

## First Generation

1. **JOHN<sup>1</sup> NILES** was born about 1602/3 or 1607/8,<sup>38</sup> possibly at Beaminster, Dorset County, England (son of **JOHN NYLE?** and **JOHANE PAVIOT?**). He married first in 1635/6,<sup>39</sup> probably in Dorchester, Massachusetts, **JANE [REED?]**, who was likely born in England and who died 15 May 1654,<sup>40</sup> in Braintree, Massachusetts, and was buried in Hancock Cemetery, Quincy, Massachusetts. John Niles married second about 1656/7,<sup>41</sup> **HANNAH ( ) AMES**, who died 31 January 1702/3,<sup>42</sup> in Braintree, Massachusetts, and was buried January 1702/3 in Hancock Cemetery, Quincy, Massachusetts. John Niles died 8 February 1693/4,<sup>43</sup> in Braintree, and was buried February 1693/4 in Hancock Cemetery, Quincy, Massachusetts.<sup>44</sup>

John Niles was one of the early immigrants in New England. The first known New England record concerning him is dated 1 September 1634, and concerns a grant of land in Dorchester.<sup>45</sup> John Niles probably remained in Dorchester for a short time before moving to Braintree. He was in Braintree by 1643, where he was made a freeman on 26 May 1647.<sup>46</sup> He married Jane (Reed?)<sup>47</sup> before 16 February

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<sup>38</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 660. Because his birth is not documented in any known record, some genealogists have estimated a birth year from the age at death reported in this entry, giving a workable birth year of 1602/3. Evidence presented in Chapter One, however, suggests that he was John Nyle of Beaminster, Dorset County, England, baptized 10 Jan 1607/8, son of John Nyle and Johane Paviot.

<sup>39</sup> Sprague, *Genealogies of Braintree* [note 18], at Card No. 3534.

<sup>40</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 637.

<sup>41</sup> Marriage year is estimated from the known birth date of first child, Isaac, on 2 Apr 1658.

<sup>42</sup> Sprague, *Genealogies of Braintree* [note 18], at Card No. 3535.

<sup>43</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 660.

<sup>44</sup> There is no gravestone or burial record for John Niles, but he was most probably buried in the Hancock Cemetery in Quincy, Massachusetts. As a weaver, not a farmer, he did not own land that could be used as a family burial plot – and the use of private family plots was not the custom in Massachusetts at this time. H. Hobart Holly [deceased], former historian for the Quincy Historical Society, mentioned to John F. Niles in 1993 that “all Braintree residents who did not die at sea were buried here.”

<sup>45</sup> *Dorchester Town Records* [note 1], at 7.

<sup>46</sup> Shurtleff, *Records of the Governor* [note 7], at 2: 295. His name appears in the record with the spelling John Nyles.

<sup>47</sup> Although not documented, tradition holds that Jane's maiden name may have been Reed/Read. There is a William Read who appears on the list of those receiving land grants in Dorchester prior to 1636. *Dorchester Town Records* [note 1], at 31. There are also Niles-Read marriages in later generations.

1636, when their first child was born.<sup>48</sup> Although the births of all their children are recorded in Braintree, it is likely the first two or three were born in Dorchester.<sup>49</sup>

Jane Niles died 15 May 1654, in Braintree, and John later married Hannah, the widow of William Ames.<sup>50</sup> No record of marriage between Hannah and John has been located. However, she is identified as John's wife in records of the birth and death of their child, and in a court proceeding that approved the sale of a house formerly belonging to William Ames.<sup>51</sup>

John Niles died in Braintree in 1693/94. His death notice appears in the town records as, "Old John Niles aged about 91 died upon the 8th day of February 1693/94."<sup>52</sup>

*Children of John and Jane (Reed?) Niles:*

- + 2. i. HANNAH NILES, b. 16 February 1636,<sup>53</sup> m. (1) [probable] say 1653, PETER SHOOTER,<sup>54</sup> m. (2) 25 December 1656, NATHANIEL MOTT.<sup>55</sup>
- + 3. ii. JOHN NILES, b. March 4, 1638,<sup>56</sup> d. after 1686/7,<sup>57</sup> m. say 1667,<sup>58</sup> ABIGAIL \_\_\_\_\_, probably in New Shoreham (Block Island), Rhode Island.
- + 4. iii. JOSEPH NILES, b. 15 August 1640,<sup>59</sup> d. before 1694, Braintree,<sup>60</sup> m. 15 October 1661, in Braintree, MARY [FARR?] MYCALL.<sup>61</sup>
- + 5. iv. NATHANIEL NILES, b. 16 August 1642,<sup>62</sup> d. 22 December 1727, Braintree,<sup>63</sup> m. 14 February 1671, New Shoreham (Block Island), Rhode Island, SARAH SANDS.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 633.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* at 633-4. See also Anderson, "The Great Migration Newsletter" [note 10], at 22. Anderson notes that the first births recorded in the Braintree Town Records are the children of John and Jane Niles. This suggests that he was one of the first Braintree residents following the town's incorporation in 1640, or at least by the time the town records were begun in 1643.

<sup>50</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 637. William Ames, an ironmonger associated with the Braintree Iron Works, died 1 Feb 1653.

<sup>51</sup> Shurtleff, *Records of the Governor* [note 7], at 83.

<sup>52</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 660.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* at 2: 633.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* at 2: 634. Peter's wife is identified as Anna, as is their child.

<sup>55</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 716. Hannah is called Hannah Shooter.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* at 633.

<sup>57</sup> George R. Burgess, *New Shoreham Town Book* (typescript available from New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1924), at 63. John Niles appears on a 1686 list submitted at a meeting 1687. The list concerns the killing of blackbirds.

<sup>58</sup> Marriage year is estimated from birth of probable first child, Penelope, in 1668.

<sup>59</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 633.

<sup>60</sup> The only time Joseph Niles is mentioned in Braintree town records is on 19 Nov 1687 (Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 1: 25). Both he and his wife had died by 10 Jun 1694, as they were said to be deceased when their son, Benjamin, was baptized as an adult on that date. Sprague, *Genealogies of Braintree* [note 18], at card No. 3542.

<sup>61</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 717.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* at 2: 633.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* at 2: 728.

<sup>64</sup> Burgess, *New Shoreham Town Book* [note 57], at 50 (page 64 in typescript).

*John Niles and Some of His Descendants*

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- + 6. v. SAMUEL NILES, b. 12 May 1644,<sup>65</sup> d. 23 November 1715, Braintree,<sup>66</sup> m. 20 April 1680, MARY BILLINGS.<sup>67</sup>
- + 7. vi. INCREASE NILES, b. 16 December 1646,<sup>68</sup> d. 1 September 1693, Braintree,<sup>69</sup> m. 4 December 1677, MARY PURCHASE.<sup>70</sup>
- + 8. vii. BENJAMIN NILES, b. 11 March 1650,<sup>71</sup> d. 1712, Lyme, Connecticut,<sup>72</sup> m. 13 December 1681, New Shoreham (Block Island), Rhode Island, RUTH  
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*Children of John and Hannah (\_\_\_\_) (Ames) Niles:*

- 9. viii. Isaac Niles, b. 2 April 1658,<sup>74</sup> d. 30 November 1659.<sup>75</sup>

3. **JOHN<sup>2</sup> NILES** (*John<sup>1</sup>*) was born 4 March 1638, Dorchester or Braintree (Norfolk), Massachusetts,<sup>82</sup> and died after 1686/7, in Block Island, New Shoreham, Rhode Island.<sup>83</sup> He married about 1667, in Block Island, New Shoreham, Rhode Island,<sup>90</sup> **ABIGAIL** \_\_\_\_\_.

By 1678, John Niles was a freeman on Block Island, New Shoreham.<sup>91</sup> Because there is a gap between the births of John's daughter Abigail and his son John, the question can be raised as to the possibility of a wife prior to his known wife Abigail, and who might have been the mother of Penelope and Abigail.

John's name appears on a list developed "... at the quarter meeting of the town of new shorum at the house of Mr. Robart guttereg the :13th: of Aperell 1686." This list concerned the shares each man over the age of sixteen years should be awarded for killing black birds. Each was required to kill 24 birds for the coming year with the exception of those on half share, who were to kill only twelve birds. Those who killed above the minimum required were to have "...penc for Each provided the

<sup>82</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 634.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* 2: 634.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* at 2: 638.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* at 2: 644.

<sup>86</sup> Birth year estimated in relation to siblings.

<sup>87</sup> Bates, *Records of Braintree* [note 9], at 2: 640.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* at 2: 633. The birth was recorded in Braintree.

<sup>89</sup> Burgess, *New Shoreham Town Book* [note 57], at 1: 48 (page 63 in typescript). John's name is on a 1686 list concerning payment for the killing of blackbirds submitted at a 1687 meeting.

<sup>90</sup> Marriage year estimated from birth of probable first child Penelope, in 1668. Torrey gives a marriage date of ca. 1679. Clarence Almon Torrey, *New England Marriages Prior to 1700* (Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1985), at 53.

<sup>91</sup> Burgess, *New Shoreham Town Book* [note 57], at 1: 57 (page 73 in typescript).

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heads bee brought in to the tresurer or wardyane . . ." Those who did not meet their quota were to pay 2 pence for each bird not killed. This "... ordur to bee purformed this year 1687." The name of John "nils" is on the list, as is that of his brother "beniamine nils."<sup>92</sup>

John Niles died before 11 June 1701, as Abigail Niles had by then married John Banning as his second wife. On that date John Banning purchased from Nathaniel Niles, who was brother to John Niles, one-third of 1,000 acres known as Joshua's Town – a section of what eventually became Lyme, Connecticut. He immediately agreed to divide the land equally with Ambrose and John Niles, both of whom were sons of Abigail. John Banning also provided a life interest in his share of the land to Abigail. On 13 June 1701, he gave Abigail power of attorney regarding future transactions for the land.<sup>93</sup>

*Children of John and Abigail (\_\_\_\_) Niles:*

- + 21. i. PENELOPE NILES, b. ca. 1668.
- + 22. ii. ABIGAIL NILES, b. ca. 1670.
- + 23. iii. JOHN NILES, b. 7 November [1680/5].
- + 24. iv. AMBROSE NILES, b. 18 November [1683/5].

22. **ABIGAIL<sup>3</sup> NILES** (*John<sup>2-1</sup>*) was born about 1670, on Block Island, New Shoreham, Rhode Island,<sup>296</sup> and died by March 1738/9, Lyme (New London), Connecticut.<sup>297</sup> She married 27 May 1696, in Block Island, New Shoreham, Rhode Island,<sup>298</sup> **CONSIDER TIFFANY**, who was born 14 June 1675, Milton (Norfolk), Massachusetts<sup>299</sup> (son of **HUMPHREY TIFFANY** and **ELIZABETH** \_\_\_\_\_), and who died Jan/Feb 1707/8, Block Island, New Shoreham, Rhode Island.<sup>300</sup> Abigail moved to Lyme, Connecticut, after the death of her husband.

*Children of Consider and Abigail (Niles) Tiffany:*

- + 106. i. **ELIZABETH TIFFANY**, b. 28 February 1697.
- 107. ii. **SARAH TIFFANY**, b. 5 March 1699, Block Island, New Shoreham, Rhode Island,<sup>301</sup> m. 3 February 1718,<sup>302</sup> **EBENEZER DAY**.
- 108. iii. **NATHAN TIFFANY**, b. 14 June 1701, Block Island, New Shoreham, Rhode Island,<sup>303</sup> m. (1) ca. 1726,<sup>304</sup> **ELIZABETH? BROCKWAY**, b. 2 March 1701/2, Lyme (New London), Connecticut[?],<sup>305</sup> (daughter of **WILLIAM BROCKWAY** and **ELIZABETH** \_\_\_\_\_) d. bef 1733[?],<sup>306</sup> m. (2) ca. 1733, in Lyme (New London), Connecticut,<sup>307</sup> **SARAH HARVEY**, b. 1 April 1712, Lyme (New London), Connecticut<sup>308</sup> (daughter of **JOHN HARVEY** and **SARAH** \_\_\_\_\_), d. by 31 January 1788, Lyme (New London), Connecticut.<sup>309</sup> Nathan died 30 May 1750, Lyme (New London), Connecticut,<sup>310</sup> and is buried at Marvin Graveyard, Lyme, Connecticut.<sup>311</sup>
- + 109. iv. **SILENCE TIFFANY**, b. ca. 1703.