

# Pilgrims William White & Susannah Jackson

## Mayflower Passengers 1620

---

### Jackson, Susanna (- 1654)

#### Person Note:

Most Mayflower researchers argue that Susanna (White) Winslow was not the sister of Samuel and Edward Fuller [MF 5:7, 13:2, 5:7; NEHGR 110:182-83; MD 53:67-69; PM 215, 217]. On 30 October 1623, Edward Winslow wrote from London to "his much respected Uncle Mr. Robert Jackson" who was clerk of the sewers at Spalding, Lincolnshire. In his letter he wrote that "almost two years since I wrote to my father-in-law declaring the death of his son White & the continued health of his daughter and her two children; also how that by God's providence she was become my wife... My wife hath had one child by me, but it pleased him that gave it to take it again unto himself; I left her with child at my departure (whom God preserve) but hope to be with her before her delivery" [NEHGR 1955:242-43]. This remains the best clue to the identity of the wife of William White. (Anderson). The letter is in the Lincolnshire Archives; addressed to Robert Jackson in Spalding and was written by Susanna's second husband, Mayflower Pilgrim Edward Winslow in 1623.

#### UPDATE:

Susanna White's origins were discovered in 2017 after more than a century of failed attempts to identify her.

Works Cited: *Sue Allan, Caleb Johnson and Simon Neal: "The Origin of Mayflower Passenger Susanna (Jackson)(White) Winslow," The American Genealogist, Whole Number 356, Vol. 89, no. 4, October 2017, pp 241-264.*

Susanna was the daughter of Richard Jackson of Braithwell and Mary (Pettinger) Jackson, who were married in Doncaster, Yorkshire, in 1591, and later moved to Scrooby. Richard Jackson's father was James Jackson of Braithwell (buried at Spalding, Lincolnshire, in 1602). Two of James' sons, John and Robert Jackson, moved to Spalding, Lincolnshire, where the elder John was clerk of sewers from 1586 to 1607, and the younger Robert took over in 1607 and continued until his death in 1624/5. Their sister Jane remained in Braithwell, and brother Richard went to Doncaster and later Scrooby.

Susanna was among those directly tied to John Robinson and William Brewster's separatist congregation, placing her in the center of the history of the Pilgrims and the colonization of America. Susanna, presumably moved to Amsterdam about 1608 and joined the Henry Ainsworth congregation, and there met and married William White. William White's mother, Thomasine (Cross)(May) White, considered Margaret, wife of John Jackson of Spalding, her kinswoman, so Susanna Jackson and William White may have known each other via this distant kinship (which appears to come via the Bryan or Bendish families) even before they were married in Amsterdam. She remained, with her husband, as a member of the Henry Ainsworth congregation in Amsterdam, until they decided to come on the Mayflower with the Leiden church congregation. Members of the Amsterdam congregation had contemplated joining with the Leiden group, but most pulled back after financial disputes with Robert Cushman, a leader and organizer of the Mayflower voyage. William and Susanna White, perhaps because of their niece Dorothy (May), wife of William Bradford, chose to continue on.

On 30 October 1623, Edward Winslow wrote to Susanna's uncle Robert Jackson, clerk of sewers, inquiring about his father-in-law (i.e. Richard Jackson), his wife's brother (identified as Thomas Jackson), and his wife's sisters. Several letters written by Richard Jackson to his brother Robert survive in the clerk of sewers records at Spalding dated 1623 and 1624. The letters reveal Richard Jackson had traveled to Holland, was in contact with Puritan ministers in London, and he was writing from Everton (the parish that borders Scrooby Manor).

Richard Jackson (James) was born about 1562, married in Doncaster, Yorkshire, on 1 Dec 1591, Mary Pettinger, who was baptized in Carlton-in-Lindrick, Nottinghamshire, 12 Sept 1561, daughter of John and Alice Pettinger and granddaughter of Richard and Mabel Pettinger. By 1598, Richard and Mary Jackson had settled in Scrooby, Nottinghamshire,

*Mayflower Quarterly Magazine, Fall 2018, Vol 84, No 3, p17*

Separatist leader Richard Jackson, the bailiff and tenant at Scrooby Manor where he served the Archbishop of York, and where he and his daughter, Susanna (Jackson) (White) (Winslow) lived.

#### Comment Fact Note:

---

The scanned painting on the cover of *The Mayflower Quarterly Vol. 76 No 3 p 227 Sept 2010*, "The First Thanksgiving at Plymouth" represents Susannah's young son Resolved standing by her and baby son Peregrine in a cradle (young boys, until about seven years of age, wore skirts until they were "breeched", that is, dressed for the first time as a young man.)The cradle, brought on the Mayflower by William and Susannah White is displayed at Pilgrim Hall Museum.

Relationship Note:

(Edward Winslow) ref: MF:13:3 - Susanna married 2nd, Edward Winslow by whom she had a child who died young, Edward, John, Josiah and Elizabeth.

**White, William (1587 - 1621)**

Person Note:

Governor Bradford says that among the Mayflower passengers were "Mr William White and Susannah his wife and one son called Resolved, and one born a-shipboard called Peregrine, and two servants named William Holbeck and Edward Thompson." In 1651 he added that "Mr. White and his two servants died soon after landing. His wife married with Mr. Winslow.... His two sons are married and Resolved hath five children, Peregrine two, all living. So their increase are seven." (Sherman)

"William and Susannah White left England with their son Resolved on the Mayflower. The Mayflower was an English ship that famously transported the first English Puritans, known today as the Pilgrims, from Plymouth, England to the New World in 1620. At Cape Cod on November 11, 1620 according to the old calendar, William was one of the forty one signers of the Mayflower Compact. Two or three weeks later, son Peregrine was born, the first English birth in Plymouth Colony. Susanna was widowed in February. She became the first colony bride in May, marrying Edward Winslow, a Mayflower passenger who had lost his wife a few weeks before. At least four children were born to Susanna and Edward Winslow." (Sherman)

UPDATE: The origins of William White in England were discovered in 2017 in a research project by Caleb Johnson, Sue Allan, and Simon Neal. The results of this research were published in the following genealogical articles:

Caleb Johnson, Sue Allan and Simon Neal:

*"The English Origin and Kinship of Mayflower Passengers William White and Dorothy (May) Bradford of Wisbech, Cambridgeshire," The American Genealogist, Whole Number 354, Vol. 89, no. 2, April 2017, pp. 81-94*

*"The English Origin and Kinship of Mayflower Passengers William White and Dorothy (May) Bradford Of Wisbech, Cambridgeshire (concluded)," The American Genealogist, Whole Number 355, Vol. 89, no. 3, July 2017, pp 168-188.*

William White was born in Wisbech and was the son of Edward and Thomasine (Cross)(May) White. He was the uncle of William Bradford's first wife Dorothy May. Susanna was the daughter of Richard and Mary (Pettinger) Jackson. Her father leased part of the Scrooby Manor and fled with Bradford to Amsterdam in 1608 to avoid arrest for Brownism. The Brownists were a group of English Dissenters or Separatists (Protestant Christians) who separated from the Church of England. A majority of the Separatists aboard the Mayflower were Brownists.

William was given permission to reside in Amsterdam in June 1608. William and Susanna met in Amsterdam and married there. They were members of Henry Ainsworth's congregation and were the only members to join the Mayflower group from Leiden.

The Wisbeck Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul is the home church of William White, where he was baptized on 25 January 1586. He is the son of Edward White and Thomasine (Cross) May White. After the death of his parents, he lived with his maternal grandmother Jacomine. On her death he went to Amsterdam where his half siblings, Henry and Jacomine May had fled. Jacomine May married Jean de l'Ecuse in Amsterdam which event William witnessed. Henry's daughter Dorothy became the first wife of William Bradford. She died tragically in Providencetown harbor by falling overboard. William White and susanna became the only members of Henry Ainsworth's church to sail on the Mayflower when the other members of Amsterdam church planning to immigrate backed out.  
*The American Genealogist No. 354, April 2017, Vol 89, No. 2*

---

Recent research on William White's origin at Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, shows he had a (female) first cousin also named Peregrine.

Sources & Works Cited:

- *The Complete Mayflower Descendant, Mayflower Deeds and Wills, 1600s-1900s*, researcher George Ernest Bowman. Susan E. Roser compiled the "Bowman Files" into five Genealogical Publishing Company books; *Mayflower Births and Deaths, Volume I, Mayflower Births and Deaths, Volume II, Mayflower Increasing, Mayflower Marriages, Mayflower Deeds and Probates*.
- *Genealogies of Mayflower Families, 1500s-1800s*, originally published by the Genealogical Publishing Company. Articles originally appeared in *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* (NEHGR) between 1847 and 1985.
- MF:13:1
- *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 175 (Spring 2021)
- *The American Genealogist* 89:83-84
- Cambridge University Library, *Ely Diocesan Records, B/2/26* (Act Book 1606-1608), folio 132 [note 3], folio 132d.
- Sherman, Ruth Wilder Sherman and Robert Moody Sherman. *Mayflower Families Through Five Generations (MF) William White*. Ed. Robert S. Wakefield. Second Edition. Vol. 13. Pages 3-4. Plymouth MA: General Society of Mayflower Descendants, 2002.
- Anderson, Robert Charles. *The Pilgrim Migration: Immigrants To Plymouth Colony 1620-1633*. Boston MA: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2004, page 496.

Immigration Fact Note:

The Pilgrims landed in what is now Provincetown, MA, and signed the Mayflower Compact on 11 November 1620 onboard the Mayflower shortly after anchoring off Provincetown Harbor. The 17th century records do not mention Plymouth Rock. Having landed on Cape Cod, a small party set out to explore. Finding poor soil and lack of fresh water, they decided to look further. William Bradford writes of how the exploring party from the Mayflower, sailing in the shallop, landed on Clark's Island. The party landed for the first time in Plymouth on December 21, 1620.

Information Fact Note:

*Pilgrim William White Society*, Volume IX number 3 July 2021, pp. 2-4.  
"More discovered on William White", By Cousins Mike Beard & Alan Smith

Researchers, Sue Allan, Caleb Johnson, and Simon Neal (research conducted in part at Cambridgeshire Archives) discovered William White, and his half-siblings Henry and Jacomine May, were excommunicated; also established, William was a shoemaker.

Their findings were also published in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* (Volume 175 Whole Number 698 Spring 2021). Visit [www.americanancestors.org](http://www.americanancestors.org) for more information on the journal article.

The record shows that Henry and his sister Jacomine May, and William White, shoemaker, were cited for non-conformity. William White was cited for being "negligent in coming to divine service" and for being a "favourer of the sort of the Brownists." Citations and the proclamation was posted to the church door.

William and his half siblings Henry and Jacomine May arrived in Amsterdam in May and August of 1608 and there they all joined the Ancient Brethren Church. When the congregation split shortly thereafter, they followed Henry Ainsworth. On 5 May 1609, Jacomine May married in Amsterdam, printer Jan l'Ecluse, with her half-brother William White accompanying her.

(Record of the Diocese of Ely, Cambridgeshire, England)  
Cambridge University Library, *Ely Diocesan Records, B/2/26* (Act Book 1606-1608), folio 132 [note 3],

---

folio 132d.

At Wisbech St. Peters

Wee present Henry Maye and Jacomyn Maye his sister for that they have separated themselves from our Congregac[i]on, pretending to joyne themselves to a reformed Church in Amstelredam in the Lowe Countryes.

And 16th March 1607[8] from the original citation gained by William Oldcorne, apparitor, [ . . . ] they did not appear by ways and means, etc, on Saturday the 9th day of April next at Cambridge.

And on 9th April 1608, the aforesaid decree having been exhibited to William Oldcorne, apparitor, the aforesaid decree was executed by the affixing of the same upon the door of the parish church of Wisbech St Peter on Sunday at the time of divine service. 3 April 1608, etc, not appearing, a publication of suspension issued. And the letters of the aforesaid suspension were announced in the church there at the time of divine services on Sunday 17th April 1608 by Master Matthew Champion, clerk, vicar there, just as appears.

And 4th June 1608, with their contumacy increasing, there issued an excommunication. And letters of the aforesaid excommunication were announced in the church there at the time of divine services on the 19th of June 1608 by master Matthew Champion, clerk, vicar there, just as appears. Jachomyn Maye presented, as above. And 16th March 1607[8] the original citation, having been exhibited by William Oldcorne, the apparitor, was cited. Not appearing, there issued a suspension. And letters of the aforesaid suspension were announced similarly, as above. And on the 4th of June 1608, her aforesaid contumacy increasing, there was issued an excommunication. And letters of the aforesaid excommunication were announced similarly, as above.

At Wisbech St. Peters

William White, shoemaker, presented for that he is negligent in coming to divine service. And on 16th March 1607[8] the original citation having been exhibited by William Oldcorne, apparitor, proclamation, not appearing by ways and means, etc, until Saturday the 9th day of April next at Cambridge.

And on 9th April 1608, the aforesaid decree having been exhibited by William Oldcorne, apparitor, the aforesaid decree was executed by the affixing of the same upon the door of the parish church there on 3 April 1608, etc. With him not appearing, a suspension issued. And the letters of the aforesaid suspension were announced in the church there at the time of divine services on Sunday 17th April 1608 by Master Matthew Champion, clerk, vicar there, just as appears.

And 4th June 1608, with his contumacy increasing, there issued an excommunication. And letters of the aforesaid excommunication were announced in the church there at the time of divine services on the 19th of June 1608 by master Matthew Champion, clerk, vicar there, just as appears. The said William White presented for that he is suspected to be a favourer of the sort of the Brownists. And 16 Mar 1607[8], the original citation having been exhibited by William Oldcorne, the apparitor, proclamation, not appearing by ways and means, etc, until Saturday the 9th of April next at Cambridge. And on 9th April 1608, the aforesaid decree having been exhibited by William Oldcorne, apparitor, the aforesaid proclamation was executed, as above. With him not appearing, a suspension was issued. And the letters of the aforesaid [suspension] were announced similarly, as above. And 4th June 1608, with his contumacy increasing, there issued an excommunication. And letters of the aforesaid excommunication were announced similarly, just as appears.

Religion Fact Note:

*The religious reform movement and how it led to the Pilgrims coming to America:*

The *Protestant Reformation* was a religious reform movement that spread through Europe in the 1500s over disagreements with the teachings of the church. It was sparked by a German monk named Martin Luther when he published a document attacking the Catholic Church and resulted in the creation of a branch of Christianity called Protestantism, a name used to refer to the many religious groups that separated from the Roman Catholic Church.

*The English Reformation* began with Henry VIII in 1534 when the Pope in Rome denied King Henry's request to divorce Catherine of Aragon. King Henry rejected the Pope's authority, split from the Roman Catholic Church, and created the Church of England and a reformed branch of Christianity that

---

includes features of both Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. The 1534 *Act of Supremacy* established the English monarch as the head of the Church of England and removed the powers of the Pope. The Act made supporting the Pope and Catholicism, over the Church of England, an act of treason punishable by death.

After Henry VIII's death in 1547 religion was a tug of war between the Catholics and Protestants. Under his son, Edward VI, Protestantism was favored and reforms were introduced to the Church of England, including *The Book of Common Prayer*, which the *Separatists* refused to use. Edward's successor, his half-sister Queen Mary I (nicknamed "*Bloody Mary*") reinstated Catholicism and persecuted and exiled Protestants. Queen Mary's successor, her half-sister Elizabeth I, tried to bring England back to Protestantism, but some citizens did not believe Queen Elizabeth did enough to restore England to Protestantism. These English citizens were made up of two groups, both called *Puritans*, one called *separatists* and the other *non-separatists*. "*Puritan*" was a term in the 17th century which referred to many Protestant groups who rejected Roman Catholicism in the Church of England, some groups wanting to completely separate from the Church, others wanting only to reform, or "*purify*" it.

Under Queen Elizabeth I, Acts passed by Parliament gave the power to imprison and execute Separatists. This persecution increased under Elizabeth's successor, her cousin, King James I of England.

The *Separatists* believed the Church of England was so corrupt that their only choice was to break entirely with the Church of England and start a new church. At the beginning of the 1600s, a group of *Separatists* began to gather in secret in the village of Scrooby in the Northeastern County of Nottinghamshire. By 1607 more *Separatists* were being hunted, watched and some imprisoned, including members from the Scrooby congregation. In 1608, the Scrooby congregation fled to Holland and initially, settled in Amsterdam. The community had some disputes over church affairs with other English separatists who lived in Amsterdam and in 1609 a group of about one hundred Separatists, many members of the Scrooby congregation, moved to Leiden, Holland.

In time, they felt the Dutch culture was too permissive for their children and they feared that the children would lose their English culture. Jobs were hard to come by and they were troubled over the struggles between the Netherlands and Spain. By 1620 some of the Separatists decided to start a new life and church in America. King James gave them permission to resettle in America, and in September 1620 they set sail aboard the Mayflower.

Of the 102 Mayflower passengers (later known as *Pilgrims*) 41 were early English Protestants, known as *Separatists* or *Brownists*. They wanted religious freedom and complete separation from the Church of England. The other passengers, referred to as "*Strangers*" were merchants, craftsmen, servants, and crew. After a 66-day voyage they landed at Cape Cod (present-day Provincetown, Massachusetts) just north of their intended destination at the Hudson River. After exploring Cape Cod, they settled nearby at Plymouth, named after the port they had departed from in Plymouth England.

William White was a *separatist* from England who arrived in Amsterdam, Holland, in May 1608. He was a follower of Henry Ainsworth, an English nonconformist clergyman who led the Separatist congregation in Amsterdam. They were known as *Brownists*, a group of early English Protestant *Separatists*, named after Robert Browne, a Puritan separatist preacher in the 1580s. A majority of the Separatists aboard the Mayflower were Brownists. Most of the 41 separatists on the Mayflower came from the Leiden congregation. William White and his wife Susanna were members of Henry Ainsworth's congregation and were the only members to join the Mayflower group from Leiden.

The *non-separatists*, known in time as *Puritans*, did not believe Queen Elizabeth's reform efforts went far enough. They did not want to leave the Church of England, only to reform, "purify" the church to rid it of any remaining Roman Catholic practices. They traveled to the New World seeking a chance for true reform of the church and freedom to worship as they chose. In 1630 they established the Massachusetts Bay Colony in Boston, Massachusetts. By 1692 the Plymouth colony was absorbed into the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Works cited:

"*Age of Upheaval*," *American Collector Mayflower Birth of America*, January 2021, pp.10-15.

Hanson, Marilee. "*Act of Supremacy*" <https://englishhistory.net/tudor/act-of-supremacy/> February 16,

---

2017

National Geographic Resource Library. "*The Protestant Reformation*"  
<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/protestant-reformation>

Cartwright, M. (2020, July 13). *English Reformation*. World History Encyclopedia. Retrieved from  
[https://www.worldhistory.org/English\\_Reformation/](https://www.worldhistory.org/English_Reformation/)

