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Webb's Tavern, Northampton, Mass., 1658 - 1670

John Webb was born probably in England c. 1615 and died in Northampton, Massachusetts 19 May 1670. He married 1) Ann Bassett, about 1640. She died in Northampton 26 August 1667. John married 2) Elizabeth Swift on 16 October 1677 at New Haven, Connecticut.

John Webb, a man of many occupations, worked as a blacksmith, a land surveyor and a hunter of wolves for the bounty money. On 28 September 1658 the Court found it necessary for someone to keep an ordinary for entertaining strangers and they selected John Webb for this task. He operated what was said to be the first tavern in Northampton, probably a story and a half building with two rooms on the ground floor and a beer house in the rear. It is said to have been on the corner of Main and old South Street. The license was "granted to him in that behalf, as also for the sellinge of wine, Cider or sponge Liquors; this license to continue for one year from this Court. Provided the said John Webb doe not suffer any evil rules or disorder in his house during said Tearme and that he doe behave himself therein." On 26 March 1667 the first Court held in Northampton met at Webb's Tavern.

John led a tumultuous life, being involved in many disputes with those in authority and his fellow townsmen. In 1665 he was fined £ 40 for abusing the Constable and contemptuous behavior toward the Northampton Commissioners. His name often appeared on the court docket.

John Webb left this world in debt, with an insolvent estate.

-Doris R. Sheridan
#81-15

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