

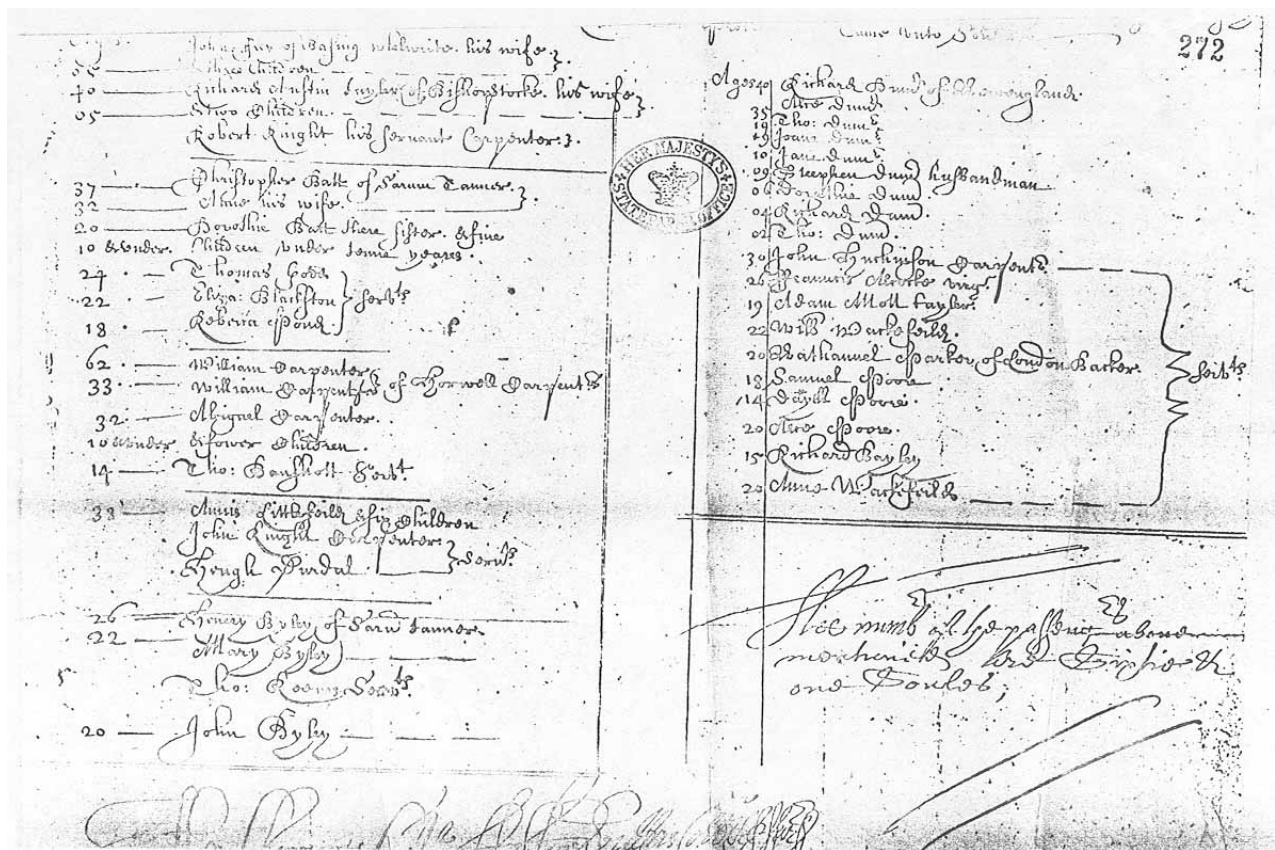
William Carpenter born about 1605, a 1638 immigrant

William Carpenter, born around 1605—likely in or near Shalbourne Parish, Wiltshire, England—was a key early immigrant who helped found the town of Rehoboth in Plymouth Colony (now Bristol County, Massachusetts). He arrived in New England in 1638 aboard the ship *Bevis* along with his wife Abigail, their four young children, and his father, also named William Carpenter. The *Bevis's* passenger list records William the younger as age 33, Abigail as age 32, and his father as age 62 at the time of departure from Southampton^{[1] [2] [3]}.

Key facts about William Carpenter (b. c. 1605):

- **Birth:** About 1605, in or near Wiltshire, England^{[2] [3] [1]}.
- **Marriage:** Married Abigail Briant on 28 April 1625 in Shalbourne Parish (then Berkshire, now Wiltshire)^{[2] [3]}.
- **Immigration:** Emigrated to Massachusetts in 1638 on the *Bevis*, with his family and father, William Carpenter Sr.^{[1] [3] [2]}.
- **Settlement:** First recorded in New England as a freeman in Weymouth, Massachusetts in 1640. He later became a founder and prominent citizen of Rehoboth, Plymouth Colony, after 1643^{[1] [2]}.
- **Public Service:** Served as Weymouth representative to the Massachusetts General Court in 1641 and 1643 and as Rehoboth representative in 1645. He also held several other public offices^[1].
- **Death:** Died 7 February 1658/1659 in Rehoboth, Bristol County (then Plymouth Colony), Massachusetts^{[1] [2] [4] [3]}.

William is buried in the Newman Congregational Church Cemetery in Rehoboth, with his grave marked by a simple fieldstone inscribed "W. C."^[2].



1638 passenger list for the ship *Bevis*, including William Carpenter (father), William Carpenter (son), and the son's family.

His story is distinct from that of other contemporaneous William Carpenters, such as William Carpenter of Providence, Rhode Island—care should be taken not to conflate these distinct immigrant lines^{[5] [6]}.

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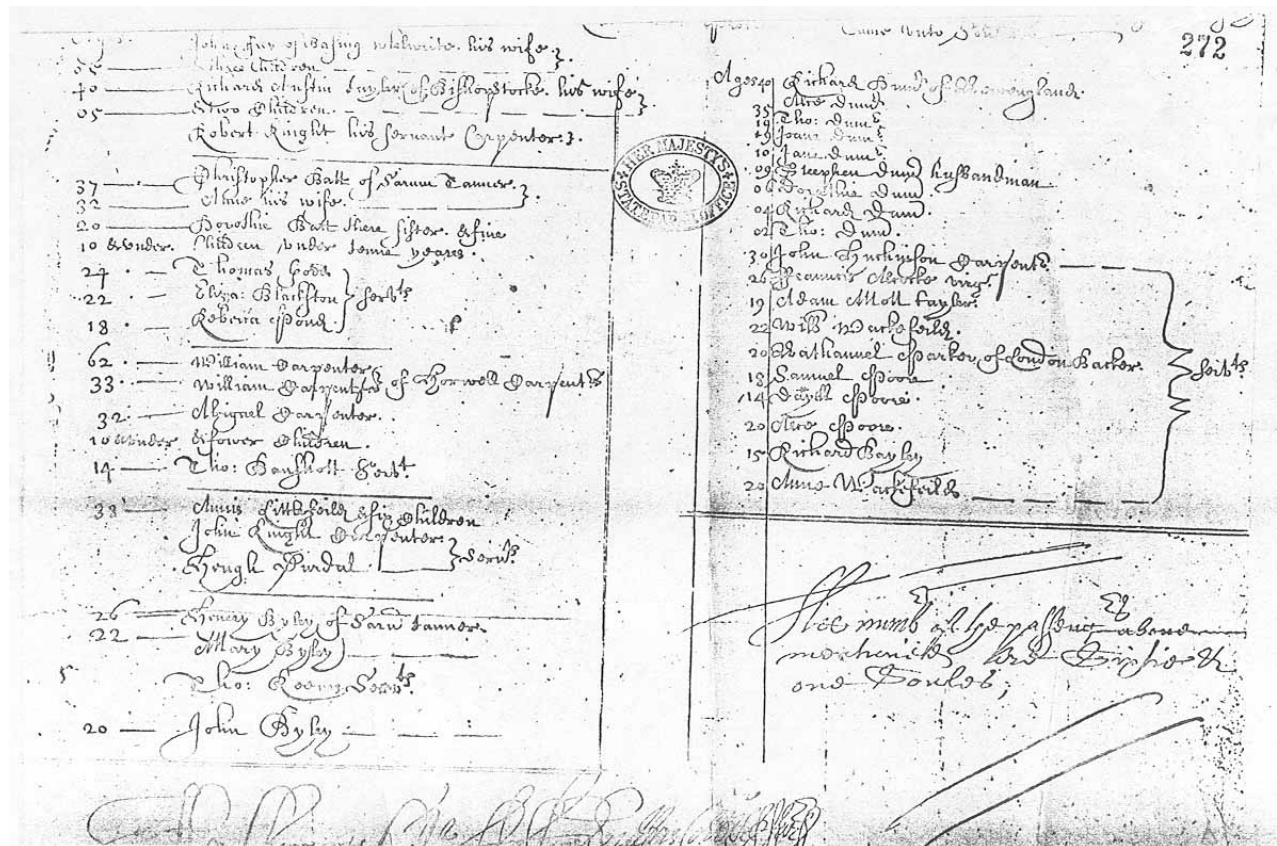
What role did William Carpenter play in the early settlement of Rehoboth Massachusetts

William Carpenter played a foundational and influential role in the early settlement of Rehoboth, Massachusetts:

- **Founder:** He was among the original settlers and proprietors who established Rehoboth in 1644, moving with a group from Weymouth the previous year^{[7] [8] [9]}. His participation began before the actual migration; he attended early proprietors' meetings held in Weymouth in late 1643 that set the groundwork for the settlement^[9].
- **Public Service:** William Carpenter served as **Rehoboth's representative to the Plymouth Colony General Court** (the colonial legislature) in 1645, contributing to the new community's governance and broader colonial affairs^{[10] [11]}.
- **Land Division:** He was empowered to adjudicate grievances regarding the division of land by lots, an essential task for ensuring fair distribution and reducing conflicts among settlers^[10].

- **Clerkship:** Some traditional sources claim that he served as the **proprietors' clerk and possibly as the first town clerk** from 1643 to 1649; however, recent research suggests the evidence for his role as clerk is inconclusive. Nevertheless, records indicate he was a central figure at proprietors' meetings and in various civic matters^[9] ^[12].
- **Community Leader:** William Carpenter's leadership and service continued throughout his life, and his descendants, notably his son William Carpenter (Generation 3), maintained influential roles in Rehoboth—the latter became the long-serving town clerk^[7] ^[8].

William Carpenter is regarded as the founder of the Rehoboth branch of the Carpenter family and his contributions helped establish the social and legal foundations of the town^[11].



1638 passenger list for the ship *Bevis*, including William Carpenter (father), William Carpenter (son), and the son's family.

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1. <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Carpenter-19>
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rehoboth_Carpenter_family
3. https://isogg.org/wiki/Rehoboth_Carpenter_family
4. <https://www.geni.com/people/William-Carpenter-of-Rehoboth/6000000008076790911>
5. <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Carpenter-201>
6. <https://www.geni.com/people/William-Carpenter-of-Providence/6000000006713541159>
7. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rehoboth_Carpenter_family
8. https://isogg.org/wiki/Rehoboth_Carpenter_family
9. <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Carpenter-19>

10. <http://ancestorbios.blogspot.com/2012/03/well-read-man-in-early-new-england.html>
11. <https://www.geni.com/people/William-Carpenter-of-Rehoboth/6000000008076790911>
12. <https://www.familysearch.org/photos/artifacts/8971836>