

By Sandra Sauers, GSMD Education Committee

# Objectives for Today's Lesson Plan:

- To examine how Pilgrims built their homes
- To become familiar with early colonial homes
- To participate in Pilgrim Home Activities







# The First Pilgrim Homes

- Nineteen (19) family groups from the Mayflower voyage were assigned plots of land to build their house on. Family, or a "family group", could include non-family members as there were few homes built the first year.
- The plots were 50 feet deep and the width of the lot was about 8 feet multiplied by the number of members in the family.
- **Homes were small and normally 800 square feet.**
- Later homes became larger as stories or wings were added.





# Steps a Pilgrim Took To Build A Home

- The Pilgrims cut down trees with ax and saw to make posts and beams for the framework, and split the wood to make thin boards called clapboards. Note: The floors consisted of pounded down dirt.
- Post holes were dug for framing the home using an auger and Shovel. Note: A post was set on each corner of the house (four total).
- Beams were attached to posts to form the roof and framework.
- Thatch of grass and reeds covered the roof.
- Clapboard (thin board) was used on the outside of the house.
- Window openings were covered with wood shutters.
- Door was made of wood planks.
- Chimney was made of clapboard and lined with a mixture of dirt, clay, grass and water known as daub.
- Inner walls were filled with wattle and daub between the building posts.
- Fireplace and hearth were a combination of rock and daub.





## **Wattle and Daub**

#### Wattle is woven sticks and branches.



#### **Fun Facts:**

- The phrase "Breaking and Entering" originated in the medieval period? People used to break through the wattle and daub walls to get into a home, rather than trying to break down the heavy oak doors!
- Daub is derived from the Old French debaur which comes from the Latin dealbare "to whiten." It is used to describe the process of covering a surface with an adhesive substance such as plaster, mud or grease. However, in its noun form, it means a smear of something. When you are ordering "a bagel with a smear," you could impress the clerk at the deli by asking for "a daub" instead.









Clay soil, twigs, grass and water-when mixed make a mixture called Daub





The First Site

#### John Alden's Family Property

The First Site is the home where John, Priscilla, and their children moved soon after being granted 100 acres in the 1627 Plymouth Colony land division. The family lived there for approximately fifty years.

Today the archaeological remains of the First Site are located on land now owned by the Town of Duxbury. In 1960, the Alden Kindred of America, through the efforts of Alden descendant Russell W. Edwards, contacted historical archaeologist Roland W. Robbins to investigate the site. The excavations revealed a foundation measuring about 10 ½ x 38 feet with a deep cellar hole under the western end.

At the end of the 1600s, the Alden family began construction on a new home, located approximately 300 yards west of the First Site. This structure, now called "the Alden House," was home to seven generations of Aldens. This house and the ground it stands on has never been out of possession of the Alden family – nearly 400 years and counting. It is owned and operated by the Alden Kindred as a museum.





#### Jabez Howland's House

The Jabez Howland House is the only existing house in Plymouth where Pilgrims actually spent time. The original 17th century two-story timber framed house consisted of the porch, hall and hall chamber. Jabez Howland, John and Elizabeth's son, lived here with his family until they sold the house in 1680. It was a private residence until 1912 when it was purchased for a museum.



#### **Winslow House**

Built circa 1699 for the Honorable Isaac Winslow on land granted to his grandfather, Mayflower passenger Edward Winslow, the Winslow House is one of the least-altered houses still standing in the former Plymouth Colony. This was the third house constructed on the land granted to Gov. Edward Winslow in the 1630s. The property was named "Careswell" after the family home "Kerswell" in Worcestershire, England.



#### **Bradford House**

The Bradford House, which is also known as the Major John Bradford Homestead, is the historic house at 50 Landing Road in Kingston, Massachusetts. The Jones River Village Historical Society currently owns the house, and operates it as a historic house museum.

The Bradford house was built circa 1714. The building was expanded c. 1750 to its present width. The house was restored to its 18th-century appearance in 1921 by George Francis Dow, which was around the time of its purchase by the Jones River Village Historical Society. The property includes an English barn that was moved to the site in 2002. The house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2006. The house was built by descendants of Governor William Bradford of Plymouth (d. 1657), and remained in the hands of the family until the late 18th-century. It replaced an earlier house, built circa 1674, for which foundation evidence was discovered immediately west of the present house.

## **Richard Sparrow House**

Although not a Pilgrim house, the Richard Sparrow House is a historic house located at 42 Summer Street, and is the oldest surviving house in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The house was built circa 1640 by Richard Sparrow. Richard Sparrow was an English surveyor who arrived in Plymouth in 1636. He was granted a 16-acre tract of land in 1636 on which the house was later built. Sparrow moved to Eastham in 1653. The house is currently operated as a museum and art gallery and is part of Plymouth Village Historic District.







## The Mayflower Society House

The Mayflower Society Home was originally built in 1754 by Edward Winslow, a loyalist who escaped to Halifax, Nova Scotia. He died in 1784 and was buried in the Old Burying Ground located in Halifax, Nova Scotia. His son, Edward Winslow, made significant contributions to the establishment of the loyalist colony of New Brunswick. Winslow was the great-grandson of Edward Winslow, who was the third Governor of Plymouth Colony. The mansion contains 18th century period decorations and furnishings.

The Mayflower House Museum is an 18th-century period historic house museum in Plymouth, Massachusetts operated by The Mayflower Society.

## **Leyden Street**

Leyden Street in Plymouth, Massachusetts was built by the Pilgrims and is the oldest continuously inhabited street. Interestingly, it was named First Street, then Great Street and Broad Street. Finally, it changed to Leyden Street in 1823.

## The Excavation of the Plymouth Settlement

"A team from the University of Massachusetts Boston has excavated a section of the original Plymouth colony settlement on Burial Hill in Plymouth, MA. Before it was known as Burial Hill this area was Fort Hill, the location of the colony's fort and meetinghouse at the westernmost edge of the 17th-century town. In addition to many artifacts from the time period, the excavations uncovered 17th-century trash pits, a calf burial, remains of at least one post-in-ground building, and part of the palisade— a fence of wooden posts— that encircled the settlement. The calf bones are significant because the Pilgrims raised domesticated cattle, while Native Americans in the area did not. The building discovered in the excavation was partially built into the hillside, with daubed interior walls, and a simple fireplace built into the building's dirt floor. The building contained broken pottery and other household trash that shows it was used as dwelling, as well as several trade items. These discoveries are the first-time people have found part of the seventeenth-century settlement in downtown Plymouth. The team also found a stone-tool workshop, Native pottery, and other artifacts indicating that Native Americans used Burial Hill before the Pilgrims' arrival, and also visited the settlement to trade with the colonists." -Dr. David Landon, University of Massachusetts





## **Robert Waterman House Site**



"AHS identified and removed the buried remains of an intact c.1638 house in Marshfield, Massachusetts. It is the only completely excavated 17th-century Plimoth Colony house. The house was occupied for only a few years before it burned down and was abandoned. The site provided volumes of data on early houses and foodways, evidence of how English settlers adapted to life in southern New England. The house was built on wooden posts set in the ground, with no stone or brick. The large quantity of recovered ceramic and glass vessels, household goods, and carbonized botanical remains and animal bones."

AHS is an award-winning cultural resource management (CRM) firm based in Storrs, Connecticut. Incorporated in 1995, AHS is an affiliate of PAST, Inc., a nonprofit archaeological and historic research organization established in 1976.

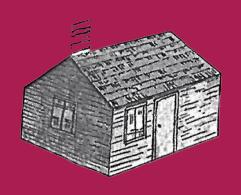
Please note that this article states it is a Plimoth Colony house, the house it situated in Marshfield, Massachusetts. The excavation provides the reader with information that would be pertinent to our own Mayflower descendants homes and the artifacts that have been a part of their lives.

Learn More Here



### **Activities**

This concludes our educational portion of the meeting.



Now please feel free to participate in any of the following activities:

- 1. Name That Tool Flash Cards (Matching Game)
- 2. Pilgrim Home Word Search Puzzle
- 3. Build Your Own Pilgrim House cutout (Cardstock should be used for the house and scissors, glue and crayons/colored pencils should be provided)
- 4. A Pilgrim Homes "Quiz"

