

# Pilgrim Village Families Sketch: John Carver

By Robert Charles Anderson

**Birth:** John Carver's date of birth is unknown (but see below).

**Death:** He died in April 1621. His wife died "within five or six weeks after him."

**Ship:** *Mayflower*, 1620

**Life in England:** Charles Banks identified John Carver as identical with the son of Robert Carver baptized on September 9, 1565, at Doncaster, Yorkshire. This location would place him near the homes of John Robinson and William Brewster and others of the early Separatist church. The identification remains unproved.

**Life in Holland:** The Carvers were in Leiden by May 22, 1615, when Catherine Carver was a witness at a betrothal. John Carver was one of the men who acted for the colonists in England between 1617 and 1620, negotiating with investors and buying provisions.

**Life in New England:** John Carver traveled aboard the *Mayflower* with his wife; two children under his care, Desire Minter and Jasper Moore; two manservants, John Howland and Roger Wilder; an unnamed maidservant; and a servant boy, William Latham. Carver was in the first group that explored Cape Cod in November, 1620. He was chosen governor of the colony for the first year and negotiated the treaty with Massasoit. In April, while planting seed, he came out of the field "complaining greatly of his head" and died several days later. His wife died several weeks after that.

**Family:** John Carver married Catherine (White) Leggatt sometime after 1599. There were no recorded children.