

Edward Winslow

By an anonymous artist, school of Robert Walker
Painted in London, 1651
Material: Oil on canvas



Edward Winslow (1595-1655) was a Mayflower passenger and a leader of the Plymouth Colony. He served as an ambassador to the Wampanoag, wrote several books about Plymouth Colony, and served 3 terms as governor.

Winslow made many trips to England -- in 1624, he brought the first cattle back to America. In 1646, he returned to England and was asked to stay by the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell. Edward Winslow was among those commissioned to retrieve English ships in the West Indies that had been captured by the Dutch. Winslow died on the journey and was buried at sea.

The portrait of Edward Winslow is the only likeness of a Pilgrim made from life. It was painted by an unknown English artist in 1651 when the 57-year-old Winslow was joined in London by his son Josiah on the occasion of Josiah's wedding to Penelope Pelham. Josiah and Penelope also had their portraits painted at this time.

Edward Winslow is depicted holding a letter. The only portion that is legible is the inscription at the bottom which reads "From yr loving wife Susanna." Susanna White Winslow did not accompany her husband Edward on his travels but remained at home at the family's estate, Careswell, in the Plymouth Colony town of Marshfield.

Edward Winslow is shown wearing black and white (it used to be thought that the *Mayflower* passengers wore only those colors). When Winslow was painted in 1651, black was very fashionable and expensive. In 1620, however, when the Pilgrims came to America, colors were fashionable.