

Pilgrim Village Families Sketch: Francis Cooke

By Robert Charles Anderson

Birth: Francis Cooke was born about 1583.

Death: He died in Plymouth on April 7, 1663.

Ship: *Mayflower*, 1620

Life in England: Francis Cooke and his family spent some time in Norwich, Norfolk between 1606 and 1608, but the purpose is unknown. Hester Cooke identified herself as being from Canterbury in her betrothal registration.

Life in Holland: Francis Cooke was living in Leiden by April 1603, when he worked there as a woolcomber. His wife's family were Walloons, originally from the town of Lille in Flanders, coming to Leiden from London in 1590. Hester joined the Walloon church just before her betrothal, but there is no record of Francis joining. He did appear in the records as witness to a baptism and a betrothal. Three of their children are listed in the church records between 1607–1611, but none thereafter and they may have joined the English Separatist church at that time.

Life in New England: Francis Cooke and his son John came to New England aboard the *Mayflower*. Hester, Jane, Jacob and Hester joined them in the summer of 1623, coming over on the *Anne* or *Little James*. Francis was in the 1633 list of Plymouth freemen and served on various committees and juries over the years. Although he owned land on the North River and Namaskett, he remained in Plymouth.

Family: Francis Cooke married Hester Mahieu in Leiden on July 20, 1603, or shortly thereafter. They had seven children. The birth order for the first three is uncertain. Hester died after June 8, 1666.

Children of Francis and Hester Cooke:

- John was baptized in Leiden between January and March 1607. He married Sarah Warren on March 28, 1634, in Plymouth and had five children. He died in Dartmouth on November 23, 1695. She died after July 15, 1696.
- A child was buried in Leiden on May 20, 1608.
- Jane was born about 1609 in Leiden. She married Experience Mitchell in Plymouth after May 22, 1627. Her date of death is unknown, as is the date of his second marriage, but his first three children are generally considered to be hers.
- Elizabeth was baptized in Leiden on December 26, 1611. There is no further record.
- Jacob was born about 1618. He married (1) Damaris Hopkins shortly after June 10, 1646, in Plymouth and had seven children. He married (2) Elizabeth (Lettice) Shurtleff on November 18, 1669, in Plymouth and had two children. He died in Plymouth in December 1675.
- Hester was born about 1620 in Leiden. She married Richard Wright in Plymouth in 1644 and had six children. She died between 1669 and 1691.
- Mary was born in Plymouth about 1625. She married John Tompson on December 26, 1645, in Plymouth and had twelve children. She died in Middleboro on March 21, 1714.