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ROBERT ASHLEY

Tavernkeeper, Springfield, Massachusetts 1646-60

Robert Ashley was born in England and died 29 November 1682 at West Springfield. He signed a contract to marry Mary, widow of Thomas Horton, on 7 August 1641 at Springfield. She died at W. Springfield 19 September 1683.

Robert Ashley first settled at Roxbury, Massachusetts and was among the first settlers at Springfield where he was first on record 13 January 1638/9. On 5 January 1640/1 he participated in allotment of lands. Town records of Springfield show he was first allowed to keep an ordinary in 1646. On 22 January 1651/2 he received a grant of land on Mill River on condition that he should keep the ordinary. In 1655 he was instructed by town officials: "*These are therefore to will and require you uppon yo^r perill that you henceforth forbear to sell either wine or strong waters to any Indians, though for selling to the English wee would not restrayne you, but doe allow yo^r of.*" He resigned some time before 31 December 1660 when Samuel Marshfield was appointed to keep the tavern.

Ashley also served the town of Springfield in many other capacities-as juror, and as selectman in 1653. He took the oath of fidelity 23 March 1655/6, and was chosen constable in 1659. Always active in church affairs, Robert Ashley was assigned the first seat in December 1659. He took the oath of allegiance 31 December 1678.

While he signed his name with a mark, indicating that he could not write, Robert Ashley was evidently regarded as a man of energy and ability, industrious and public-spirited, and entrusted with important offices.

Sandra MacLean Clunies
91-35

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3. Clarence Almon Torrey, *New England Marriages Prior to 1700*, (1987), 23.