

Name[2][3][4][6]
Deacon John Willis
Gender
Male
Birth[5]
1606
[London, England](#)

Marriage
1636
[Duxbury, Plymouth, Massachusetts, United States](#)
to [Elizabeth Hodgkins](#)
Will[1]
15 Jun 1692
[Bridgewater, Plymouth, Massachusetts, United States](#)

Death?
31 Aug 1693
[Bridgewater, Plymouth, Massachusetts, United States](#)

[169] **Will of John Willis senr of Bridgewater**, dated "The 15 of ye 4th month june 1692 ". Son Nathaniel Willis to be executor. To son John the 10 acres his house stands on, and my farm of threescore acres lying below Titticut , also 10 acres not yet laid out; to son Nathaniel the homestead and other lands "only let it be Remembred that after his Decease the seventy Acres of the far field be divided unto his three sons Nathanael Jonathan and John "; to son Joseph during his life, 15 acres at the far field on that side next Taunton , and 25 acres of my last fifty that is yet to be laid out, and after his decease it shall go to his eldest son Joseph ; to son Comfort, 16 acres at the Indian field, etc.; to son Benjamin , lands; to eldest dau. Hannah Hayward , household goods; to dau. Elizabeth Harvey ; to grandchild Patience Augur one of my cows and my Bible; rest of estate to be divided among my three daus., Hannah Hayward , Sarah Ames and Elizabeth Harvey ; "my desire is that Mr Kieth and Captain Hayward would se my will fulfilled". Witnessed by Thomas Hayward and Elihu Brett who made oath to the same, 20 Sep 1693 , the former being styled Capt. Thomas Hayward . [170] Inventory of the estate of said John Willis "who deceased the 27 Aug 1693", taken by Thomas Hayward , John Ames senr and Elihu Brett "ye last of August 1693 ", and presented at court by the executor, said Nathaniel Willis, 20 Sep 1693. [Genealogical Advertiser: A Quarterly Magazine of Family History, Vol. III. September 1900. Plymouth County Probate Records, p. 93](#)

"Wheras John Willis, of Duxborrow, complained that his daughter in law, Rebeckah Palmer, was molested and hindered in performing faithfull service vnto her mr, viz, Samuall Mayo, of Barnstable by the wife of Trustrum Hull, of Barnstable aforsaid, the Court haue sent downe order by Roger Goodspeed, grand juryman, of Barnstable aforsaid, to wrarn the wife of ye said Trustrum Hull to desist from such practises any further, as shee or any other that shall soe doe will answare for her not appeering at this Court nor her attornie, to answare the suite comenced against her by the said John Willis." (The Plymouth Colony Archive Project at the University of Virginia. Servants and

Masters in the Plymouth Colony, Appendices I, II, and III on Plymouth Colony Laws, Court Orders, and Descriptive Statistics. PCR Volume 3, 1651–1661; March 2, 1651/1652; PCR 3:4–5:)

▼References

1 ↑ Mitchell, Nahum. [History of the Early Settlement of Bridgewater, in Plymouth County, Massachusetts: including an extensive family register](#). (Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts, United States: Printed for the author by Kidder & Wright, 1840 (reprinted 1897)), pp. 363–364. WILLIS.—Dea. John Willis was at Duxbury very early; he and his wife Elizabeth are recorded as there in 1637 ; he was an original Proprietor, and one of the first settlers of Bridgewater; the first Deacon here ; sustained many town offices, both at Duxbury and here ; represented Bridgewater at the old Colony Court 25 years; sold his estate in Duxbury to William Paybody 1657 ; was appointed to solemnize marriages and administer oaths to witnesses and others ; his wife Elizabeth was wid. of William Palmer Jr.; her maiden name Hodgkins : his will dated 1692, proved 1693 ; his children therein mentioned were John, Nath'l, Joseph, Comfort, Benjamin, Hannah, wife of Nath'l Hayward; Elizabeth, who m. a Harvey ; and Sarah, wife of John Ames. Nathaniel, Executor. He gave to Joseph "land at Farfield as we go to Taunton;" "to Comfort, 15 acres at the Indian Field;" "to Jolin, land his house stands on;" "to Nathaniel, the homestead ;" and mentions the pond "that divides between me and Benjamin;" also "the Wolf Trap Gutter."

2

3 He had four brothers, Nathaniel, Lawrence, Jonathan, and Francis, which we thus ascertain ; Elkanah was appointed to settle his father Nathaniel's estate 1686, his uncle John to assist him. Elkanah also settled his uncle Lawrence Willis' estate in Boston 1703, and in 1704 he sold land in Boston, which he described as the estate of his uncle Francis Willis deceased. On the 8th day of January, 1656, the year Bridgewater was incorporated, the following record, and almost the first in the book of records, appears, viz : "Be it known unto all men by these presents, that we, Nathaniel Willis and Lawrence Willis, inhabitants of the town of Bridgewater, do bind ourselves to free the said town of Bridgewater from any charge or damage that may come upon the said town by the keeping of our brother Jonathan Willis." The following also appears on the Court Records : "Jonathan Willis, who is at Duxbury for cure, shall not be maintained by Duxbury, but by Sandwich, whence he came." Thus we are assured these five were brothers.

4 ↑ Notes, in [Sumner, Edith Bartlett. Ancestry and Descendants of Samuel Bartlett and Lucy Jenkins](#). (Los Angeles: The compiler (typescript), 1951), pp 141–143. Bridgewater land ownership records, confirmatory deeds, Second Church construction, jury duty, and King Philip's War service.

5 ↑ [Morrison, Aurie Willis. Some Willis Families of New England](#). (South Braintree, Massachusetts: Morrison, Aurie Willis, 1973), pp. 1–12.

6 ↑ [Morse, Abner. A Genealogical Register of the Descendants of Several Ancient Puritans](#). (Boston, MA: H.W. Dutton & Sons, 1861), II:185–187.

7 ↑ Willis, Warrington R. (Warrington Russell). [Certain Willises and their wives: an account of one line of descent from John Willis of Duxbury and Bridgewater, Massachusetts](#). (Derry, New Hampshire: W.R. Willis, 1985). John Willis's birth year of 1606 is based on the assumption that he is the John Willis who embarked at Gravesend, England, aboard the "Paul" sailing from London on April 3, 1635. The

passenger list shows a John Willis at "29 yeres".

8 ↑ [Stratton, Eugene Aubrey. Plymouth Colony, its history & people 1620 – 1691.](#) (Salt Lake City, Utah: Ancestry Pub., c1986), pp. 159–160. John Willis came to America in 1635 and held some of town offices at Duxbury in 1637 and at Bridgewater in 1650. In 1648 he was a juror at the murder trial of Alice Bishope who was hanged for killing her daughter, Martha Clarke...