

Our Whitney Ancestors

By
James C. Retson
Last revised at
<https://www.retson.ca/whitney.pdf>
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Whitney Context¹

Our Whitney Ancestors emigrated London after years of residency in the Parish of Isleworth-on-the Thames opposite Richmond approximately 9 miles from London. John Whitney, son of Thomas Whitney emigrated in 1635 along with his first wife and several children. He settled in Watertown, Massachusetts.

1. Thomas Whitney

1. Thomas Whitney

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Whitney-131>

Thomas was born in Clifford Castle, Herefordshire, England about 1560 based on his marriage in 1583.

He obtained, May 10, 1583, from the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, a license to marry Mary Bray, in which document he is mentioned as "Thomas Whytney of Lambeth Marsh, Gentleman."^[5] Lambeth Marsh is across the Thames bridge from Westminster.

Thomas Whitney and Mary Bray were married 10 May 1583 in Westminster, England May 12 1583 at Saint Margaret in Westminster, London, England.

Thomas and Mary had the following children, all baptized in Westminster²:

- i. Margaret, b. 1584, d. **Jan 1604** at **London, London, England**
- ii. Thomas, b. 1587, d. **about Aug 1587** at **London, England**
- iii. Henry, b. 1588, d. 1589,
- iv. Arnwaye, b. 1590, d. **about Aug 1591** at about age 2 in **Westminster, England**
2. v. John Whitney b. bef. 20 Jul 1592 in Westminster, Middlesex, **Massachusetts Bay Colony MA**, m.(1) Elinor ____ abt 1618 to 11 May 1659 in England (2) Judah ____ 29 Sep 1659 in Watertown, MA, d. 1 Jun 1673 Watertown, Middlesex, MA, age 80
- d. **1 Jun 1673** after age 80 in **Watertown, Middlesex**,
- vi. Abigail, b. perhaps 1673 in Groton, per Ward
- vii. Nowell, 1594, died 1597
- viii. Francis, 1599, died at Westminster, 1643
- ix. Mary, 1600, died 1600
- x. Robert, 1605, died in parish of St. Peter's, Cornhill, London, England, 1662.

¹ Primarily extracted from Pierce, Frederick Clifton. *The descendants of John Whitney, who came from London, England, to Watertown, Massachusetts, in 1635*. Published by the author, Chicago, Illinois, 1895. Also available on Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/2000000000:15255?ssrc=pt&tid=83224522&pid=122122052001&ftm=1> [Use with caution]

² For missing citations see wikitree entry for Thomas Whitney, <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Whitney-131>

He apprenticed his son, John, on February 22, 1607, and his son, Robert, on November 8, 1624. In 1611 he paid the subsidy tax, and on December 6, 1615, on the probate of the will of his father-in-law, John Bray, he was appointed executor. At the time of his death, in 1637, administration of his estate was granted, May 8, 1637, to his remaining sons, Francis and Robert.

He died April 14 1637 at about age 77 in Westminster, London, England.

Watertown Massachusetts

Watertown is a city in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, and is part of Greater Boston. The population was 35,329 in the 2020 census. Its neighborhoods include Bemis, Coolidge Square, East Watertown, Watertown Square, and the West End. Watertown is located at 42°22′17″N 71°10′55″W﻿ / ﻿42.37139, -71.18194﻿ / 42.37139; -71.18194.^[17] To the north, it is bordered by the town of Belmont, along Belmont Street; to the south, it is bordered by Newton and Brighton—the border being largely formed by the Charles River. In Watertown Square, the nexus of the town, the town's border extends south of the Charles to encompass the neighborhood surrounding Casey Playground. To the east lies the City of Cambridge, the border to which is almost entirely the well-known Mount Auburn Cemetery, most of which is actually in Watertown (though commonly believed to be in Cambridge). To the west lies the more expansive city of Waltham, but there is no distinct geographic feature dividing the two municipalities. Watertown was one of the first Massachusetts Bay Colony settlements organized by Puritan settlers in 1630..

Watertown, first known to settlers as Saltonstall Plantation, was one of the earliest of the Massachusetts Bay Colony settlements. Founded in early 1630 by a group of settlers led by Richard Saltonstall and George Phillips, it was officially incorporated that same year. The alternate spelling "Waterton" is seen in some early documents. The first buildings were upon land now included within the limits of Cambridge known as Gerry's Landing. For its first quarter century Watertown ranked next to Boston in population and area. Since then its limits have been greatly reduced. Thrice portions have been added to Cambridge, and it has contributed territory to form the new towns of Weston (1712), Waltham (1738), Lincoln (1754) and Belmont (1859). In 1632 the residents of Watertown protested against being compelled to pay a tax for the erection of a stockade fort at Cambridge; this was the first protest in America against taxation without representation and led to the establishment of representative democracy in the colony. As early as the close of the 17th century, Watertown was the chief horse and cattle market in New England and was known for its fertile gardens and fine estates. The Treaty of Watertown, the first treaty signed between the newly formed United States of America and a foreign power, the St. John's and Mi'kmaq First Nations of Nova Scotia, was signed in this house.

References for Watertown:

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2. John Whitney 1592- 1673 Elinor

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Whitney-126>

John Whitney, son of Thomas Whitney and Mary Bray, was baptized 20 July 1592 at St. Margaret's parish in Westminster, London, England. He was a son of Thomas Whitney.

He married Eleanor (Elinor) about 1618 (d. 11 May 1659) in England d in Watertown, MA.

John Whitney emigrated to New England on the Elizabeth & Ann on April 13 1635, "John age 35, Jo[h]n Whitney aged 11, Richard Whitney aged 9, "Nathaniel Whitney aged 8, "Tho[mas] Whitney aged 6, Jonathan Whitney aged 1 and Ellin Whitney aged 30

John and Eleanor had at least ten children:

- i. Mary Whitney, bp Isleworth, Middlesex, England May 23 1619, bur St. Mary Aldemary, London 15 February 1626/7
- ii. John Whitney bp Isleworth 14 September 1621 m. by 1643 Ruth Reynolds
- iii. Richard bp Isleworth 6 Jan 1623/4 m. Martha Coldam
- iv. Nathaniel Whitney b about 1626 (aged 8 in 1635 [Hotten 58])
- v. Thomas Whitney bp St Mary Aldemary, London 10 Dec 1627 m Mary Kettle, 11 Jan 1654/55, Watertown,
- vi. Mary Whitney bp St Mary Aldemary, London, 29 Dec 1629 [TAG 81: 250]
- vii. Jonathan Whitney b. about 1634, England (aged 1 (?) in 1635 [Hotten 58]) m. Lydia Ones
3. viii Joshua Whitney b. abt 15 Jul 1635 Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts Bay Colony, m. (1) Mary _____ abt 20 Nov 1669 to 17 Mar 1671, (2) Abigail Tarbell 30 Sep 1672 Watertown, Middlesex, MA in Watertown, d. 1 Aug 1719
- ix. [Caleb](#) born about 1639; bur Watertown July 12 1640
- x. Benjamin b. Watertown June 6 1643 m Jane _____ and Mary Poor.

Elinor died May 11, 1659 in Watertown. John Whitney then married Judah "Judith" Clement, the widow of Robert Clement, on 29 September 1659 in Watertown, Massachusetts. John died 1 Jun 1673 after age 80 in Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts Bay Colony.^{[10][11]}

3. Joshua Whitney 1635 – 1719 Abigail Tarbell

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Whitney-280>

Deacon Joshua Whitney, son of John Whitney and Elinor.^{[10][11]} was born about July 15 1635 in Watertown, Middlesex County, Massachusetts Bay Colony, America³ He married Mary (Unknown) about 20 Nov 1669 (died 17 Mar 1671) in Watertown, Massachusetts,

Children of Mary and Joshua:

- xi. Joshua Whitney, b. 14 June 1665, in Groton, **Massachusetts Bay Colony, America** (VR)
- xii. Sarah Whitney, b. 10 Oct 1668 in Groton (VR)
- xiii. Hannah Whitney, b. perhaps 1670 in Groton, (Ward), m. Thomas Woods 1692

³ Joshua Whitney's birth date is uncertain. The headstone on Findagrave.com shows his death as August 7, 1719 at the age of 83 indicating a birth date between August 8, 1635 and August 7, 1636. *The Descendants of John Whitney* by Henry Austin Whitney, pg. 22, states the birthdate of Joshua as 3 July 1635. FamilySearch.org's "Massachusetts, Births an Christenings, 1639-1915" collection provides a birth date of May 15, 1635 without citing sources. *Colonial and Revolutionary Families of Pennsylvania* lists a date of July 15, 1635 but provides no sources.

He then married Abigail Tarbell) September 30 1672 in Watertown, Middlesex County, Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Children of Abigail and Joshua:

- xiv. Abigail Whitney, b. perhaps 1673 in Groton, per Ward m. John Hutchins about 1692 in Groton, Massachusetts Bay Colony, America, d. 1705 about age 33 in Groton, Middlesex, Massachusetts, America
- iv. Eleanor "Alice" Whitney b. 10 or 11 Sep 1673 in Groton, Middlesex, Massachusetts, m. Nathaniel Woods 1690 in Groton, Middlesex, Massachusetts Woods
- xv. Mary Whitney b. 1 Jul 1675 in Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts Bay Colony, America, m. Ephraim Pierce 1696 in Groton, Middlesex, Massachusetts Bay Colony, d. 29 Dec 1749 at age 74 in Groton, Middlesex, Massachusetts Bay, America
- xvi. William Whitney , b. 28 Feb 1677-8 in Watertown, m. (1) Lydia Perham 16 Mar 1699 in Chelmsford, Massachusetts, (2) Margaret (Mirick) Whitney 27 Apr 1717 in Newton Middlesex, Massachusetts, d. 4 May 1754 at age 76 in Lebanon, New London County, Connecticut
- 4. xvii. Cornelius, b. perhaps 1680, in Groton per Ward 5. Cornelius Whitney b. about 1680 Groton, Massachusetts, (1) Sarah 1713 Groton, MA (2) Rebecca (Church) Cleveland 7 Nov 1751, d. 1751
- xviii. Col. David Whitney, b. perhaps 1682, in Groton, Middlesex County, Massachusetts Bay Colony m. Elizabeth Warren 20 Jan 1712 in Plainfield, Connecticut, d. 1 Nov 1769 at about age 87 in Canaan, Litchfield County, Connecticut Colony,
- xix. Eleanor, b. perhaps 1684, in Groton per Ward
- xx. Sarah, b. perhaps 1686, in Groton per Ward
- xxi. Martha Whitney 1683 or 1688 Massachusetts Bay m. Isaac Williams III, 1 Feb 1709 in Newton, Middlesex, Massachusetts Bay
- xxii. Elizabeth, b. 1686 or 1690, Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts, m. Ebenezer Farnsworth 17 Apr 1707 , d. about 1750 at about age 64 in Middlesex, Massachusetts

He was one of the original proprietors of Groton, Massachusetts, and resided there until it was burned by the Indians in the spring of 1676, during King Philip's War, in which he and his eldest son Joshua Jr were soldiers. Returning to Watertown, he served as selectman of that town, 1681-87; was overseer of highways, 1683, and subsequently constable. he served many years as dean of the church at Watertown, resigning on account of infirmities of age, April 22, 1715.

His will was dated 17 Apr 1713, and proved 6 Oct 1719. Deacon Joshua Whitney of Groton, "aged about seventy six years"; Abigail, my now n[]ed wife; son William Whitney, all housing and lands in Groton; his mother above [i.e. Abigail] and he to be executors; son Joshua Whitney, £30; son Cornelous Whitney; son David Whitney; my five daughters now living, Mary Peirce, Elenor Shepard, Sarah Juell, Martha Williams, and Elisabeth Farnworth; eldest daughter Hutchins's children, her eldest son John Hutchins (under 21), and the rest of her children (under 21); her three daughters; eldest daughter, wife of Thomas Woods, having received her portion; witnesses, Jonathan Bowen, Abraham Moores, Samll. Cummings. ^[5]

Joshua had four children with births recorded in the Vital Records ("VR") of Groton^[6] and Watertown;^[7] and seven other children deduced by Robert L. Ward, on WhitneyGen.org, based primarily on analysis of his will.

Joshua Whitney died August 1 or 7 1719 at about age 84 in Groton, Middlesex County, Province of Massachusetts Bay, America .^{[2][3][4]}

5. Cornelius, Whitney, - Sarah

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Whitney-871>

Cornelius Whitney, son of Joshua Whitney and Abigail Tarbell, was born about 1680. Cornelius Whitney . He served in the Queen Anne war of 1707. The same year, on account of the unprotected condition of the Groton frontier, he petitioned with others for leave to move elsewhere.

Cornelius and wife Sarah admit to the church 29 April. 1739 Putnam, Connecticut ^[2]

Cornelius married secondly 7 Nov 1751, Brooklyn, CT, Zerviah (Church) Cleveland, daughter of Samuel and Rebecca (Shattuck) Church and widow of Edward Cleveland (1663-1746). She was born as "Rebecca," 31 Dec 1672, Watertown, MA, and died after 1752^[3]

Children of Cornelius and Sarah (?Shepard?) Whitney:

- i. Sarah Whitney, b. 17 Apr 1715, Groton, MA, d. presumably before 1732, when a sister was given her name.
6. ii. Abigail Whitney b, 9 Dec 1717 Groton, Middlesex, Massachusetts, m. John Robbins 25 Apr 1739 Putnam Windham, Connecticut, d. after 24 Oct 1790 Kin Killingly, Windham, Connecticut
- iii. Matthias Whitney, b. 26 May 1720, Groton, MA; m. Alice Robbins.
- iv. Mary Whitney, b. 20 Aug 1722, Groton, MA; m. Nathan McKee.
- v. Joshua Whitney, b. 1 Dec 1724, Groton, MA; m. (?Joanna?)
- vi. Lydia Whitney, b. 23 Apr 1729, Groton, MA; no further record.
- vii. Sarah Whitney, b. 8 Jan 1731/2, Groton, MA; probably m. Zechariah Cutting.
- viii. Susanna Whitney, bpt. 12 May 1734, Groton, MA;[27] no further record.

Cornelius Whitney passed away in 1751.

6. Abigail Whitney 1717 – 1790 John Robbins

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Whitney-5502>

~0.39% X DNA ~3.12% James Retson Find Relationship : 23andMe, GEDmatch M560030

Abigail, daughter of Cornelius Whitney and possibly Sarah Shepard, was born December 9 1717 in Groton, Middlesex, Massachusetts. She married John Robbins in Putnam, (now Killingly) Connecticut. She died after October 24 1790 in Killingly, Windham, Connecticut
They had the following Children,

- i. Abigail Robbins, b. 18 Aug ---- [say 1738], Killingly, CT; d. after 1758. Called "eldest daughter" in her father's probate.
- ii. Josiah Robbins, b. 3 Feb 1739/40, Killingly, CT; m.(1) Elizabeth ----; m.(2) Lydia Robins.
- iii. Mary Robbins, b. 17 Feb 1741/2, Killingly, CT; d. 15 May 1742, Killingly, CT (as "Marcy").
- iv. Millicent Robbins, b. 3 Feb 1743/4, Killingly, CT; "Molle" in father's probate, 1758; "Molly" m. 11 Aug 1766, Douglas, MA, Nathaniel Cummings. No children found.
- v. Mary Robbins, b. 3 Oct 1745, Killingly, CT; m. Jonathan Utley.
- vi. Samuel Robbins, b. 9 May 1747, Killingly, CT; d. after 1763.
- vii. Rhoda Robbins, b. 1 Jun 1749, Killingly, CT; d. 9 Apr 1752, Killingly, CT.
- viii. Sarah Robbins, b. 18 Mar 1750/1, Killingly, CT; d. before 1758
- ix. Zerviah Robbins, b. 23 May 1753, Killingly, CT; d. after 1758.
7. x. Rhoda Robbins, b. 30 Mar 1755, Killingly, CT; m. Ebenezer Gould.

Appendices

Sources

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Whitney Research Group "[Thomas Whitney \(1550-1637\)](#)"

(<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/FCDL-VVZ> : accessed 20 Sep 2014), Joshua Whetny and Abigail Tarball, Sep 1672; citing reference ; FHL microfilm 745869.

Vital Records of Groton Massachusetts to the end of the year 1849, p. 278: "Whetney"

gravestone of Joshua Whitney on Find A Grave: [Memorial #5043799](#) Retrieved 23 January, 2018.

[Probate file for Joshua Whitney](#)

Vital Records of Groton Massachusetts to the end of the year 1849, p. 252

Whitney http://ma-vitalrecords.org/MA/Middlesex/Watertown/Images/WatertownV1_043.shtml *Watertown Records . . . of Births Deaths and Marriages*, p. 43: "Willyam Whetny son of Joshua and Abigail borne the last of february"

[Robert L. Ward, The Wives and Children of Joshua Whitney, e-published on WhitneyGen.org](#)


(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/2:2:94RB-RVQ> : accessed 26 February 2019), entry for Joshua Whitney, cites sources; file (2:2:2:MM95-NZ5), submitted 16 February 2003 by rmauseth2764238 [identity withheld for privacy].

"Pedigree Resource File," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/2:2:SRJS-FYW> : accessed 26 February 2019), entry for Joshua /Whitney/; file (2:2:2:MMQ5-QT6), submitted 12 May 2011.


Find A Grave: [Memorial #5043799](#)

Relationship of Whitneys with Author

10th great grandfather

	Thomas Whitney b: d: Apr 1637
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9th great grandfather

	John Whitney b: 1589 Great Yarmouth, England d: 01 Jun 1673 Watertown, MA
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8th great grandfather

	Joshua Whitney b: 15 Jul 1635 Watertown, Middlesex, Massachu d: 07 Aug 1719 Watertown, Middlesex, Massachu
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7th great grandfather

	Cornelius Matthias Whitney b: 1680 Groton, Middlesex, Massachusett d: 11 Nov 1760 Killingly, Windham, Connecticut,
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6th great grandmother

	Abigail Whitney b: 09 Dec 1717 Groton, Middlesex, Massachusett d: 24 Oct 1790 Killingly, Windham, Connecticut,
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5th great grandmother

	Rhoda Robbins b: 30 Mar 1755 Killingly, Windham, Conn. d: 06 Mar 1832 West Walworth Cemetery, Wayne,
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4th great grandmother

	Abigail Gould b: 08 Sep 1775 Granville, Washington, New York, d: 07 May 1860 Augusta Twp, Grenville Co, Ontar
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3rd great grandfather

	Orrin Gould Perrin b: 16 Aug 1806 Maynard, Augusta, Grenville, Ont d: 01 Mar 1888 Maynard, Augusta Township, Gre
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2nd great grandmother

	Elizabeth Jane Perrin b: 28 Sep 1840 Merrickville, Grenville County, Ont d: 08 Apr 1915 Maynard, Grenville, Ontario, Can
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Great grandmother

	Abigail Almeda Spicer b: 13 Sep 1860 Prescott, Ontario, Canada d: 10 Jul 1940 Merrickville, Ontario, Canada
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Maternal grandfather

	Edward Elbert Atkinson b: 26 Feb 1887 Merrickville, Merrickville-Wolford, d: 14 Jan 1957 Vancouver, British Columbia
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Mother

	Grace Elizabeth Atkinson b: 11 Dec 1916 Waskada, Manitoba, Canada d: 04 Jun 2008 Truro, Colchester County, Nova S
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Self

	James Clifford Retson b: 28 Jul 1948 Truro, Colchester County, Nova S d:
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