emmanuel College , Cambridge . He studied there for two years , before entering the service of the Earl of Lincoln as an assistant to Thomas Dudley in 1622 . There is some uncertainty about whether Bradstreet returned to Emmanuel College in 1623 ? 1624 . According to Venn , a Simon Bradstreet attended Emmanuel during this time , receiving an M.A. degree , but genealogist Robert Anderson is of the opinion that this was not the same individual . During one of Bradstreet 's stints at Emmanuel he was recommended by John Preston as a tutor or governor to Lord Rich , son of the Earl of Warwick . Rich would have been 12 in 1623 , and Preston was named Emmanuel 's master in 1622 .

Bradstreet took over Dudley 's position when the latter moved temporarily to Boston in 1624 . On Dudley 's return several years later , Bradstreet then briefly served as a steward to the Dowager Countess of Warwick . In 1628 he married Dudley 's daughter Anne , when she was 16 .

In 1628 , Dudley and others from the Earl of Lincoln 's circle formed the Massachusetts Bay Company , with a view toward establishing a Puritan colony in North America . Bradstreet became involved with the company in 1629 , and in April 1630 , the Bradstreets joined the Dudleys and colonial Governor John Winthrop on the fleet of ships that carried them to Massachusetts Bay . There they founded Boston , the capital of the Massachusetts Bay Colony .

= = Massachusetts Bay Colony = =

After a brief stay in Boston , Bradstreet made his first residence in Newtowne (later renamed Cambridge) , near the Dudleys in what is now Harvard Square . In 1637 , during the Antinomian Controversy , he was one of the magistrates that sat at the trial of Anne Hutchinson , and voted for her banishment from the colony . In 1639 he was granted land in Salem , near that of John Endecott . He lived there for a time , moving in 1634 to Ipswich before becoming one of the founding settlers of Andover in 1648 . In 1666 his Andover home was destroyed by fire , supposedly because of " the carelessness of the maid " . He had varied business interests , speculating in land , and investing with other colonists in a ship involved in the coasting trade . In 1660 he purchased shares in the Atherton Company , a land development company with interests in the " Narragansett Country " (present @-@ day southern Rhode Island) . He became one of its leading figures , serving on the management committee , and publishing handbills advertising its lands . When he died he owned more than 1 @,@ 500 acres (610 ha) of land in five communities spread across the colony . He

was known to own two slaves , a woman named Hannah and her daughter Billah .

Bradstreet was heavily involved in colonial politics . When the council met for the first time in Boston , Bradstreet was selected to serve as colonial secretary , a post he would hold until 1644 . He was politically moderate , arguing against legislation and judicial decisions punishing people for speaking out against the governing magistrates . Bradstreet was also outspoken in opposition to the witch hysteria that infested his home town of Salem , culminating in numerous trials in 1692 .

He served for many years as a commissioner representing Massachusetts to the New England Confederation , an organization that coordinated matters of common interest (principally defense) among most of the New England colonies . He was regularly chosen as an assistant , serving on the council that dominated the public affairs of the colony , but did not reach higher office until 1678 , when he was first elected deputy governor under John Leverett . He was against military actions against some of the colony 's foreign neighbors , opposing official intervention in a French Acadian dispute in the 1640s , and also spoke against attacking the New Netherland during the First Anglo - Dutch War (1652 - 1654) .

Bradstreet was sent on a number of diplomatic missions , dealing with settlers , other English colonies , and the Dutch in New Amsterdam . In 1650 he was sent to Hartford , Connecticut , where the Treaty of Hartford was negotiated to determine the boundary between the English colonies and New Amsterdam . In the following years he negotiated an agreement with settlers in York and Kittery to bring them under Massachusetts jurisdiction .

Following the 1660 restoration of Charles II to the throne of England , colonial authorities again became concerned about preserving their charter rights . Bradstreet in 1661 headed a legislative committee to " consider and debate such matters touching their patent rights , and privileges , and duty to his Majesty , as should to them seem proper . " The letter the committee drafted reiterated the colony 's charter rights , and also included declarations of allegiance and loyalty to the crown . Bradstreet and John Norton were chosen as agents to deliver the letter to London . Charles renewed the charter , but sent the agents back to Massachusetts with a letter attaching conditions to his assent . The colony was expected , among other things , to expand religious tolerance to include the Church of England and religious minorities like the Quakers . The agents were harshly criticized by hardline factions of the legislature , but Bradstreet defended the need to accommodate the king 's wishes as the safest course to take . How to respond to the king 's demands divided the colony ; Bradstreet was part of the moderate " accommodationist " faction arguing that the colony should obey the king 's wishes . This faction lost the debate to the hardline " commonwealth " faction , who were in favor of aggressively maintaining the colony 's charter rights , led through the 1660s by governors John Endecott and Richard Bellingham . With Charles distracted by war with the Dutch and domestic politics in the late 1660s , the issue lay dormant until the mid - 1670s . Relations between colony and crown deteriorated when the king then renewed demands for legislative and religious reforms , which hardline magistrates again resisted .

= = Governor = =

In early 1679 Governor John Leverett died , and Bradstreet as deputy succeeded him . Leverett had opposed accommodation of the king 's demands , and the change to an accommodationist leadership was too late . Bradstreet would turn out to be the last governor under its original charter . His deputy , Thomas Danforth was from the commonwealth faction . During his tenure , crown agent Edward Randolph was in the colony , attempting to enforce the Navigation Acts , under which certain types of trade involving the colony were illegal . Randolph 's enforcement attempts were vigorously resisted by both the merchant classes and sympathetic magistrates despite Bradstreet 's attempts to accommodate Randolph . Juries frequently refused to condemn ships accused of violating the acts ; in one instance Bradstreet tried three times to get a jury to change its verdict . Randolph 's attempts to enforce the navigation laws eventually convinced the colony 's general court that it needed to create its own mechanisms for their enforcement . A bill to establish a naval office was vigorously debated in 1681 , with the house of deputies , dominated by the commonwealth party , opposing the idea , and the moderate magistrates supporting it . The bill that finally passed

was a victory for the commonwealth party , making enforcement difficult and subject to reprisal lawsuits . Bradstreet refused to actually implement the law , and Randolph published open challenges to it . Bradstreet was in some degree vindicated when he won re @-@ election in 1682 , and he then used his judicial authority to further undermine the law 's effects .

Randolph 's threats to report the colonial legislature 's intransigence prompted it to dispatch agents to England to argue the colony 's case ; however , their powers were limited . Shortly after their arrival in late 1682 , the Lords of Trade issued an ultimatum to the colony : either grant its agents wider powers , including the ability to negotiate modifications to the charter , or risk having the charter voided . The general court responded by issuing the agents instructions to take a hard line . Following legal processes begun in 1683 , the charter was formally annulled on October 23 , 1684 .

= = Dominion , and temporary return as governor = =

King Charles II in 1684 established the Dominion of New England . Bradstreet 's brother @-@ in @-@ law Joseph Dudley , who had served as one of the colonial agents , was commissioned by James as President of the Council for New England in 1685 by King James II , and took control of the colony in May 1686 . Bradstreet was offered a position on Dudley 's council , but refused . Dudley was replaced in December 1686 by Sir Edmund Andros , who came to be greatly detested in Massachusetts for vacating existing land titles , and seizing Congregational church properties for Church of England religious services . Andros ' high @-@ handed rule was also unpopular in the other colonies of the dominion .

The idea of revolt against Andros arose as early as January 1689 , before news of the December 1688 Glorious Revolution reached Boston . After William and Mary took the throne , Increase Mather and Sir William Phips , Massachusetts agents in London , petitioned them and the Lords of Trade for restoration of the Massachusetts charter . Mather furthermore convinced the Lords of Trade to delay notifying Andros of the revolution . He had already dispatched to Bradstreet a letter containing news that a report (prepared before the revolution) stating that the charter had been illegally annulled , and that the magistrates should " prepare the minds of the people for a change . " News of the revolution apparently reached some individuals as early as late March , and Bradstreet is one of several possible organizers of the mob that formed in Boston in April 18 , 1689 . He , along with other pre @-@ Dominion magistrates and some members of Andros ' council , addressed an open letter to Andros on that day calling for his surrender in order to quiet the mob . Andros , who had fled to the safety of Castle Island , surrendered , and was eventually returned to England after several months in confinement .

In the wake of Andros ' arrest , a council of safety was formed , with Bradstreet as its president . The council drafted a letter to William and Mary , justifying the colony 's acts in language similar to that used by William in his proclamations when he invaded England . The council fairly quickly decided to revert to the government as it had been under the old charter . In this form Bradstreet resumed the governorship , and was annually re @-@ elected governor until 1692 . He had to defend the colony against those who were opposed to the reintroduction of the old rule , who he characterized in reports to London as malcontents and strangers stirring up trouble . The colony 's northern frontier was also engulfed in King William 's War , where there was frequent Indian raiding . Bradstreet approved the expeditions of Sir William Phips in 1690 against Acadia and Quebec .

In 1691 William and Mary issued a charter establishing the Province of Massachusetts Bay , and appointed Phips its first governor . Bradstreet was offered a position on Phips ' council when the new governor arrived in 1692 , but declined . Bradstreet died at his home in Salem on 27 March 1697 at the age of 93 ; due to his advanced age he was called the " Nestor of New England " by Cotton Mather .

= = Family and legacy = =

Bradstreet was buried in the Charter Street Burying Ground in Salem . Poetry by his first wife Anne was published in England in 1650 , including verses containing expressions of enduring love for her

husband . Anne Bradstreet died in 1672 ; the couple had eight children , of whom seven survived infancy . In 1676 Bradstreet married Ann Gardner , the widow of Captain Joseph Gardner , son of Thomas Gardner of Salem . His many descendants include jurists Oliver Wendell Holmes , Jr. and David Souter , U.S. President Herbert Hoover , and actor Humphrey Bogart .