

Pilgrim Village Families Sketch: William Holmes

By Robert Charles Anderson

Birth: William Holmes was born by 1610, based on his date of freemanship.

Death: He died between November 12 and 30, 1649.

Ship: Unknown, 1632

Life in England: William Holmes was a soldier. He returned to England in 1641 to serve in the Civil War, and returned to New England with the rank of Major. He also had property in Antigua.

Life in New England: As Lieutenant William Holmes, he escorted Massachusetts Bay Colony governor, John Winthrop, and his party on their return north from Plymouth. On March 2 1635/6, and again on March 1, 1636/7, he was employed by the colony to teach the use of arms. On June 7, 1637, he was elected as the leader of company of men sent to fight the Pequots. By 1639, he had removed to Duxbury and in 1641, had returned to England to fight in the Civil War. By 1645, he had returned to New England, by his own account very poor. Depositions concerning his estate indicate that he was living in a tavern in Boston, with financial support from his kinsman, Job Hawkins, by the time of his death.

Family: There is no evidence that William Holmes married or had children. His November 1649 will named only his sister-inlaw, four nieces and his kinsman, Job Hawkins.