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Three Cranes Inn, Charlestown, Mass. 1635-1712

Robert Long, born c. 1590, came to America from Dunstable, Bedfordshire County, England, on the "Defence", 7 July 1635, with wife Elizabeth (-), born c. 1605. She died in 1687 in Charlestown, and Robert Long died there 9 January 1664.

"Robert Longe, Innholder" arrived in Massachusetts with his second wife, Elizabeth, Luce Mercer, servant, and ten children ages 20 to 3/4 year. The place which he chose for his inn in America was first called "The Great House." The house was built in 1629 for the official residence of the Governor. In 1635 it was sold to Robert Long and it became a tavern or ordinary with the sign of The Three Cranes. On 3 September 1635, Long was licensed to "keepe a house of intertainment att Charles Towne for horse and man." In 1640 the city of Charlestown chose him to sell wine, and the General Court approved the choice.

The book of Charlestown Land Records shows that Robert Long had 12 other pieces of real estate which contained over 150 acres.

The year after the Ancient & Honorable Artillery Company was founded (1638) Robert Long was one of the 21 new members added to the Company. This was a great distinction, as the most prominent men in this group were from all over the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Robert was a member for 25 years.

After the death of Robert Long, the tavern continued with his son John as owner until he died 20 July 1683. From 1683 until 1711 the inn continued as the "Long Tavern", with John's widow, Mary, daughter of Increase Nowell, having full control. After Mary's death, their son, Samuel, sold the inn the next year, in 1712. Thus, "The Three Cranes" was run by three generations in the same family for about 77 years, which was quite a record in the colonial times.

-Janet Collier Clark

REFERENCES

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