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*Flagon & Trencher: Taverner and Innkeeper
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Tavernkeeper, Roxbury, Mass.

John Johnson was born in England, date unknown; died 30 September 1659 at Roxbury, Mass. He married first, in England, Margery (-) who died or was buried 9 June 1655. He married second, Grace, widow of Barnabas Fawer.

The probability is that Johnson came in the Winthrop fleet with his wife, two sons and three daughters. He is first of record on 19 October 1630 when he was "Surveyor General of all ye armyes". Chosen Constable of Roxbury 19 October 1630 and 1632, he was made Freeman 18 May 1631. From 1634 when the first General Court met, until 1649, he served as a representative. From 1638 to 1640 he was Clerk of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company.

A man of ability and character, Johnson was one of the founders of the church in Roxbury, of which John Eliot was the first pastor. His house and tavern were near the church, as was the custom.

Winthrop records under date of February 6, 1645 that the "fair house in the midst of town with divers barns and other out-houses" built by John Johnson fell on fire in the daytime (no man knowing by what occasion) and there being in it seventeen barrels of the country's powder and many arms, all was burnt and blown up to the value of four or five hundred pounds." The explosion shock houses in Boston and Cambridge and many thought it was an earthquake. Fortunately, those who came to help put out the fire remembered the cache of explosives and withdrew just in time, so no one was injured. Had not the wind miraculously changed, the greater part of the town of Roxbury would have been destroyed. As it was, the first book of town records and the school charter were destroyed, the former an irreparable loss.

- Lois H. Barrington
#80-31

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