



FOUNDING FEMALES Female Qualifying Ancestor Index

Female Ancestor Number: 020

Name: Mullins, Priscilla

Dates: (c. 1600/05-aft 1650)

Colonial Society: MA

Date added to ROA: 12-5-2013

Service: Mayflower Passenger, 1620

Authority: Bradford's History of Plimoth Plantation, pp. 448, 452, 454.

Biography:

Priscilla is thought to have been born in Dorking, Mole Valley in Surrey, England in the early 1600's. She was the daughter of William Mullins and his wife Alice, Priscilla's step-mother. The Mullins' were part of the Puritan Separatist movement seeking to "purify" the Church of England from its Roman Catholic remnants. The Separatists faced persecution from King James I and were forced to flee England. Seeking religious freedom, William, Alice, 17-year-old Priscilla and her brother Joseph boarded the Mayflower in 1620 leaving behind a brother and sister in England.

Neither William, Alice or Joseph survived the first harsh winter in the new settlement of Plymouth leaving Priscilla an orphan. The small tight-knit community of Puritans looked after each other, and it is presumed that Priscilla was taken-in by another family when she was orphaned.

Priscilla married John Alden, a fellow Mayflower passenger, about 1622. He was a cooper and respected in the community. It is thought that their marriage was the third to occur in Plymouth following Edward Winslow and Susanna White in 1621 and Francis Eaton and Dorothy. Priscilla and John had 10 children. Presumably, the first three were born in Plymouth with the remaining being born in Duxbury.

The Pilgrims had a contract with financial backers in London for their settlement in the new world. They were required to live together in community for seven years after which, in 1627 they could settle outside of the first settlements' boundaries. Priscilla and John eventually settled in Duxbury, just north of Plymouth, with their family and are noted as founders of the new community.

Priscilla is last recorded in historic records in the 1650's, and her exact death date is not determined. Priscilla and John's graves are in the Myles Standish Burial Ground at Duxbury.

Even though Priscilla's life was not heavily detailed in the annals of history, her story was Romanized in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's famous poem *The Courtship of Miles Standish*. Longfellow was a direct descendant of John and Priscilla Alden.