

SAMUEL FULLER OF THE *MAYFLOWER*

Among those on board the ship *Mayflower* when it finally reached New England in November, 1620 was Samuel Fuller, who had been baptized in Redenhall Parish, County of Norfolk, England on 20 January 1580. His wife Bridget and their child came later in 1623 on the ship *Anne*.

There was a Protestant revolt in England, and the group called Separatists were forced to flee the county to Holland to escape fines and punishments for their illegal religious practices. Samuel Fuller was a deacon in the church of this religious group in Leyden. He married first Alice Glascock, who died before 1613. He then married Agnes Carpenter on April 14, 1613. She died in Leyden in 1615. And Samuel Fuller was again married on May 27, 1617 to Bridget Lee.

After about 10 years enjoying Holland's acceptance of different religious practices, these Separatists found their children speaking the Dutch language and playing with the Dutch children. They did not approve of the Dutch customs, and they wanted to keep their English customs and way of life and especially their Separatist religion.

After financial and political difficulties, the decision was finally made to cross the Atlantic Ocean to the New World in search of religious freedom. Two ships were obtained: the *Speedwell* (which leaked and could not make the journey) and the *Mayflower*. Problem after problem delayed their departure, and they had to cross the stormy North Atlantic at a bad time of the year. After 66 miserable days at sea with 102 passengers packed in that tiny ship, they finally anchored near Provincetown on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. Samuel Fuller was on of the 41 men who signed the Mayflower Compact on board the ship. This famous historic document is an example of our country's earliest democratic government.

The site near Plymouth Rock was finally selected for the settlement of Plymouth Colony. Today we call all of the people who settled here the Pilgrims. Samuel Fuller survived that first terrible winter when half of the group which had just arrived died from some unidentified epidemic. He was again a deacon in the Plymouth Church. He was a physician and surgeon and provided medical service to Plymouth Colony as well as the neighboring Massachusetts Bay Colony. And in 1632 he was an Assistant in the Colony Governor's Council.

Samuel Fuller died before October 28, 1633, perhaps in the second epidemic to hit the young colony. His widow Bridget opened a small private school after her husband's death and then served as a midwife in Rehoboth, dying after 1664. Samuel Fuller had at least four children by his three wives, but only one is known to have survived to marry and have children.

Child of Samuel and Bridget (Lee) Fuller:

1. SAMUEL was born about 1624 in Plymouth. He had an unknown first wife and married second about 1665 ELIZABETH (NICHOLS) BOWEN. Samuel was a physician and minister. He had eight children, and six of those later married and had Fuller descendants.

Which grandchild of Pilgrim Samuel Fuller is your Mayflower ancestor?