

Richard Warren

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Richard Warren (c. 1578–died c.1628) was one of the passengers on the Pilgrim ship *Mayflower* and a signer of the Mayflower Compact.^[1]



Mayflower in Plymouth Harbor by William Halsall (1882)

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Early life

Richard Warren married Elizabeth Walker, at Great Amwell, Hertfordshire, on April 14, 1610. Elizabeth Walker was the daughter of Augustine Walker of Great Amwell. She was baptized at Baldock in September 1583. This information came to light with the discovery of Augustine Walker's will dated April 19, 1613, in which he named his daughter Elizabeth and her children Mary, Ann and Sarah Warren.^[2]

Based on his marriage in Hertfordshire, current speculation is that he also came from that county. His parentage and apparent birthplace in Hertfordshire are uncertain, but there is a Warren family that may be of that ancestry residing in the vicinity of Therfield.^[1]

The author and genealogist Charles Edward Banks states that Warren came from London and was called a “merchant” of that city (Mourt).^[3] Richard Warren was one of those very few English merchants who signed on to make the *Mayflower* voyage as a member of the Leiden contingent. His reason for this has not been determined, and given his status, it is unusual that little is actually known of him.^[1]

The *Mayflower*

At the time of the *Mayflower*'s voyage in 1620, Richard and his wife had five daughters: Mary, Ann, Sarah, Elizabeth and Abigail. But Richard came on the *Mayflower* alone, deciding to wait until conditions in the New World were satisfactory before bringing over his family.^[1] Bradford's recollection of that time: “Mr. Richard Warren, but his wife and children were left behind, and came afterwards.”^[4]

The *Mayflower* departed Plymouth, England on September 6/16, 1620. The small, 100 ft (30 m) ship had 102 passengers and a crew of about 30-40 in extremely cramped conditions. By the second month out, the ship was being buffeted by strong westerly gales, causing the ship's timbers to be badly shaken with caulking failing to keep out sea water, and with passengers, even in their berths, lying wet and ill. This, combined with a lack of proper rations and unsanitary conditions for several months, attributed to what would be fatal for many, especially the majority of women and children. On the way there were two deaths, a crew member and a passenger, but the worst was yet to come after arriving at their destination when, in the space of several months, almost half the passengers perished in cold, harsh, unfamiliar New England winter.^[5]

On November 9/19, 1620, after about 3 months at sea, including a month of delays in England, they spotted land, which was the Cape Cod Hook, now called Provincetown Harbor. After several days of trying to get south to their planned destination of the Colony of Virginia, strong winter seas forced them to return to the harbor at Cape Cod hook, where they anchored on November 11/21. The *Mayflower Compact* was signed that day. ^{[5][6]}Richard Warren's name appears 12th in the list.



Signing the Mayflower Compact 1620, a painting by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris 1899

In the New World

He participated in some of the early explorations of Cape Cod, when a suitable settlement location was being searched for.^[1]

One such extensive exploration began on Wednesday, December 6, 1620 in freezing weather using the ship's shallop, a light, shallow-water boat with oars and sails which was navigated by two pilots, with a master gunner and three sailors. Pilgrims on board, in addition to Richard Warren, were senior members (Governor) Carver, Bradford, Standish and Winslow along with John and Edward Tilley, John Howland, Stephen Hopkins and Hopkins servant, Edward Doty. These persons were less than half the number of the previous exploration due to many having been felled by illness, the English exploring in freezing temperatures wearing unsuitable clothing due to not planning for the severity of the New England winter weather. This exploration would result in their first encounter with Indians and did not turn out well, as they learned that slow-firing muskets were no match for rapid-fire arrows. This Indian challenge to the Pilgrims was later known as the First Encounter.^[7]

In 1623 Warren felt that conditions were right to bring his family over from England, and they arrived that year on the *Anne*.^[8]

In the 1623 Division of Land, Warren received two “akers” (acres) of land in one area – “these lye one the north side of the towne nexte adjoyning to their gardens which came in Fortune” and five acres in another – “these following lye on the other side of the towne towards the eele-riuer (Eel River)” (as Richard “Waren”).^{[9][10]}

In Plymouth two more children were added to their family - in 1624 his wife Elizabeth gave birth to a son Nathaniel and in 1626 another son, Joseph.”^[9]

In 1626 twenty seven Plymouth settlers , called Purchasers, were involved with the colony joint-stock company which afterwards was turned over to the control of senior colony members. That group was called Undertakers, and were made up of such as Bradford, Standish and Allerton initially who were later joined by Winslow, Brewster, Howland, Alden, Prence and others from London, former Merchant Adventurers. The agreement was dated October 26, 1626 and was finalized sometime in 1627. Richard Warren may have originally been a party to the agreement, but due to his death, which may have been sometime in 1628, his name on the charter was replaced by that of his

wife, recorded as “Elizabeth Warren, widow.”^[11] Elizabeth Warren, as a widow, was named in a law passed by the Plymouth Court specifically to give her the Purchaser status that her husband had – “hee dying before he had performed the bargaine, the said Elizabeth performed the same after his decease, ...”^[12]

In the 1627 Division of Cattle, Richard, his wife and their seven children, in the ninth lot, received several animals that had arrived on the ship Jacob, apparently in 1625. The ninth lot also listed John Billington and the Soule (spelled Sowle) family.^{[9][13]}

In his “Increasings and Decreasings”, Bradford assigns Richard Warren the title of “Mr.” which indicates someone of status, but does not mention him at all in his recording of Plymouth history. And except for a few mentions elsewhere, not very much is known about him in Plymouth, but the Warren family does seem to have been among those with wealth.^[14]

During her widowhood, Elizabeth Warren’s name is noted in Plymouth Colony records. She was listed as the executor of her husband’s estate, paying taxes as head of household and as an independent agent in her own right.^[15]

Marriage and Children

Richard Warren married Elizabeth Walker, daughter of Augustine Walker, on April 14, 1610, at Great Amwell, Hertfordshire. ^[16]

Children of Richard and Elizabeth Warren:

- Mary was born about 1610 and died on March 27, 1683 in Plymouth. She married Robert Bartlett about 1629 and had eight children. He died between September 19 and October 29, 1676 in Plymouth. She and her husband were buried at White Horse Cemetery Plymouth, Mass.
- Ann was born about 1611/2 and died after February 19, 1675/6. She married Thomas Little on April 28, 1633 in Plymouth and had nine children. He died shortly before March 12, 1671/2 in Marshfield.

- Sarah was born about 1613 and died after July 15, 1696. She married John Cooke, son of Francis Cooke, on March 28, 1634 and had five children. He died on November 23, 1695 in Dartmouth.
- Elizabeth was born about 1615 and died on March 9, 1669/70 in Hingham. She married Richard Church by 1635/6 and had eleven children. He died December 27, 1668 in Dedham.
- Abigail was born about 1619 and died after January 3, 1692/3 in Marshfield. She married Anthony Snow on November 8, 1639 in Plymouth and had six children. He died in August 1692 in Marshfield.
- Nathaniel was born about 1624 in Plymouth and died between July 21 and and October 31, 1667 in Plymouth. He married Sarah Walker on November 19, 1645 in Plymouth and had twelve children. She died on November 24, 1700.
- Joseph was born by 1627 in Plymouth and died on May 4, 1689 in Plymouth. He married Priscilla Faunce about 1653 and had six children. She died on May 15, 1707 in Plymouth.^{[17][18]}

Richard Warren death and burial

Richard Warren died of unknown causes, possibly sometime in 1628, exact date unknown. Nathaniel Morton in his 1669 book *New England's Memorial*, p. 68, recorded that "This Year (1628) died Mr. Richard Warren, who was an useful Instrument; and during his life bare a deep share of the Difficulties and Troubles of the first Settlement of the Plantation of New-Plymouth [sic]."^{[9][14]}

From Bradford's recorded Plymouth history: "Mr. Richard Warren lived some *4* or *5* years, and had his wife come over to him, by whom he had *2* sons before (he) dyed; and one of them is maryed, and hath *2* children. So his increase is *4* But he had *5* doughters more came over with his wife, who are all married, and living, and have many children."^[5]

Banks states that Richard Warren died before 1628 and it probable that he was considerably past middle life at the time of emigration in 1620.^[3] Richard Warren was buried at Burial Hill in Plymouth.^[19]

Richard Warren's widow Elizabeth would live to be more than ninety years of age, dying on October 2, 1673. Her death as noted in Plymouth Colony records: "Misstris Elizabeth Warren, an aged widow, ...haveing lived a godly life, came to her grave as a shoke of corn fully ripe". She was buried at Burial Hill in Plymouth.^{[9][20][21][22]}

See also

- *Mayflower*
- Mayflower Compact
- *Of Plymouth Plantation*
- Pilgrims
- Plymouth Colony
- Thanksgiving

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4. [^] Eugene Aubrey Stratton. *Plymouth Colony: Its History and People, 1620-1691*, (Salt Lake City: Ancestry Publishing, 1986), p. 406
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10. ^ Eugene Aubrey Stratton. *Plymouth Colony: Its History and People, 1620-1691*, (Salt Lake City: Ancestry Publishing, 1986), pp. 416-417
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14. ^ *a b* Eugene Aubrey Stratton. *Plymouth Colony: Its History and People, 1620-1691*, (Salt Lake City: Ancestry Publishing, 1986), p. 367
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