

JAMES CHILTON

ORIGIN: Leiden, Holland

MIGRATION: 1620 on *Mayflower*

FIRST RESIDENCE: Died before *Mayflower* reached Plymouth

OCCUPATION: Tailor.

ESTATE: In the 1623 Plymouth land division "Marie Chilton" received an unknown number of acres as a passenger on the *Mayflower* [PCR 12:4]. In the 1627 Plymouth cattle division Mary, now the wife of John Winslow, is listed as the sixth person in the sixth company [PCR 12:11].

BIRTH: About 1556 (aged 63 in 1619 [Bangs 34]), probably at Canterbury, Kent, son of Lionel Chilton by an unknown first wife [TAG 38:244].

DEATH: 8 December 1620 off Cape Cod [Prince 165].

MARRIAGE: By 1586 _____; she d. Plymouth early in 1621 [Bradford 446]. (John G. Hunt has suggested, reasonably, but on limited evidence, that she was Susanne Furner, James Chilton's stepsister [TAG 38:244-45].)

CHILDREN:

i ISABELLA, bp. St. Paul's, Canterbury, Kent, 15 January 1586/7 [MF 2:5]; m. Leiden 21 July 1615 [NS] ROGER CHANDLER [MD 11:129].

ii JANE, bp. St. Paul's, Canterbury, 8 June 1589 [MF 2:5]; no further record.

iii JOEL, bur. St. Martin's, Canterbury, 2 November 1593 [MF 2:5].

iv MARY, bur. St. Martin's, Canterbury, 23 November 1593 [MF 2:5].

v ELIZABETH, bp. St. Martin's, Canterbury, 14 July 1594 [MF 2:5]; no further record.

vi JAMES, bp. St. Martin's, Canterbury, 22 August 1596 [MF 2:5]; d. by 11 September 1603.

vii INGLE, bp. St. Paul's, Canterbury, 29 April 1599 [MF 2:5]; thought to be the "Engeltgen Gilten" who m. Leiden 27 August 1622 [NS] Robert Nelson [Dexter 627]; no further record.

viii CHRISTIAN (dau.), bp. St. Peter's, Sandwich, Kent, 26 July 1601 [MF 2:5]; no further record.

ix JAMES, bp. St. Peter's, Sandwich, 11 September 1603 [MF 2:5]; no further record.

x MARY, bp. St. Peter's, Sandwich, 30 May 1607 [MF 2:5]; m. Plymouth by 22 May 1627 JOHN WINSLOW.

COMMENTS: On 12 June 1609, "[blank] the wife of James Chilton" was excommunicated from St Peters, Sandwich, Canterbury [NEHGR 153:407-12].

Until recently there was no direct evidence that James Chilton resided in Leiden, despite the marriage of one and perhaps two daughters there. Recent research in Leiden has revealed a notarial record detailing an assault on James Chilton, aged 63, and his daughter on 28 April 1619 [NS]; this assault has been interpreted as one of the reasons leading the Pilgrims to believe that they were becoming less welcome in Leiden, and therefore as a factor in the decision to leave for New England [Bangs 34; see also Stratton 262].

In his list of those on the *Mayflower* Bradford included "James Chilton and his wife, and Mary their daughter; they had another daughter that was married, came afterward" [Bradford 442]. In his accounting of the family in 1651 Bradford reported that "James Chilton and his wife also died in the first infection, but their daughter Mary is still living and hath nine children; and one daughter is married and hath a child. So their increase is ten" [Bradford 446].

The death date for James Chilton is given variously as 6, 8, or 18 December 1620. The best evidence for the date is Prince, who cites a now-lost notebook kept by [WILLIAM BRADFORD](#) [Prince 165]. The date of 18 December may have arisen when someone corrected for the 1752 calendar change, an unnecessary confusion. A month before his death James Chilton signed the Mayflower Compact. A longstanding tradition has held that Mary Chilton was the first of the *Mayflower* passengers to step onto Plymouth Rock. Charles Thornton Libby carried out a detailed examination of this story, published as *Mary Chilton's Title to Celebrity* (Boston 1926; rpt. Warwick RI 1978).
BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE: [JAMES CHILTON](#) has been treated in the second volume of the Mayflower Society's Five Generations Project [[MF](#) 2:1-117].

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