



*The*  
**MAYFLOWER**  
**QUARTERLY**  
*Magazine*

VOL. 91, NO. 4

WINTER 2025

# General Society of Mayflower Descendants

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2023-2026

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The Mayflower Meetinghouse Project



### Find out more at:

[www.TheMayflowerSociety.org/give/the-mayflower-meetinghouse-project](http://www.TheMayflowerSociety.org/give/the-mayflower-meetinghouse-project)

**Cover Art:** Members of The Mayflower Guard present the colors at the General Board of Assistants meeting in San Antonio.

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**Submissions:** To submit to *The Mayflower Quarterly Magazine*, please e-mail MQMEditor@TheMayflowerSociety.org. All articles submitted should be sent as Microsoft Word documents; photographs submitted should be sent as 300 dpi resolution or higher. All articles must contain endnotes for researched material referenced in the article. The following is a link for *Chicago Manual of Style* where endnote formatting information can be found:  
[www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/book/ed17/frontmatter/toc.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/book/ed17/frontmatter/toc.html).

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# The MAYFLOWER QUARTERLY Magazine

VOLUME 91, NO.4  
WINTER 2025

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the 2025 winter issue of *The Mayflower Quarterly Magazine*.

I would like to thank the Texas Mayflower Society for hosting a wonderful General Board of Assistants (GBOA) meeting in San Antonio this past September. The GBOA meeting is a great way to meet up with fellow General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD) members, and I enjoyed seeing many of you in person. If you were unable to attend this year, please enjoy in this 2025 winter issue of *The Mayflower Quarterly Magazine*, the GBOA summary and the many photos of the various events.

In addition to the GBOA coverage, this issue also contains several articles from both new and returning authors. David Furlow has written an enlightening article about the Mayflower Compact and Dale Cook has an article on using State Government sites for genealogy research. Both Lisa Pennington and Bonnie Wade Mucia have great articles regarding Pilgrim connections to royalty. Sally Whiting has shared an interesting article describing her journey to bring her ancestor to life, and then by writing a novel that shares her research, and Anissa Davis writes of the importance of school genealogy clubs. Rounding off the articles we have the usual Member Society news, General Society news and an article on the War of 1812!

I wish everyone a festive and relaxing holiday season.

- Doug



▲ The San Antonio River Walk

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# Governor General's Message

LISA PENNINGTON, GOVERNOR GENERAL

In 1897, the General Society of Mayflower Descendants was formed to educate Americans about the Pilgrims who traveled aboard the *Mayflower* in 1620. According to our Mission Statement, “the Society provides education and understanding of why the Mayflower Pilgrims were important, how they shaped western civilization, and what their 1620 voyage means today...” Our early members would be amazed to learn that we tell the Pilgrim story in person, in print, on video zoom calls, and on film! In fact, our latest educational methods involve something they could never have envisioned. It is our educational YouTube videos which are reaching more people than ever.

Over the last year, we have started to tell the Pilgrim story in short ten-to-twenty-minute videos on our YouTube Channel. See [www.youtube.com/@mayflowersociety](http://www.youtube.com/@mayflowersociety). We have stories about “Christmas in Plymouth” and “Where the Pilgrims Lived on Leyden Street.” There is a video entitled “The Things the Pilgrims Left Behind,” which is not only about the items the Pilgrims left in their wills and estate inventories, but also about the laws they passed to take care of impoverished widows and children—the first such laws in America. This last video has proven to be very popular and has achieved over 95,000 views from all over the world. An American History professor is even assigning this video to her students!

There are also fun videos with recipes about how to cook some of the seventeenth-century food the Pilgrims would have known. We have a terrific video of the Mayflower Society House, with history and pictures of the interior. We have lectures on some of the individual Pilgrims as well as a video about the sailing of the *Mayflower*. We will be posting a video of the Washington, DC, and Maryland Societies’ “Compact to Independence” event which reflects on the 400 plus year history of Americans fighting for their rights against kings and governments—and which began with the Mayflower Compact. If you subscribe, you will get an alert when we post a new video.

This education is exactly what our Society founders hoped for when they passed a motion to educate children and adults so they would be “better citizens.” We want The Mayflower Society to be a source of



▲ Some of the videos available on The Mayflower Society YouTube Channel.

education about the Pilgrims and to deliver that instruction in an engaging and meaningful way.

We are planning future videos on Thanksgiving (coming soon), Pilgrims in Love (both true and profane!), and a four-part series on the Meetinghouse, which operated as a fort, church, courthouse and town hall. We will reenact a real 1638 trial, watch Captain Standish’s militia exercise their arms, see how the Pilgrims worshipped, and watch how the Pilgrims passed their laws and elected their leaders. These and other stories will be told at the Meetinghouse when it is opened as an educational center.

The decisions made in the Meetinghouse changed the course of American history and inspired later generations to fight for democracy, religious freedom and individual rights. We should be proud that by telling these stories, we are continuing their hard work, good sense, compassion and sacrifice—and “lighting the candle” for future generations.

# Executive Director's Update

CHERYL SOARES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## Greetings from your Plymouth Campus!

It was wonderful to see so many of you at our General Board of Assistants Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, in September. What a special gathering—made all the more memorable thanks to the Texas Society's hospitality and hard work.

This past summer we welcomed many of you to Plymouth, and we always look forward to seeing those members who make the trip. If you plan to visit Plymouth, we would be happy to arrange a private tour for you of the Mayflower Society House. Please contact Christine at [executiveasst@themayflowersociety.org](mailto:executiveasst@themayflowersociety.org) to schedule your tour. Our Research Center is also open by appointment or during the week from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (closed Tuesdays).

We have partnered with the Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce and local artist Elizabeth Ames for the town's public art display; it will be available for the next two and one-half years. Twenty-five painted harbor seals are featured throughout Plymouth, each with its own story. Be sure to find The Mayflower Society harbor seal, *Winny*, when you visit!

I am also pleased to introduce my new assistant, Christine Wood. Many of you may already know Christine from her work in the Research Center. Please join me in welcoming her to this new role.

Recently, our online Silent Auction raised approximately \$22,000 for the Meetinghouse. Many thanks to the Member Societies who contributed items and to all who participated. We plan to continue this fundraiser next year during Congress, so you

will have time to start thinking about items that best represent your Society.

As stewards of the historic Mayflower Meetinghouse, we are committed to preserving it for generations to come. I am honored to be working with a fundraising consulting firm - CCS and a dedicated Mayflower team on a capital campaign to ensure its future and to establish it as an educational center where Pilgrim stories can be shared on the very ground where our ancestors walked. If you are interested in supporting this important effort with a gift to The Meetinghouse—or if you have any questions—please don't hesitate to reach out. We are deeply grateful for the commitment and belief in this project from so many of you as we work to ensure that we will have a space to teach future generations, preserve the Pilgrim legacy, and honor their stories.

As I settle into my role as Executive Director, I am grateful for your warm welcome and continued support.

# General Board of Assistants Meeting 2025

MARTIN W. BEERMAN, SECRETARY GENERAL



More than 225 members, spouses and guests traveled from across the continental United States and Hawaii to attend this year's General Board of Assistants Meeting at The Menger Hotel in San Antonio, Texas, September 4-7, 2025.

Attendees enjoyed connecting with cousins and friends at the Welcome Reception, participating in one of two tours, enriching their understanding of the Pilgrims from a presentation by Blaine Bettinger, PhD, JD, The Genetic Genealogist: "Using Autosomal DNA for 18th and 19th Century Mysteries," and hearing about the final hours of the Alamo siege from Stephen L. Hardin, PhD, The Texan's Historian.

Members of the Governor General's 1620 Club enjoyed a special brunch event at The Witte Museum.

## ABBREVIATED GENERAL BOARD OF ASSISTANTS MEETING MINUTES

The Annual Meeting of the General Board of Assistants of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants was called to assemble by Secretary General Martin W. Beerman on Saturday, September 6, 2025, at The Menger Hotel in San Antonio, Texas. The meeting was called to order by Governor General Lisa H. Pennington, Esq.

Elder General Rev. Michael Denney offered the invocation, followed by Presentation of the Colors by the Mayflower Guard. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Captain General Collier Wiese.

Texas Society Governor Nancy Freeman Powers welcomed the assembly. Secretary General Beerman responded to the welcome and thanked the Texas Society for hosting the meeting.



▲ Above: Houston Colony Governor Susan Lawyer participates with the Mayflower Guard at the 2025 GBOA Meeting. Below: Former Governors General Jane Hurt, George Garmany, and Lea Filson with other attendees at the 2025 GBOA meeting in San Antonio, Texas.



▲ The Saturday Banquet at the Menger Hotel.

Governor General Pennington presented the Executive Committee Officers and recognized Former Governors General and General Society of Mayflower Descendants Staff in attendance.

Professional Registered Parliamentarian Kay Crews was appointed and welcomed by Governor General Pennington. Crews gave an overview of parliamentary procedures including the role of the parliamentarian. Governor General Pennington announced the appointment of two timekeepers and four tellers for this meeting.

A necrology of Officers was read by Elder General Denney.

Secretary General Beerman read the nominees to the General Society offices of Deputy Governor General and Assistants General. Twenty-four nominees from sixteen member societies were elected.

Secretary General Beerman conducted the Roll Call of Executive Committee Officers, Executive Committee Members-at-Large, Former Governors General, Deputy Governors General and Assistants General. Forty-eight of fifty-four Member Societies were present.

Without objection, the Agenda and Standing Rules were approved.

The minutes of the September 7, 2024, General Board of Assistants Meeting in Asheville, North Carolina, were approved.

The actions of the September 4, 2025, Executive Committee were read. The Actions of the Executive Committee since September 2024 were previously distributed by email to all General Board of Assistants members.

Without objection, Rev. Michael Denney was elected to serve as Historian General and Cherie Snow Lawson was elected to serve as Member-at-Large for the remaining unexpired terms of those offices ending with officer elections at Congress in 2026.

Reports of the Executive Committee were presented by Governor General



Pennington, Assistant Governor General Jeffrey J. Stark, Secretary General Martin W. Beerman, Treasurer General Bart S. Henson, Historian General Rev. Michael R. Denney, Counsellor General James J. Wheaton, Elder General Rev. Michael R. Denney, Captain General Collier S. Wiese, and Member-at-Large Jane Duxbury Schleinzer.

Former Governor General Jane E. Groves Riddell Hurt presented the Report of the Former Governor General, followed by the National Pilgrim Memorial Meetinghouse Report, presented by Former Governor General Lea Sinclair Filson.



Former Governor General Jane E. Groves Riddell Hurt presented the Mayflower Society House Report followed by the Report of the Executive Director, presented by Cheryl Soares.

**Committee Reports included:**

**Awards**

Nancy Saul

**Insignia**

Meg Averett

**Mayflower Guard**

Captain General  
Collier Wiese

**The Mayflower  
Quarterly Magazine**

Della Regenold

**Meetings and Events**

Secretary General  
Martin Beerman

**New Products**

Secretary General  
Martin Beerman

**Scholarship**

Member-at-Large  
Cherie Lawson

**Silver Books**

Bonnie Wade Mucia

**Technology**

Chris Schlosser

**Trustees of  
Endowment Funds**

Treasurer General  
Bart Henson

**DNA**

Susan Abanor

Governor General's Commendation Awards were presented to:

The **Texas Society** for outstanding effort to make this GBOA Meeting special, citing the great location, tours and hospitality to make everyone welcome.

**Mary Brown**, Connecticut, for her stewardship of the Meetinghouse Trays project.

**Greg Thompson**, Connecticut, for his steadfast commitment to fundraising for the Meetinghouse through the sale of challenge coins and a new scarf, and countless hours indexing member applications.

**Muriel Cushing**, Florida, for continued work on the Pilgrims to Patriot Project, now expanded to include War of 1812 soldiers.

Governor General Pennington recognized the **Texas Society**, recipient of last year's Governor General's Light the Candle Award for its eighth-grade curriculum and short films, by showing a sneak peek of one of the project's videos.

The Governor General's Distinguished Service Award was presented to Scholarship Committee Chair **Cherie Snow Lawson** for her service and dedication to the continued success of the GSMD Scholarship program.

Treasurer General Henson presented the 2025-2026 Budget. The Annual Audit was accepted without objection.

Nine Bylaws amendments were approved for consideration at Congress in 2026. Five were approved as presented and four were approved as amended.

◀ Left: River Cruise Photo: Left to Right: Karen Pogoloff - Virginia, Della Regenold - Kansas, Meg Averett - Virginia and North Carolina, Bonnie and Joey Mucia - South Carolina, Jane Hurt - Kansas, Karen Weis - Kansas, and Suzanne Keesler - Virginia. Below: Members of the General Board of Assistants attending the 2025 GBOA Meeting.





▲ Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, for the Alamo defenders who were Mayflower Descendants.



# Save the Dates

## MEMBER EXCLUSIVE EVENTS

### FORTY-FOURTH GSMD GENERAL CONGRESS September 11–16, 2026

Hotel 1620 Plymouth Harbor  
Plymouth, Massachusetts.

See *The Mayflower Quarterly Magazine* Spring 2026 issue for details. Registration opens online Tuesday, **March 3, 2026**, at the Members Only section of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants website.

### GSMD HEREDITARY FORTNIGHT BREAKFAST April 15, 2026

**Army Navy Club Ballroom  
901 Seventeenth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006.**

See related article on page 8 of this issue of *The Mayflower Quarterly Magazine* for more information on how to register for this event.

### 2026 PILGRIM ORIGINS TOUR September 26–October 6, 2026

Journey through England tracing the lives of our Mayflower ancestors.

See related article on page 9 of this issue of *The Mayflower Quarterly Magazine* for more information on registering for this extraordinary tour.

Governor General Pennington announced the members of the Nominating Committee.

The Benediction was given by Elder General Denney. Captain General Wiese called for Retiring of the Colors by Mayflower Guard Commander James Battles.

With no additional business, the 2025 General Board of Assistants Meeting was adjourned.

## TOURS

Members, spouses, and guests enjoyed a choice of tours to the San Antonio Missions or the Museum of the Pacific War in nearby Fredericksburg.

## BANQUET

At the Saturday evening banquet, and at a special wreath-laying ceremony at the Alamo Sunday morning, The Mayflower Society honored Alamo Defenders who are Mayflower Descendants.

## UPCOMING GBOA AND CONGRESS MEETINGS

Congress 2026 – Plymouth: September 11–16, 2026.

GBOA 2027 – Atlanta, Georgia: September 9–12, 2027.

GBOA 2028 – California: September 7–10, 2028.

Congress 2029 – Plymouth: September 7–12, 2029.

GBOA 2030 – Virginia: September 5–8, 2030.

**Complete General Board of Assistants Meeting Minutes and Reports may be accessed on The Mayflower Society website under the Members Only tab [www.TheMayflowerSociety.org](http://www.TheMayflowerSociety.org).**

# GSMD Hereditary Fortnight Breakfast in Washington, DC

MARTIN W. BEERMAN,  
SECRETARY GENERAL

The General Society of Mayflower Descendants' (GSMD) Hereditary Fortnight Breakfast is Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at the Army Navy Club Ballroom in Washington, DC. Join Governor General Lisa Pennington and your Mayflower Cousins for this special event with keynote speaker Richard Pickering, Deputy Executive Director and Senior Historian, Plimoth Patuxet Museums.

## ABOUT RICHARD PICKERING

Richard Pickering serves as Deputy Executive Director and Senior Historian at Plimoth Patuxet Museums, the living-history institution that interprets seventeenth-century Plymouth Colony and the Wampanoag homeland.

Over nearly four decades at the museum, Pickering has held numerous roles—including historical role player, research associate, director of education, and director of special projects—before assuming his current leadership posts. In his capacity as Senior Historian, he leads research initiatives, oversees interpretive programming, and works to bridge scholarly inquiry with public engagement.

Pickering is known for his dedication to making history accessible to general audiences. He describes himself as a public historian—a mediator between academia and informal learners—who seeks to present nuanced, complex historical narratives in ways that resonate with museum visitors.

Raised in Braintree, Massachusetts, Pickering first joined the museum as a historical interpreter (portraying figures such as Philip Delano) and gradually transitioned into leadership and scholarship. He has also contributed to public-facing publications—for example, editing a facsimile edition of William Bradford's "Of Plimoth Plantation" with accessible annotations.



▲ Richard Pickering, Deputy Executive Director and Senior Historian at Plimoth Patuxet Museums.

## ARMY NAVY CLUB BALLROOM

901 Seventeenth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006.

Wednesday, April 15, 2026.

8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

\$55 per person.

## MENU

Scrambled eggs, breakfast potatoes, bacon and sausage, fresh fruit, breakfast breads, mini-croissants, orange juice, coffee, and tea.

## RESERVATIONS

Reservation deadline is Wednesday, April 1, 2026.  
Seating is limited.

To register, visit the Members section of the GSMD website ([www.TheMayflowerSociety.org](http://www.TheMayflowerSociety.org)) and click on the link for Members Events to locate the registration link for the Hereditary Fortnight Breakfast.

## ARMY NAVY CLUB DRESS CODE

Men are required to wear a coat and collared shirt.  
Women's attire should be comparable.

## QUESTIONS?

Contact Secretary General Martin Beerman at [SecretaryGeneral@TheMayflowerSociety.org](mailto:SecretaryGeneral@TheMayflowerSociety.org).

WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE PILGRIMS:

# Join the 2026 Pilgrim Origins Tour

MARTIN W. BEERMAN, SECRETARY GENERAL

The General Society of Mayflower Descendants invites you to embark on the only official Mayflower Pilgrim Origins Tour, an unforgettable journey through England tracing the lives, faith, and courage of our Mayflower ancestors. This once-in-a-lifetime experience takes place September 26–October 6, 2026, and promises history, fellowship, and discovery at every turn.

## A JOURNEY ACROSS CENTURIES

Beginning in London, you will enjoy a panoramic city tour, visit Southwark Cathedral, and dine at the historic Mayflower Pub overlooking the Thames. From there, the adventure unfolds with highlights that include:

- **The Tower of London and Royal Museums Greenwich**—where kings, queens, and seafarers shaped Britain's destiny.
- **Highclere Castle** (home of Downton Abbey) or **Windsor Castle** (depending on availability)—stepping into the grandeur of royal and noble life.
- **Hampton Court Palace**—exploring Pilgrim ties to King Henry VIII's iconic home.
- **UNESCO treasures in Canterbury**—including the awe-inspiring Canterbury Cathedral and St. Augustine's Abbey.
- **Pilgrim towns and villages**—Great Amwell, Baldock, Fenstanton, and Cambridge, where our ancestors worshipped, studied, and prepared for their journey to the New World.
- The tour concludes with a moving farewell at **Cambridge and East Bergholt**, followed by a celebratory dinner near Heathrow before your return home.



▲ The Tower of London.

## EXCLUSIVE PILGRIM INSIGHTS

Adding unparalleled depth to this experience, Richard Pickering, Deputy Executive Director and Senior Historian at Plimoth Patuxet Museums, will accompany the tour. His knowledge and storytelling will bring Pilgrim history to life, making each stop resonate with meaning.

Your package includes nine nights of hotel accommodations, daily breakfasts, selected lunches and dinners, motorcoach transportation, entrance fees, and expert guides. Whisper headsets will ensure you do not miss a word during guided tours. Fellowship with fellow descendants will enrich the journey even further, making this both a personal pilgrimage and a shared celebration of our heritage.

## RESERVE YOUR PLACE

Space is limited for this remarkable tour. Pricing begins at \$5,640 per person, with monthly payment plans available. A private room upgrade is also offered.

- **Tour Dates:** September 26–October 6, 2026.
- **Register online:** [www.feattravel.com/mayflower2026](http://www.feattravel.com/mayflower2026).
- **Questions?** Email: [info@feattravel.com](mailto:info@feattravel.com).

Step back in time, walk where the Pilgrims walked, and honor their legacy on this extraordinary journey through England.

# Honoring the Alamo Defenders Who Were Mayflower Descendants

BY LISA PENNINGTON,  
GOVERNOR GENERAL

On Sunday, September 7, 2025, Texas Society Governor Nancy Powers and I were honored to place a wreath at the entrance to the Alamo to commemorate the three Mayflower descendants who were Alamo defenders who fought against General Santa Anna's army in March 1836. Each man had come to Texas hoping to become a part of the new country.

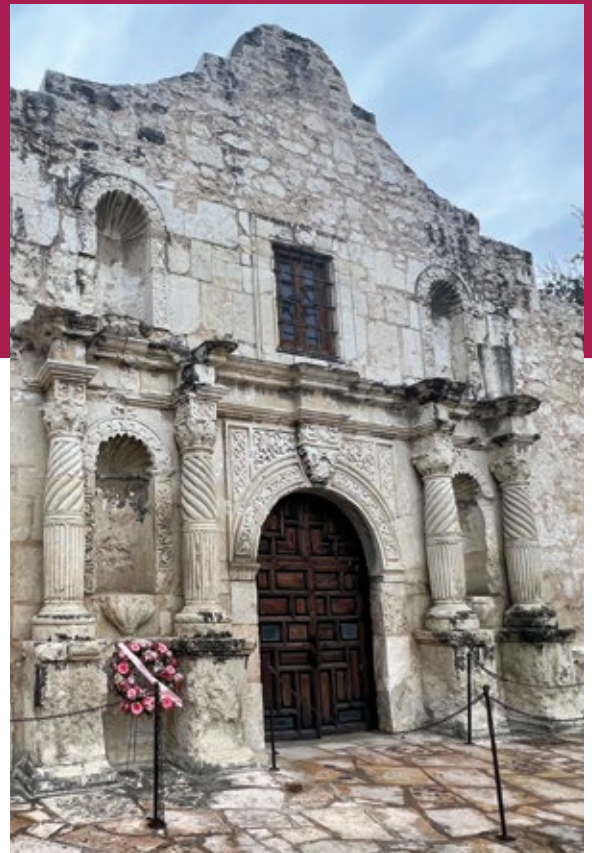
**Dr. Amos Pollard** was head regimental surgeon at the Alamo hospital before he and the other physicians were killed during the siege. He was born in Massachusetts and came to Texas in 1834 to become part of the early government. He was a William White, Suzanna White and Resolved White descendant.

**George Washington Cottle** was born in Missouri but came with his parents to Texas in 1829 as early settlers in the DeWitt Colony. Cottle was one of the men who came from Gonzales to relieve the Alamo only days before the final battle and then perished in the battle. George is a William Bradford descendant through his son William Bradford Jr.

**Benjamin Franklin Highsmith** was also born in Missouri and came with his family to Texas in 1823. He was a teenaged courier for Col. William Travis, who sent him to Col. Fannin begging for reinforcements, which Fannin would not send. That errand saved Highsmith's life. Highsmith would go on to fight in every battle including the final one at San Jacinto. He lived a long life as a Texas Ranger. Highsmith's ancestors were Myles Standish and Edward Doty through their children Alexander Standish and Desire Doty, respectively.

After the GBOA meeting, I received an email from a cousin to tell me that there was yet *another* Mayflower descendant at the Alamo—**James Butler Bonham**, who was born in South Carolina. James was a lawyer and came to Texas in 1835, where he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Texas Cavalry. Col. Travis also sent Bonham as a courier to try to secure additional reinforcements, but to no avail. Bonham returned and fought through enemy lines on March 3 to tell Travis that hope was not coming. He died with his comrades at the Alamo on March 6. James Bonham is a Samuel Fuller descendant.

I was privileged to honor these noble men who were prepared to give the last full measure of devotion to the values of religious freedom, self-government and liberty. The Pilgrim ancestors of these Alamo defenders would have been proud!



▲ Governor General Lisa Pennington and Texas Society Governor Nancy Powers at the Alamo wreath laying ceremony.

# We Want You for the Mayflower Guard

JAMES BATTLES, COMMANDER, MAYFLOWER GUARD

When the *Mayflower* arrived off Cape Cod in November of 1620, the passengers were prepared for their protection by the arms and armor that they brought with them to defend their new plantation. They also brought with them the traditions and the experience of the Dutch militia, town guards, and the trained bands of the English militia. We know what type of arms and armor were used by the Pilgrims during their first years in the new world.

Monday, the 13th of November (1620) sixteen men were set out with every man his musket, sword, and corselet, under the conduct of Captain Miles Standish, unto whom was adjoined, for counsel and advice, William Bradford, Stephen Hopkins, and Edward Tilley.<sup>1</sup>

This quote from *Mourt's Relation* tells us that the men who went exploring on Cape Cod wore armor, had swords and muskets. When authors of *Mourt's Relation* referred to arming they meant putting on armor. The crosslet refers to pikeman's armor. An unarmed man was someone who was not wearing armor.

In order to celebrate the rich history of the early defenders of Plymouth in those formative years of 1620 and 1621, the General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD) created the Mayflower Guard at Congress in 2017 as a living history unit that makes

those few defenders come alive. The Mayflower Guard is a committee of the GSMD and serves under the Captain General. The Guard is drawn from society members who are willing to participate in the Guard at GSMD meetings and events. The members of the Mayflower Guard are appropriately dressed and equipped as were Mayflower passengers who formed the militia of the Pilgrims in 1620–1621. The Mayflower Guard visibly promotes the education and understanding of the Pilgrims through their historically correct arms, armor, and apparel.

Since its founding the Guard has focused its attention on recruiting, and on members obtaining the necessary arms, armor, and clothing to be historically accurate in their appearance. It has been a challenge to find sources for these items. Where does one find seventeenth-century pikeman's armor, matchlock muskets, pikes, and swords in the twenty-first century? After a good deal of research and consulting with reenactor groups like the New Plimmoth Gard, sources for all these items have been located and vendors identified where one can purchase the necessary items or patterns for clothing for those who like to sew. There were other challenges such as learning how to blacken or blue armor and to make long pikes that are portable and

1. Dwight B. Heath (ed.) *Mourt's Relation: A Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth* Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1963, 19.



▲ Members of the Mayflower Guard at the GBOA Meeting in San Antonio.



◀ Mayflower Guard Commander James B. Battles.

easily transported. The Guard has grown from one member, the commander, to over fifteen members and is growing.

The Mayflower Guard had its primer performance as a color guard at the GSMD Board of Assistants Meeting in St. Charles, Illinois, on September 8, 2018. The Guard participates in other official ceremonies and events of the GSMD such as Pilgrims Progress, memorial ceremonies such as wreath laying as needed and required. The Mayflower Guard also serves as an honor guard for the Governor General on special occasions to serve as visible ambassadors for the GSMD. The Mayflower Guard is a visible public face of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants. Mayflower Guards provide an easily identifiable and colorful focal point at events. The arms and armor of the Guardsmen will invite children and spectators and potential members to come forward and ask questions about the Pilgrims.

Membership in the Mayflower Guard is open to all members of the GSMD, both male and female, who wish to participate in Guard activities. Consideration

is also given to spouses and significant others of GSMD members who wish to participate in the living history activities of the Guard and join the Guard. The non-members must have a close relationship to a Society member.

I would like to invite everyone to consider joining the Mayflower Guard, enjoying the fun of participating in the living history that the Guard represents and helping to make the story of our Pilgrim ancestors come alive. Join the Guard and join us in our next event at Congress and help lead the Pilgrim's Progress from the Mayflower Society House to the Meetinghouse through the streets of Plymouth in September 2026.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the Mayflower Guard and being a part of living history should contact the Guard Commander:

**James B. Battles**  
Captain USN (ret)  
*Commander, Mayflower Guard*  
  
440 Independence Pkwy  
Apt 1106  
Plano, TX 75057-8035  
  
Phone: 301-346-7694  
Email: [battles.mayflowerguard@gmail.com](mailto:battles.mayflowerguard@gmail.com)



# Insignia

BY MEG AVERETT

Insignia Chair Meg Averett and Sales Manager Alex Cervenak enjoyed seeing many of you at the 2025 General Board of Assistants meeting in San Antonio, Texas. As always, we are happy to help you with GSMD Insignia sales. Thank you for the positive feedback.

Mayflower Society at ceremonial occasions and may be worn along with other genealogical medals across the heart. A 2.5" ribbon is included. Order now for your upcoming spring meetings!

Choose the Miniature Member Medal with no stone, a cubic zirconia, a synthetic pink stone, or a .03 carat diamond.

For **10K and 14K gold prices**, please contact Meg Averett, Insignia Chair, at [Insignia@TheMayflowerSociety.org](mailto:Insignia@TheMayflowerSociety.org)

# Warm Up Your History



See Plymouth

MASSACHUSETTS

[SeePlymouth.com](http://SeePlymouth.com)

Cole's Hill, Plymouth



*Town of*  
**PLYMOUTH**

# 2025 Awards

DELLA REGENOLD, MQM CHAIR

## 2025 GSMD MEMBER SOCIETY COMMENDATION AWARDS

Commendation Awards are bestowed each year by the General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD) at its annual meeting to members who have been nominated by their Member Society for their extensive volunteer service with significant direct benefits to GSMD or to their Member Society. Each Member Society may nominate one member each year to the GSMD Awards Committee. The members of the Awards Committee are Chair Nancy Q. Saul, Lee Hardin Woody, and Jane Schleinzer. Each recipient of the award receives a Commendation Pin and a Certificate of Commendation and Appreciation.

The following members are the recipients of the GSMD 2025 Commendation Awards presented on Saturday, September 6, 2025, at the General Board of Assistants meeting in San Antonio, Texas.

### ALABAMA

Ann R. Ferguson

### ARIZONA

Raya Robinson

### AUSTRALIAN

Andrew Cooper  
Wells

### CALIFORNIA

Gail Raser

### CONNECTICUT

Kate Wagner

### DELAWARE

David Bradford

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Ann Campbell

### FLORIDA

Clara Waterman  
Powell

### HAWAII

Lindsay Kamm

### ILLINOIS

John Schellinger

### INDIANA

Erica Tamsen Gould

### MAINE

Carolyn Small

### MARYLAND

Ben Proctor Jr.

### NEBRASKA

Robert Laughlin

### NEW YORK

Adelaide Perry  
Farah

### OHIO

Vicky Heineck

### OREGON

Frances "Francie"  
Fessler

### PENNSYLVANIA

Laura L. Tyndall

### SOUTH CAROLINA

Sarah Linley  
Clingman, Esq.

### SOUTH DAKOTA

Sharon Wiese

### VIRGINIA

John Alden  
Copenhaver

## 2025 GOVERNOR GENERAL'S COMMENDATION AWARDS



**Mary Brown** of the Connecticut and Massachusetts Societies received the Governor General's Commendation

Award for her extensive work with an artist in creating the unique, historic, and very popular trays made from the Meetinghouse slate roof tiles which financially benefit the Meetinghouse.



**Greg Thompson** of the Connecticut Society received the Governor General's Commendation Award for both

creating and selling challenge coins and a gorgeous scarf decorated with depictions of the Meetinghouse stained-glass windows with the sale proceeds benefiting the Meetinghouse. Thompson is also a devoted Mayflower Indexer, having indexed thousands of member applications for the Easy App Generator project.



**Muriel Cushing** of the Florida Society received the Governor General's Commendation Award for her many

years of selfless and tireless work as a Silver Book researcher and in creating the Patriots to Passenger database which links American Revolutionary War patriots to their Mayflower passenger ancestors. Cushing has added War of 1812 patriots to Mayflower passenger lines in the database.

The Mayflower Society will benefit for many years from the selfless efforts of Mary Brown, Greg Thompson, and Muriel Cushing. The Mayflower Society congratulates all of the Commendation Award recipients and thanks each one of you for the volunteer work you do for your Member Society and for the General Society of Mayflower Descendants!

## 2025 GOVERNOR GENERAL'S DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD CHERIE SNOW LAWSON

The Governor General's Distinguished Service Award recognizes excellence and dedication to the General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD) and is presented to an individual for their extraordinary and extensive service.

The recipient of the 2025 Governor General's Distinguished Service Award is Cherie Snow Lawson, a dual member of the Oklahoma and Kansas Societies. Lawson has been a devoted volunteer for the GSMD by giving educational speeches about the Mayflower Pilgrims to many community organizations and by serving as 2023–2026 Chair of the GSMD Scholarship Committee when the scholarship application went online for the first time in 2025, making it easier for applicants to submit their scholarship applications.

In addition, Lawson reached out to every applicant to assist them with the application process, and she

also revised the application and the adjudicating process which increased the number and quality of the applicants.

Finally, Lawson prepared a short film showcasing the winners of the 2025 GSMD Scholarships for presentation at the 2025 General Board of Assistants (GBOA) meeting in San Antonio, Texas, this past September.

Lawson was elected at the 2025 GBOA meeting as Member-at-Large to fill the remaining year of a vacant seat and is a Past Governor of the Oklahoma Society.

Congratulations to Cherie Snow Lawson on receiving the 2025 Governor General's Distinguished Service Award!



## 2025 PILGRIM ACADEMIC RESEARCH AWARD BLAINE T. BETTINGER, PhD, JD



The General Society of Mayflower Descendants' (GSMD) prestigious Pilgrim Academic Research Award recognizes scholarly contribution and advancement in Pilgrim related research. The 2025

Pilgrim Academic Research Award was presented by Governor General Lisa Pennington to Blaine T. Bettinger, PhD, JD on September 7, 2025, at the Governor General's 1620 Club meeting in San Antonio, Texas.

Bettinger can be called the godfather of genetic genealogy. While he is a patent attorney by trade, he is also a professional genealogist specializing in DNA evidence and the use of artificial intelligence for genealogical research.

Bettinger is also an author. His works include the long-running blog *The Genetic Genealogist*, and two books, *The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy*, and the award-winning *Genetic Genealogy in Practice*, the world's first genetic genealogy workbook that he co-authored with Debbie Parker Wayne. The GSMD DNA Committee

has gained knowledge through the information in Bettinger's work, and his ground-breaking research has enabled many GSMD members who are adopted to prove their connections to their Pilgrim ancestors.

The award included \$1,000 for Dr. Bettinger's continued research in the field of Mayflower Pilgrim related research.

Congratulations Blaine T. Bettinger, PhD, JD for your 2025 Pilgrim Academic Research Award, and thank you for your scholarly contribution and advancement in Pilgrim related research.

### Previous recipients of this prestigious honor are:

- 2015** James W. Baker
- 2016** Dr. David Landon & Dr. Christa Beranek
- 2017** Dr. Jeremy D. Bangs
- 2018** Susan E. Roser
- 2019** Caleb H. Johnson
- 2021** Judith H. Swan
- 2022** Richard H. Pickering
- 2023** Peggy M. Baker
- 2024** Christopher C. Child

# 2026 GSMD Scholarship

CHERIE SNOW LAWSON, MEMBER-AT-LARGE AND SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR

The General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD) 2026 scholarship applications will be opening to applicants via the GSMD website on January 5, 2026. GSMD will be awarding four scholarships to high school students who will be graduating seniors, are Mayflower descendants, and will be attending a four-year college or university, or a two-year community college.

To be considered, the GSMD applicant must include a valid, active GSMD membership number for themselves, or for one of their parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents. The applicant will be required to complete the application form, to provide their GPA, Class Rank, and to upload their latest school transcript to the GSMD website.

Two references will also be required: one from a teacher and one from a person in the community. Both of these two people will need to fill out a

provided form, and then both must return the completed reference form to GSMD by March 2, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. ET.

In addition, a required essay must be written by the applicant. All documents, including the essay, must be received by GSMD by March 2, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. ET.

Watch the GSMD website for updates on the application process. Please let the members of your Member Society know about the availability of these scholarship opportunities.

In 2025, GSMD awarded two Native American scholarships through the Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants with the help of Beth Anderson-Godfrey. Candidates for the 2026 GSMD Native American scholarship will need to apply to: [scholarships@massmayflower.org](mailto:scholarships@massmayflower.org).

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION:

## Genealogy Clubs in Middle and High Schools

ANISSA PENN DAVIS, EdD

For many people, genealogy is a lifelong pursuit—a window into the past that reveals the resilience, courage, and sacrifices of those who came before us. For those of us in the Mayflower Society, that interest often begins with names like Allerton, Howland, or Standish, and grows into a broader appreciation of history, identity, and legacy.

But while adult genealogists continue to document and preserve ancestral ties, there is one question we all ask ourselves: Who will continue our work?

This question was answered for me in the Fall 2016 when I brought in some personal stories while teaching historical speeches to my eighth-grade language arts class. While comparing Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address", Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech, and President Obama's first Inaugural Address, I also incorporated some history with the 1860 Census Slave Schedule and showed them the statue of Gen. John Buford, who is my fifth

cousin, once removed. This created an opening for me to explain that everyone has famous relatives—you just need to know where to look. Because of my explanation, the first Genealogy Club at Anderson County Middle School was born.

The best genealogy programs do not just focus on building family trees—they teach essential twenty-first-century skills. Through the process of investigating their past, students learn to:

- conduct credible research.
- interview relatives.
- analyze primary documents such as census records, letters, and ship manifests.
- organize their findings with clarity.

And this brings me to Carter. When the ACMS Genealogy Club first started, Carter was a sixth

# In Memoriam

No In Memoriams were submitted to the General Society of Mayflower Descendants since the printing of the fall 2025 issue of *The Mayflower Quarterly Magazine*.

The General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD) remembers those who have served on the board of a Member Society or as a General Society officer. If a past or present officer of your Member Society has passed away, please complete the In Memoriam Form located in the Members Area of the GSMD website under Society Resources, and email it to Elder General Rev. Michael R. Denney at the following email address: [ElderGeneral@TheMayflowerSociety.org](mailto:ElderGeneral@TheMayflowerSociety.org).



▲ Carter and Anissa attend the grave marking for Daniel Boone in Frankfort, KY.

grader. I can still picture him walking down the hall with his files and a huge smile on his face. By seventh grade, he wanted to join some lineage societies. I printed out the forms that had previously proven generations listed and told him he had to prove every blank space. He did that using his own research, which involved the two different ancestors he chose to study when he joined the Children of the American Revolution and the Sons of the American Revolution.

Carter is now a senior at Centre College and has just returned from studying at the University of Reading in England. He has also studied in Istanbul, Turkey, and is preparing to head to Spain and Morocco in January 2026. When asked about his Genealogy Club experience, he said,

**Being involved in Genealogy Club was such a formative experience for me. I have always had an interest in my family history, but the Club gave me the skills to research it on my own. Additionally, exposure to online and archival research has proven invaluable to my studies. For all of my history classes, research papers have been required. Knowing how to work with records and research libraries is so useful. My archival experience helped me get into the John C. Young Scholars Program at Centre, an opportunity to pursue a research**

## **project over the course of my senior year.**

For hereditary societies like the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, genealogy clubs are more than educational—they are strategic. If we hope to keep our membership growing, we must bring in our young people. A genealogy club can be the door that opens opportunities for greater understanding about our ancestors' lives, which can lead them to join hereditary societies.

Genealogy reminds us that we are one small piece of a very large puzzle. For younger people, these discoveries can be transformative, and genealogy clubs provide the necessary tools to help them grasp the stories that shape us.

Anyone who is a member of a hereditary society understands we are stewards of our past, and we owe it to both our ancestors and our descendants to pass the torch.

It is our responsibility to light the path through history—one student, one story, one family tree at a time.

***Anissa Penn Davis, EdD, is an academic advisor for grades 6-12 at Anderson County Learning Academy and is an adjunct professor at Eastern Kentucky University in the College of Education and Applied Human Sciences. She is a member of fourteen lineage societies and holds local and state offices in many of them. Dr. Davis is a past Governor and past two term Historian for the Kentucky Society of Mayflower Descendants.***

# MEMBER SOCIETY NEWS

## CONNECTICUT

### Mayflower Meetinghouse Scarf

The Connecticut Society partnered with renowned scarf designer Nina Akin, a Brewster descendant, to design an exclusive, limited-edition, forty-inch scarf as a supporting fundraiser for the National Pilgrim Memorial Meetinghouse Project.

Nina collaborated closely with Connecticut Society Board members and Lea Filson, President of the Meetinghouse Charitable Trust, incorporating iconic Meetinghouse symbols to develop a narrative of the historic Mayflower story.

This limited-edition, heirloom-quality, forty-inch scarf is crafted in a light, wistful fabrication with the feel of fine silk, while sharp images pop in jewel-tone colors, that can be easily integrated as an eye-catching accessory to almost any lady's ensemble. Meant to be passed down through generations in

Mayflower Descendants' personal cherished collections—this scarf is a must-have as either a gift to yourself or a meaningful gift for family and friends. The scarf is priced at \$40 plus tax and shipping.

Available by emailing Greg Thompson, [gthomp5749@aol.com](mailto:gthomp5749@aol.com) or through the Connecticut website [ctmayflower.com](http://ctmayflower.com).

**Submitted by: Louise Wagner, Governor**



▲ Limited-Edition, heirloom-quality, forty-inch scarf with the feel of silk, featuring sharp images in jewel-tone colors. Sale proceeds of the scarf benefit the National Pilgrim Memorial Meetinghouse Project.

## EUROPE

### Europe Society Hosts Governor General Lisa Pennington

Filtering in from nations across Europe, the people of the Society of Mayflower Descendants (Europe) (SMD(E)) travelled by ones and by twos, gathering at last in Leiden, Holland, the Netherlands in July 2025. Our second annual in-person gathering has taken place. We have managed, yet again, to overcome the heavy odds placed against us by time, space, and limited resources. The results were utterly joyous.

This event is part of a series of momentous events during an exceptionally busy quarter. Between May and September, the SMD(E) also hosted General Society of Mayflower Descendants Governor General Lisa Pennington in both Paris and England; presented our second Annual General Meeting as a hybrid in-person/online event; coordinated representation at the General Board of Assistants; formally started the incorporation process;

welcomed seventeen Associate Members; carried out a fund-raiser on behalf of the Leiden American Pilgrim Museum; started planning for the 2026 SMD(E) gathering in Scrooby, England (please join us!); and established a new relationship with England's National Trust.



▲ Europe Society Governor Carmen Kew (front left) with other Europe Society members for the annual in-person meeting.

The headline news is as follows: the SMD(E), in collaboration with the GSMD and England's National Trust, has established that Charles Henry Robinson, who donated Ightham Mote (Kent, UK) to the National Trust, is a descendant of the Mayflower passengers Brewster, Doty, and Priest. Please consider visiting this beautiful place and letting

them know that you are there because YOU are a Mayflower descendant. The property is planning an event in November in which the GSMD certificate will be presented for public display. The National Trust also intends to pursue Mayflower links in its other properties throughout Great Britain; your interest will encourage them in their endeavours. But—for me, the entire process provoked a meditation on everything to do with being a Mayflower descendant, generally, and being the SMD(E) Governor, in particular.

I think that this is because I accidentally made grown people cry in public. I stood in front of a crowd and told them that some of them were really, truly Mayflower descendants, and tears were the result. I should add that there were also some glorious smiles and delighted applause, and many, many people eager to talk with me, but it was the tears that caught me off-guard. Such a level of emotional display was totally unexpected at a decorous garden party on a splendid summer afternoon at one of England's most beautiful National Trust properties. During the drive home, and in the weeks that have followed, I have thought long and hard about people's reactions.

They cried, I think, because I gave them something real and precious and true. I offered a fact unsullied by imagination, wishful thinking, the popular press, or the whim of a political body. I told those people that they carry a thread which is an integral to the fabric of an exceptional community. That community irrefutably stands at the centre of modern history. I was focussed on my own task for the day, which was to tell everyone gathered—the National Trust officers, the awe-inspiring architect and his henchmen, the glittering local dignitaries, and the representatives and diaspora of Charles Henry Robinson's kindred—that the GSMD had confirmed C. H. Robinson's Mayflower ancestry. I was delighted by that confirmation. What I did not think about, however, was the impact that my words would have once they were uttered.

The thrill of discovering such a reality and the joy in finding tangible proofs for those facts resonates deeply for some of us. The bald statement of an irrefutable link to the Mayflower has cognitive and emotional heft; without realising it, I have become casual about the piece of that story that I own.

Thinking about it again, knowing that the Mayflower passengers—those people who successfully carried each other's burdens through the depths of misery, who kept faith with each other even in the midst of unspeakable suffering, who went on to lift the fallen, and carry them into the future—to know that those people are among my own ancestors is overwhelming. I can hear echos of their voices now (I have William Brewster's text beside me; I have to remind myself that he is my own grandfather); this is a glimpse of understanding offered to only a very few. How fortunate I am. How blessed we all are. It is easy to underestimate the value of what we know for certain.



▲ Carmen Kew, SMD(E) Governor with descendants of Charles Henry Robinson at Ightham Mote in Kent, UK

I offered the people at Ightham Mote an antidote to endless dichotomies and amorphous grey areas cluttering daily life; I gave them a moment of certainty that is a rare and precious gift. When we know where we have come from, we can gain some sense of where we are going, too, and that knowledge can be overwhelming and can force an acknowledgement that that person is both uniquely individual and yet part of something much bigger and more important than personal interest. A yearning for these things is essential to humanity, I think. So is the desire for a place where we have an unchallenged belonging. This all is granted to a confirmed Mayflower descendant. That is why people cried.

This essay has become very philosophical, perhaps as a result of my entering the last quarter of my three-year term as Governor. I can look back at great hardship in the beginning. Magnificent people joined me in working very hard, and real progress is now evident; it is also obvious that there is still a great deal of work to be done, and that we are all a little tired. Yet beyond these pragmatic, day-to-day

affairs and the fleeting fatigue, it is worth reminding myself the SMD(E) offers something that is, in truth, embarrassing in its scope and grandeur. It also provides a domestic scale of community that is deeply satisfying to the soul and utterly necessary for mental health. You can see this effect in the photo taken during the SMD(E)'s first evening in Leiden.

We came together as individuals and created a community, an exceptional feat in a world designed to splinter relationships. It is worth doing the work that is necessary to make it continue. Thank you to every one of you who takes part in doing so.

**Submitted by: Carmen Kew, Governor**

## NEW YORK

### New York Society Holds Fall Reception

The Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New York held its annual Fall Reception on Wednesday, September 17th at the Cosmopolitan Club – *An Evening of Music and Dance at Plimoth*. After the 2025 Spring of strong attendance, this seasonal kick-off was no different with over eighty members and their guests attending. The content of the evening was unique, which in the past few years had included authors Charlotte Carrington-Farmer (2024) who presented her publication—*Roger Williams and His World, A History of Documents* and Rebecca Fraser (2023) who presented her publication—*The Mayflower: The Families, the Voyage, and the Founding of America*.

The goal for this gathering was to make the presentation interactive and participatory. After a warm welcome from Deputy Governor Charles E. “Trip” Dorkey III, Tom Begley, the new Executive Director

from Plimoth Patuxet Museums, shared with the audience that the expectation for the evening was for the audience to learn as well as to have fun. Richard Pickering, Deputy Executive Director and Senior Historian, and Malka Benjamin, Director of Colonial Interpretation and Training, led the assembled crowd in songs from the psalter as well as more in bawdy rounds appropriate from an alehouse. They also taught many guests a few of the country dances of the time. A lively cocktail hour followed, and our New York guests finished the evening eagerly anticipating the next gathering, another evening of music and dancing, the Seventy-first Annual Mayflower Ball (Saturday, November 8th). Please contact Alexis Morledge, Executive Director, ([director@mayflowernewyork.org](mailto:director@mayflowernewyork.org)) if you would like to purchase tickets or sponsor a debutante for the 2026 Ball.

**Submitted by: Alexis Morledge, Executive Director**

## OKLAHOMA

### Oklahoma Society's San Antonio Visit

The Oklahoma Society was well represented at the General Board of Assistants meeting held in San Antonio, Texas, September 4–7, 2025. Three members and one guest attended, which may be a record for the Oklahoma Society. They were: Cherie Lawson, Deputy Governor General, Norma Hughes, Assistant General and Governor of the Oklahoma Society, and John Ruffing. It was John's first time to attend a General Board of Assistants meeting. John is serving the Oklahoma Society as the elected Deputy Governor, and appointed as Historian to complete an unexpired term.

The Oklahoma delegation went sightseeing around downtown San Antonio prior to the start of the sessions. They participated in the Scholarship Committee meeting, the Historian's meeting and the Treasurer's meeting. The San Antonio Missions Tour

was the highlight of the visit, as was the Welcome Reception hosted by the Texas Society. The Oklahoma delegation also attended the General Board of Assistants meeting, as well as the luncheon and evening banquet. The Sunday morning 1620 Club wreath ceremony at the Alamo was especially moving. The Oklahoma delegation wishes to thank the Texas Society for a “Yee-Ha” good time in San Antonio.



▲ Oklahoma Society members, Cherie Lawson, John Ruffing, and Norma Hughes.

**Submitted by: Norma Hughes, Governor**

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Pennsylvania Society Educates and Entertains

The Pennsylvania Society's Members Meeting was held on April 12 at the historic Cameron Estate Inn & Restaurant amidst the cornfields of Mount Joy, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Following a brief business meeting and gourmet lunch, we enjoyed an outstanding presentation from guest speaker, Andrew C. Lipman, PhD. This prize-winning historian and educator delved into his recent book, *Squanto: A Native Odyssey* (Yale University Press, 2024), which was released to wide acclaim, including the *Wall Street Journal's* "12 Books to Read: The Best Reviews of September." We came away from Dr. Lipman's talk with a uniquely sympathetic perspective of our Wampanoag cousins. Their fifty-five-year partnership with our Pilgrim ancestors represents a multicultural American origin story from which we may all take inspiration.

Our Susquehanna Colony's Spring Event on May 3 featured an engaging tour of Historic Rock Ford, followed by lunch at the historic Greenfield Restaurant—both in Lancaster, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. This late-Georgian style mansion on thirty-three acres of parkland was built in 1794 for Dr. Edward Hand, an Irish immigrant and physician, who served as Adjutant General to General George Washington throughout the Revolutionary War. Once the wife of Dr. Hand passed away in 1805, this mansion was left unoccupied for 250 years, with the surrounding farmland being rented to tenant farmers; thus, there was no plumbing, central heating or electricity installed, leaving the building in a remarkably original state.



▲ Pennsylvania members at Historic Rock Ford.

Our Western Colony's Summer Event on July 12 involved a two-hour group sail aboard the *Lettie G. Howard*, a fishing schooner built in 1893, followed by an early dinner at Smuggler's Wharf in Erie, Erie County, Pennsylvania. During this characterful excursion across Erie Bay, the ship's crew educated members on the history of the ship and the local fishing industry throughout the twentieth century. They also invited members to help raise and lower the sails. This year's group sail was a successful reprise of last year's sold-out event.

On August 7, our Philadelphia Colony members enjoyed an immersive, all-day experience at one of the area's best-kept secrets. The Bryn Athyn Historic District in Montgomery County consists of well-manicured grounds housing three Beaux Arts mansions of the Pitcairn family, whose Scottish-born patriarch John Pitcairn Jr. was an industrialist and founder of Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co. (now PPG Industries). Also onsite is the renowned Bryn Athyn Cathedral, episcopal seat of the General Church of the New Jerusalem, a denomination of Swedenborgianism. All Bryn Athyn buildings were constructed between 1892 and 1938.

**Submitted by: James Reed Campbell Jr., Governor**

## SOUTH DAKOTA

### Honoring Heritage in the Heart of South Dakota

This fall, the South Dakota Society of Mayflower Descendants gathered in one of America's most profound places of remembrance and cultural pride—the Crazy Horse Memorial in the majestic Black Hills of South Dakota.

More than a monument, the **Crazy Horse Memorial** is an evolving tribute to the Lakota warrior Crazy Horse and all Native American peoples. Work on the mountain carving began in 1948 and continues to

this day. Once completed, the sculpture will rise 563 feet into the South Dakota sky—making it the largest mountain carving in the world.

The Crazy Horse Memorial is a rare blend of monumental art, historical remembrance, and living cultural education—an ideal setting for our annual gathering.

We were honored to welcome **Paul Horsted**, an acclaimed photographer, historian, and author, as our guest speaker. A South Dakota native, Horsted has

spent more than forty years capturing the spirit of the region through his lens.

His work has appeared in the *National Geographic*, *Smithsonian*, *USA Today*, *LIFE*, *South Dakota Magazine*, and more. He is best known for his ongoing project of recreating historic photographs with modern precision, most notably in his book *Exploring with Custer: The 1874 Black Hills Expedition*—now in its fourth edition.

In addition, The South Dakota Society proudly donated two meaningful auction items to the General Society of Mayflower Descendants' 2025 Silent Auction. The proceeds from the Silent Auction will support the restoration of the **National Pilgrim Memorial Meetinghouse**. The two South Dakota auction items were as follows:

- **A Signed Print: "Traditional Lakota Warrior Funeral"**  
This striking, numbered painting by Tom Phillips was accompanied by a letter of authenticity and a one-year subscription to South Dakota Magazine.
- **A Traditional Lakota Star Quilt**  
These quilts are powerful symbols of Lakota identity, gifted during life's most sacred milestones—births, graduations, marriages, and ceremonial honors. Their eight-pointed design, rooted in the "star nation" and ancestral traditions, represents warmth, protection, and community. Originally developed when buffalo hides became scarce, the star quilt is now an enduring expression of resilience, beauty, and cultural survival.



▲ Photos of the Crazy Horse Memorial in the Black Hills by Paul Horsted.

Join us in honoring heritage—both Native and Pilgrim—as we reflect, learn, and celebrate together in the heart of South Dakota.

**Submitted by: Randy Olivier, Governor**



▲ Left to Right: Governor General Lisa Pennington, San Antonio, BOA Rep Mike Byrne, Texas Governor Nancy Powers and Houston Colony Governor Susan Lawyer in front of the Alamo.

## TEXAS

### Texas Society Hosts the 2025 General Board of Assistants Meeting in San Antonio

The Texas Society of Mayflower Descendants hosted the General Society of Mayflower Descendants' General Board of Assistants Meeting this past September 4-7, 2025, at the historic Menger Hotel in San Antonio, Texas.

Many attended from all over the country, but the member travelling the farthest to attend was from Hawaii. The local San Antonio Colony were the "Cowboy Boots" on the ground for the event and did a spectacular job, particularly San Antonio, Texas, Board of Assistants (BOA) member Mike Byrne, Texas Deputy Governor Kathleen Pierce and San Antonio Colony Governor Ellen Cotton.

Houston Colony Governor Susan Lawyer, Dallas-Fort Worth Colony Governor Rachel Hall, Texas Treasurer Kimberly Florsheim and Texas

Newsletter Chair Peggy Marsh were also integral to the success of this very special meeting with a Texas flair!

We had a very special ceremony at the front of the Alamo remembering three known Mayflower Descendants who died there: George Washington Cottle, a William Bradford descendant, Benjamin Franklin Highsmith, a Myles Standish and Edward Doty descendant, and Dr. Amos Pollard, a William White descendant. A beautiful memorial wreath was presented and a thoughtful prayer was written and read by Elder General Rev. Michael Denney. Governor General Lisa Pennington offered opening remarks and San Antonio BOA representative Mike Byrne talked about the history of the siege at The Alamo.

Thank you to all other representatives of the other Member Societies who were able to attend and for their enthusiasm and camaraderie that we here in Texas could feel and appreciate. You are all very special to us!

**Submitted by: Nancy Freeman Powers, Governor**



◀ Top: (L-R) Texas Deputy Governor Kathleen Pierce, San Antonio Colony Governor Ellen Cotton, Texas Governor Nancy Freeman Powers and Texas Treasurer Kimberly Florsheim. Left: Mike Byrne reading the Mayflower Compact at the Saturday Night Banquet.

## UTAH

### Utah Society Spring 2025 Banquet

Friday, May 2, 2025, was a beautiful evening on the benches of the Salt Lake Valley, where the Utah Society met for its Spring 2025 Banquet at the Sons of Utah Pioneers National Headquarters.

Highlights of society business included celebrating our past Governors for their many years of service to the Utah Society. As a special thank you, Past Governor Susan McEvoy was given a certificate and a beautiful brooch whose front was engraved with a picture of the Mayflower Society House. The brooch was designed by President General Pamela Wright of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Thomas Portlock gave a review of RootsTech which was attended by representatives from both the General Society of Mayflower Descendants as well as by many members of the Utah Society.

This past year, the Utah Society celebrated its “Pilgrims to Pioneers” initiative. This celebration included our past Pilgrim ancestors’ descendants who crossed the plains as pioneers before the Transcontinental Railroad was completed. Lapel pins, medallions, challenge coins, and mugs with a newly created design were available for purchase. A new

Utah Society certificate was announced and is now available for sale on the Utah Society website. The certificate includes the member’s Passenger and Pioneer, GSMD number as well as the Member Society membership number. The Certificate will go well with the “Pilgrims to Pioneers” medallion and both will be a beautiful legacy for members to pass down to honor their heritage.



▲ Berti Loken and the Utah Mayflower Society table at the Cries of Freedom event.

The Utah Mayflower Society was pleased to host an information table at the Cries of Freedom event held at the SCERA Theater in Orem over the weekend of July 3–5. Berti Loken volunteered and was on hand to answer questions and share details about The Mayflower Society and its mission. We were thrilled by the strong interest, with many attendees signing up to learn more about their potential Mayflower connections.

**Submitted by: Thomas Portlock**

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# PILGRIM HISTORY AND GENEALOGY

## Mayflower Compact or Plymouth Combination?

DAVID FURLOW

Every year in November, members of Mayflower Societies read the *Mayflower Compact* before they begin the annual feast of turkey, stuffing, and cranberry sauce. Few stop to ask whether their ancestors used the word “compact” to describe the agreement they signed in what is known today as Provincetown Harbor, on November 11, 1620, Old Style. In actuality, the Pilgrims chose a different phrase, *Plymouth Combination*, to describe their consensus-shaping covenant. In this article, we can use the *Combination* to unlock some insights about the *Compact*.

### THE PILGRIMS CALLED THEIR NOVEMBER 1620 AGREEMENT A COMBINATION, NOT A COMPACT

There is no evidence that either the Pilgrims in 1620, or the first six generations of their descendants through 1800, used the word “compact” to describe their November 1620 agreement to create a covenanted community. In *Mourt’s Relation*, Edward Winslow, William Bradford, and their co-authors described their agreement as “an association and [an] agreement that we should *combine* together in one body, and to submit to such government and governors as we should by common consent agree to make and choose...”<sup>1</sup> William Bradford chose “combination” in his journal: “I shall a little return back, and begin with a *combination* made by them before they came ashore; being the first foundation of their government in this place.”<sup>2</sup>

As best we can reconstruct by combining *Mourt’s Relation* with Bradford’s journal, the Mayflower Pilgrims agreed to “covenant” and “combine” to create Plymouth Colony:

**“We whose Names are under-written . . . do by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, Covenant and Combine our selves together into a Civil Body Politick, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid: and by virtue hereof do enact,**

**constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony...”**

We should presume that the Pilgrims chose the most appropriate words—*combine* and *Combination*—to describe the intent and achievement of their November 1620 agreement. They combined their lives, families, and fortunes, as well as their different life-experiences in Scrooby, London, East Anglia, Kent, and the West Country, to create the “civil body politick” known as Plymouth Colony.<sup>3</sup> That combination “join[ed] two or more separate things into a whole,” to quote the *Oxford English Dictionary’s* definition of *combine*. Robert Cawdrey’s 1604 edition of the *Table Alphabeticall*, England’s first single-language dictionary, shows that the Pilgrims defined a “combination” the same way we do today—as “a joining or coupling together.”<sup>4</sup>

When the Pilgrims drafted the *General Fundamentals of New-Plymouth* in 1636—and thereby created the first constitution, bill of rights, and law code in North America—they referred back to their foundational agreement as the “Combination.”<sup>5</sup>

A text-heading on the right-hand side of the first page of the *Book of the General Laws of the Inhabitants of the Jurisdiction of New Plymouth* in 1685 describes the origin of Plymouth’s law codes as “[t]he Combination of the first Associates [in] 1620.” Published in Boston in 1685, the *Book of the General Laws* reflects that the Pilgrims’ descendants understood that Plymouth’s legal system began as a combination of individuals who chose to work, live, and pray together.<sup>6</sup>

So, what did “compact” mean to the Pilgrims? A compact originated in Latin as *compactum*, “an agreement or covenant between two or more parties,” one that was “put together,” typically in formally sealed pacts or treaties between or among states, institutions, or tribes. Elizabethan chronicler Richard Hakluyt used “compact” that way in his 1589 book

*Principall Navigations*: “Any compacts, treaties, or leagues, by any of us or any of our progenitors, heretofore had or made...”<sup>7</sup> William Shakespeare used “compact” that same way in 1591 to refer to a peace treaty between France and England in his play *Henry VI, Part I*: “And therefore take this compact of a truce // Although you break it when your pleasure serves.”<sup>8</sup> In *Hamlet*, in 1602, the character Horatio told how “our valiant Hamlet... [d]id slay this Fortinbras; who by a sealed compact, [w]ell ratified by law and heraldry, [d]id forfeit, with his life, all those his lands, [w]hich he stood seized of, to the conqueror...”<sup>9</sup>

A *compact’s* connotation of a formally-ratified treaty or official agreement among monarchs, governments, or states continued through the nineteenth century. Article I, Section 10, Chapter 3 of the U.S. Constitution (1789) declared that “[n]o State shall, without the Consent of Congress ... enter into any Agreement or Compact with another state, or with a foreign Power...”<sup>10</sup>

The Pilgrims chose to write *combination* rather than *compact* when they designated their foundational document as the *Combination* (sometimes spelled *Combinacion* with a small “c”) in their official law books and codes.<sup>11</sup> They could have called their founding document a compact in 1620, for Englishmen sometimes used that term to discuss a formal covenant or contract, but they chose not to do so. In contrast to a compact, a covenant was an agreement or promise between two or more people, usually set forth in a contract or deed, to engage in or refrain from engaging in a particular act. A borrowing from Old French, it first appeared circa 1297 as “*conuenant*” in *Robert of Gloucester’s Chronicle* to describe the bond of allegiance between King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table.<sup>12</sup>

## THE TERM COMPACT REFLECTS IDEAS THAT AROSE LONG AFTER THE MAYFLOWER SAILED

In his quadricentennial book *Made in America: The Pilgrim Story and How It Grew*, Plymouth historian James W. Baker described how the people of Plymouth gave “due recognition” to the agreement signed aboard the *Mayflower*. “The agreement was not a revolutionary departure from English precedent but a pragmatic application of it,” he declared.<sup>13</sup>

The first time anyone called Plymouth’s *Combination* a *compact* likely occurred in 1780, Jim Baker noted, when a Tory Scottish attorney, George Chalmers, used it to describe the creation of New England colonies, beginning in Plymouth, in a 1780 book, *Political Annals of the Present United Colonies from*

*their Settlement to the Peace of 1763*. Chalmers learned about the Plymouth Combination while reading Samuel Purchas’s 1625 book *Hakluytus Postumas, or Purchas His Pilgrims*—a retelling of *Mourt’s Relation*.<sup>14</sup> Chalmers noted that the Pilgrims entered into that voluntary agreement because King James denied them the royal charter they sought in 1617 and 1618. Chalmers described the Pilgrims’ entry into a “covenant, which was signed before they landed, on the 11th of November 1620...”<sup>15</sup>

George Chalmers applied a more secular term, *compact*, to retrospectively characterize an agreement that began as a contract: “Having thus formed a community, by a *compact* which everyone was bound to obey, because all had consented, the emigrants chose Carver their governor...”<sup>16</sup> “Whenever the Independents [the Brownists—the Pilgrims] settled a colony without the authority of a charter,” Chalmers noted, “they founded their policy on a contract, to which everyone agreed.”<sup>17</sup> He published, *verbatim*, the Combination under the heading “Association of New-Plymouth,” while properly hailing it as “the basis whereon was erected the superstructure of the laws and constitution of New-Plimouth.”<sup>18</sup>

George Chalmers’ choice of “compact” to describe the Pilgrims’ agreement reflected the popularity of philosophy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. English philosopher Thomas Hobbes first made the reading public familiar with “compact” in his 1642 treatise, *De Cive [On the Citizen]*, which he published as *Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society*. In that book, Hobbes wrote that, “No man... by his *compact*, obliges himself to an impossibility.”<sup>19</sup> The term “compact” and its equivalent, “social compact,” became even more widespread because of Hobbes’ influential 1651 book *Leviathan: Or the Matter, Forme, and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiasticall and Civill*.<sup>20</sup> English philosopher John Locke’s 1690 opus, *Two Treatises of Government*<sup>21</sup> and Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s 1762 treatise *On the Social Contract; or, Principles of Political Right*, with their discussions of social contracts and compacts arising out of a state of nature, retrospectively shaped Chalmers’ views of Plymouth Colony and New England.<sup>22</sup>

A decade after George Chalmers introduced eighteenth century social contract theory to Plymouth’s story, Philadelphia lawyer James Wilson, one of only six men to sign both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, discussed the frustrations he experienced while searching for the first North American social *compact*. “In discharging the duties of office,” Wilson stated, “I shall have the

pleasure of presenting to my hearers what, as to the nations of the Transatlantic world, must be searched for in vain—an original compact of a society, on its arrival in this section of the world.”<sup>23</sup>

## JOHN QUINCY ADAMS RECHARACTERIZED THE COMBINATION AS A COMPACT

James Wilson’s search provided another American, John Quincy Adams, an opportunity to find that original social compact that had evaded Wilson. Adams, the sixth President of the United States, helped re-label Plymouth’s Combination by referring to it as “that positive, original social compact” in his 1802 Forefathers Day speech in Plymouth:

**“One of these remarkable incidents is the execution of that instrument of government by which they formed themselves into a body-politic, the day after their arrival upon the coast, and previous to their first landing. This is perhaps the only instance in human history of that positive, original social compact, which speculative philosophers have imagined as the only legitimate source of government. Here was a unanimous and personal assent, by all of the individuals of the community, to the association by which they became a nation.”<sup>24</sup>**

Adams’ praise inspired others to call Plymouth’s foundational agreement the Mayflower Compact, a term that became common in the nineteenth century.

## SHOULD MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS CELEBRATE COMPACT DAY OR COMBINATION DAY?

Are there any reasons that Mayflower descendants should start celebrating “Combination Day” rather than “Compact Day?” There are at least three good reasons for renaming it, while there are also three even better reasons for not doing so.

The first and most important to celebrate *Combination Day* is a due regard for historical accuracy. The Pilgrims chose to use the words that mattered to them: *combine* and *combination*, rather than *compact*, to commemorate their creation of Plymouth Colony. The Pilgrims’ descendants used those same words in their constitutions and law codes for six generations afterwards, until John Quincy Adams substituted a Tory Scot’s term, *compact*, something that sounded more Enlightenment and more Federalist than the words the Pilgrims and their descendants used.

Second, the Pilgrims exemplified a Separatist disdain for ostentation. Their Geneva Bible, at Proverbs

16:18, warned them against taking undue pride in ostentation: “Pride goeth before destruction, and an high mind before the fall.” In 1602, eighteen years before the *Mayflower* sailed, the character Horatio in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* described Fortinbras’s “sealed compact, [w]ell ratified by law and heraldry...”<sup>25</sup> The Pilgrims drafted their Combination when they lacked a charter, heraldry, or royal seal—and when their patent stopped short of reaching Cape Cod. A humble combination, rather than a haughty compact, better captures the Separatist spirit of Plymouth Colony.

Third, Mayflower Compact rather than Plymouth Combination obscures the Pilgrims’ achievement. In a Thanksgiving essay published in *The Imaginative Conservative* in 2013, Professor Bradley J. Birzer, the Russell Amos Kirk Chair in History at Hillsdale College and a conservative Catholic, hailed the Combination as an exemplar of Protestantism:

**“My first thought after reading [the *Mayflower Compact* to my liberal arts college class] every January for the past fourteen years is, what incredibly and pugnacious audacity these Pilgrims had. Ruling themselves with a simple agreement, a single paragraph, and a deep and abiding faith—a faith I don’t necessarily share but one I respect immensely...”<sup>26</sup>**

Professor Birzer hailed the Combination’s significance as world-altering: “For all intents and purposes, the Plymouth Combination is the first real assertion of the right to self-governance in the modern western world and is one of the most important in any time or place.”<sup>27</sup>

In addition, Professor Birzer warned that replacement of an early seventeenth-century word, *combination*, with a term popularized by eighteenth-century secular philosophers, *compact*, was anachronistic: “While we could interpret the Combination from a Lockean or Hobbesian perspective, it would be nothing short of absurd to do so. Hobbes was still thirty-one years away from writing *Leviathan*, and Locke was age negative 12 in 1620... Importantly, the authors of the Combination never assert the existence of a “state of nature.”<sup>28</sup> Professor Birzer argued, instead, for a contemporaneous construction of the Combination in accord with the Pilgrims’ seventeenth century religious, legal, and cultural traditions.

Now let us consider the reasons for not changing Compact Day to Combination Day. Again, there are at least three good reasons for not making such a name change.

The first reason for adhering to Mayflower Compact is that almost everyone knows that it means an

instrument the Mayflower passengers signed in present day Provincetown Harbor on November 11, 1620, Old Style. Whether we call it the Compact or the Combination, the most important thing to focus on is how the words in that agreement created a colony that changed England, America, and the Atlantic world. The words that identify that agreement symbolize reality, but should not loom larger than the document they describe. They are neither magic nor are they set in stone. Words are dynamic; they evolve in response to the changing needs of individuals, groups, and societies, whether in Plymouth or anywhere else.

In a personal conversation, Plymouth historian James W. Baker got to the point:

**“Everyone knows what the Compact is. But if you say Combination, many people do not know what it was. Was it the same thing as the Compact, or something different? People would get confused. Why go through that? It would be pointless, anyway. After two hundred years of saying Mayflower Compact, no one is going to switch over to Plymouth Combination. The important thing is not what we call the agreement but what it says.”**

The second reason is cost. A comprehensive change from Mayflower Compact to Plymouth Combination would require expensive modifications to monuments, historic signboards, and inscriptions—or their replacement—at a time when such funding is hard to find.

The third reason is to avoid unnecessary controversies. The change of traditional names to new ones has generated resentment, contention, and conspiracy theories when applied to countries, schools, ships, geographical bodies, and historical museums. Ironically, an effort to attain more authenticity might result in delegitimizing the Pilgrims’ foundational agreement. Any marginal gain in accuracy does not merit the trouble that might follow in its wake.

More than two centuries of continued, widespread use of the phrase Mayflower Compact in tens of thousands of books, articles, and events makes it extremely unlikely that members of Mayflower societies will replace it with a more accurate but obscure *Plymouth Combination*. Members of Mayflower societies who wish to make their Compact Day celebrations more meaningful can quote the actual words their ancestors used when they joined together their lives, families, fortunes, and traditions as the Plymouth Combination.

**David Furlow organized the Journal of the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society and served as its Executive Editor 2011-2020. He has served as a Pilgrim Hall Trustee from 2019 through the present.**

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December 22, 1802. At the anniversary commemoration of the first landing of our ancestors, at that place (Russell and Cutler, 1802), Image 7 (text, p. 1), Image 12 (text, p. 6: "Man, therefore, was not made for himself alone. No! He was made for his country by the obligations of the social compact..."), and Image 23 (text, p. 17: "This is perhaps the only instance, in human history of that positive, original social contract..."), Library of Congress website, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/gdcmassbookdig.orationdelivered00ada/?st=gallery>, accessed April 4, 2025.

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## ONLINE DISCOVERIES:

# State Government Sites

DALE H. COOK

All of you have ancestry from what is now the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, so the Commonwealth's website<sup>1</sup> and the sites of its daughter agencies will be the primary focus of this column. Some outstanding features of other state sites will also be noted.

### SOME MASSACHUSETTS STATE SITES

I have previously described in this column a significant online resource of the Massachusetts state government which provides information about the state's historic sites—the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS).<sup>2</sup> Some of the other state sites of significant utility to genealogical and historical researchers are:

- Probate records, and divorce records; and
- Land records (aka deeds).

### PROBATE AND DIVORCE RECORDS

Many Massachusetts government functions, traditionally carried out by county governments, have been taken over by the state government for most counties. Among the most significant for readers are the probate courts and the registries of deeds. Probates are a major focus of the state's Probate and Family Courts.<sup>3</sup> These courts are still organized by county, but four counties have multiple Probate and Family Court locations. Bristol County has three (Taunton, Fall River and New Bedford), Essex County has two (Salem and Lawrence), Middlesex County has two (Lowell and Woburn), and Plymouth County has two (Plymouth and Brockton).

Historic Massachusetts probate records are not maintained online by the State of Massachusetts, but are available through Family Search<sup>4</sup> (a free login is required for access) and, to a lesser extent, through American Ancestors<sup>5</sup> (available only to New England Historic Genealogical Society members). More recent probate records, as well as more recent divorce records, are available for a fee through the individual Probate and Family Court pages.

### LAND RECORDS (AKA DEEDS)

Land records, aka deeds, were historically maintained by Massachusetts counties in their registries of deeds. Deeds are now maintained by the state in most counties, through twenty-one registries located in the fourteen counties. The websites for those registries can be accessed through the Massachusetts Registry of Deeds page.<sup>6</sup> Barnstable, Dukes, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, Nantucket, Norfolk, Plymouth, and Suffolk Counties have one registry location located in each of the historic county seats. Berkshire County has three registries, in Pittsfield, Adams, and Great Barrington. Bristol County has three, in Taunton, Fall River, and New Bedford. Essex County has two, in Lawrence and Beverley, with some services also available in a Salem office. Middlesex County has two, in Cambridge and Lowell. Worcester County has two, in Worcester and Fitchburg.

Historical deeds, as with probates, can be found at Family Search and, to a lesser extent, through American Ancestors. Copies of more recent deeds are available for a fee through the individual Registries.

## SIGNIFICANT SITES FOR OTHER STATES

Every state has historic sites listed on the National Record of Historic Places.<sup>7</sup> Some states maintain much larger lists of historic sites not included in the National Register. I mentioned earlier in this article the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System. Because I have lived in Virginia for the second half of my lifetime, I am very familiar with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources,<sup>8</sup> or DHR. I encourage you to visit the governmental sites of all states involved in your research and try to find out whether they contain documentation of historic buildings, sites, cemeteries, or other locations useful in your research. Some states also have online collections of historic photographs. State sites can contain useful sources for genealogical research which should not be overlooked.

**Dale H. Cook <webmaster@plymouthcolony.net> serves as the Massachusetts State Coordinator for the USGenWeb® Project, and specializes in Plymouth Colony families, especially those of Bridgewater, MA. Dale is also a member of The Mayflower Quarterly Magazine staff as Contributing Genealogist.**

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## Bringing Your Ancestor to Life

SALLY HOBERT WHITING

When you learned you were descended from a passenger on *Mayflower*, did you wonder what happened to your ancestor on the harrowing voyage in 1620 and throughout the years that followed? Like me, did you wonder about your ancestor's personal beliefs, hopes, and emotions during all that happened?

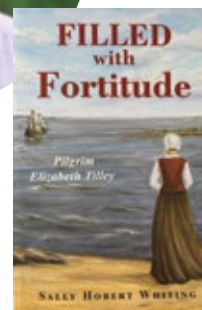
When I learned one of my ancestors was only thirteen when she boarded the ship, orphaned before she got off the ship, married to another passenger who was fifteen years her senior, and gave birth to ten children who all lived, I was astonished. "What a fascinating story she would have to tell," I thought. Was there a way to imagine her experiences and bring her to life for my children and grandchildren, and even my *Mayflower* cousins?

How would I go about finding clues to determine her probable experiences? Fortunately, I found multiple ways, many of which I am about to share with you. It is possible to bring your ancestor to life if you take on the challenge.

First, read voraciously. Read anything and everything to do with *Mayflower's* history, both nonfiction and fiction, to acquire a basic understanding of who the passengers were—their backgrounds, their different

motivations for leaving Europe, and their lifeways—their beliefs, customs and daily lives. Determine your ancestor's own reason for making the journey. Start bringing your ancestor to life by putting yourself in your ancestor's shoes. Imagine what your ancestor might have been thinking and feeling when first boarding *Mayflower*.

Second, research primary sources. Build yourself a timeline, based on fact—on known events that happened during the crossing and afterward. William Bradford's, *Of Plymouth Plantation 1620-1647*, and Edward Winslow's *Mourt's Relations* are two critical sources. Imagine where your ancestor might have been and what your ancestor might have been doing and feeling during each event—the ocean storms, the winter of devastating sickness, the interactions with the Native Americans, etc. Again, put yourself in your ancestor's shoes, and allow your ancestor to come to life.



Next, delve into genealogical records. Referring to the passenger list, look up factual information about everyone on the ship, not just your ancestor. Learn about their occupations, marriages, the names and dates their children were born, and what they did in the colony. Imagine how they might have interacted with your ancestor on the ship and afterwards—what short-term and long-term relationships your ancestor might have had with them. Robert Charles Anderson's three volumes of *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England, 1620-1633*, is an excellent source for this purpose. For example, I was able to learn enough about the women and girls on the ship, that I could easily imagine the likely interaction between them as they had children and their families grew. I imagined what they did together, what they talked about. Piece together the clues you find, and you can do the same.

Seek out archaeological clues. Artifacts found at the locations where your ancestor lived shed light on the dwelling in which your ancestor lived, the items used, foods eaten, and clothing worn. Imagine the story behind each artifact. How did that plate break, and who was upset when it happened? Who used that thimble, and what was she making? Some Mayflower artifacts are on display at Pilgrim Hall Museum and Plimoth Patuxet Museum in Plymouth. Go study them. They can provide plenty of clues for your story.

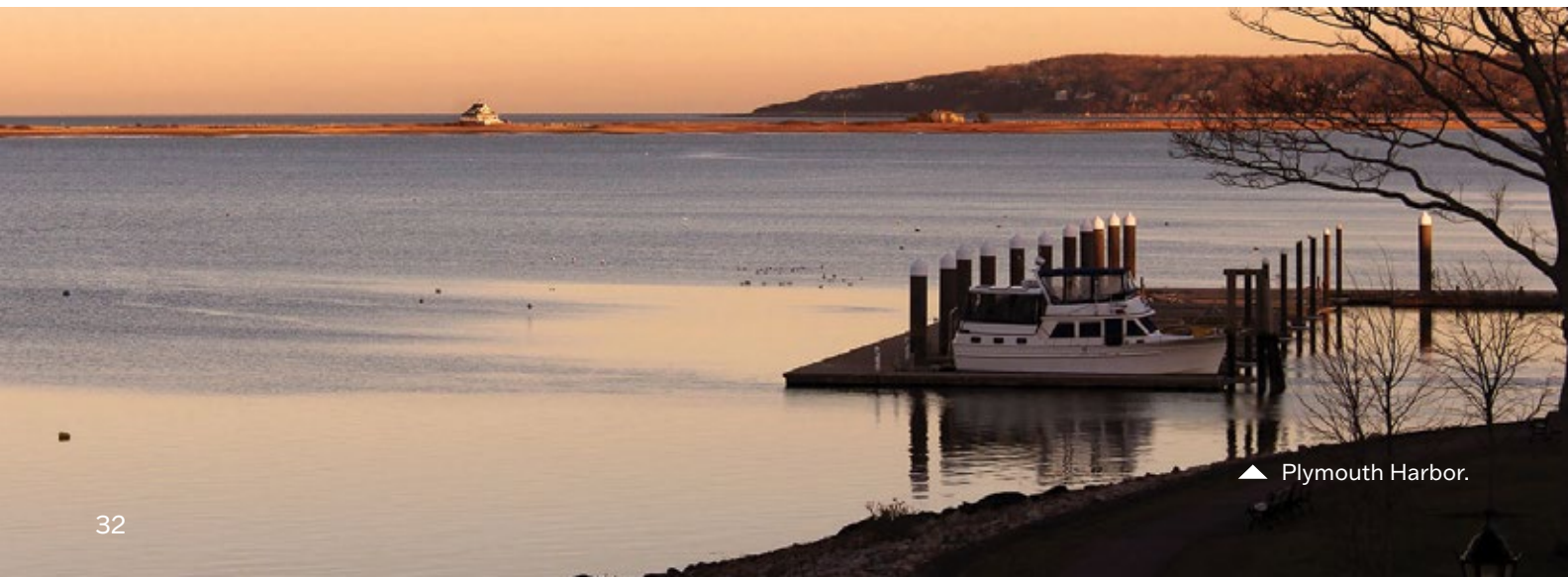
Question the talented interpreters at Plimoth Patuxet Museum. They do an excellent job portraying the daily experiences of our ancestors in the year 1627. You may be able to talk to your own ancestor there. During the time I was writing my book, I was able to visit with four different women who played the role of my ancestor, and I gained valuable information from each of them.

Attempt to experience for yourself what your ancestor experienced. What better way to imagine what it was

like to be your ancestor, than to walk the hill from the harbor to the Meetinghouse, explore Town Brook, and go to a spring herring run? Imagine what your ancestor was seeing, hearing, smelling and feeling when they did these things.

Finally, consult with historians and experts who have made the study of Mayflower history their life's work. This way you can be assured you have brought your ancestor to life accurately. Bringing your ancestor to life is definitely achievable. It may take you a few years; it took me six; however, if you do take on the challenge, I am confident you will find it an enriching experience. You will be astounded at what you will learn that you did not know, especially the number of extreme difficulties our ancestors faced in the early years of settling Plymouth Colony—the unexpected and incredible struggles they had to overcome. You will find out for yourself what remarkable people they were, and your respect for them will grow exponentially. I titled my historical novel *Filled with Fortitude: Pilgrim Elizabeth Tilley*. However, what I learned was that *all* our ancestors were individuals with amazing fortitude. If you read Elizabeth's account of our Mayflower history, you are sure to find mention of your own ancestor. Believe me, we are incredibly fortunate to be descended from such exceptional people!

***Sally Hobert Whiting is a thirteenth-generation granddaughter of Elizabeth Tilley. She grew up in Wyoming, taught school in California, and worked in elementary and secondary educational publishing for most of her professional career. She and her husband retired to Virginia in 2007 and presently enjoy an extended family of six married children and sixteen grandchildren.***



▲ Plymouth Harbor.

# Tracing a Line to Charlemagne, Magna Carta Barons, and Plantagenet Kings

BY BONNIE WADE MUCIA, AG® · SILVER BOOKS DIRECTOR

Many Mayflower descendants are familiar with the story of John Howland and Elizabeth Tilley in Plymouth Colony's early history. But fewer realize that their eldest daughter, **Desire Howland**, born in the New World, has descendants who not only carried on those Pilgrim roots but also inherited a surprising connection to ancient royal bloodlines.

Desire Howland married **John Gorham**.<sup>1</sup> Their daughter, **Desire Gorham**, born 2 April 1644, later married John Hawes in Yarmouth on 7 October 1661.<sup>2</sup> Through this Hawes connection, the descendants of Desire Howland and John Gorham find themselves linked to an extraordinary royal legacy—one that stretches back through Magna Carta barons, Plantagenet kings, and even to **Charlemagne**, Emperor of the West.

## THE GATEWAY ANCESTOR: EDMOND HAWES

The key to unlocking this royal lineage lies in **Edmond Hawes**, born in 1612 and baptized in Solihull, Warwickshire, England.<sup>3</sup> He arrived in Plymouth Colony around 1635, possibly aboard the ship *James* which sailed from London on 6 April 1635. Edmond settled in Yarmouth, Barnstable County, Massachusetts, where he lived until his death 9 June 1693 in Yarmouth.<sup>4</sup>

Long before Edmond Hawes arrived in New England, he already had deep roots in medieval English nobility. Today, genealogists recognize him as a gateway ancestor—someone whose family tree can be reliably traced back to European royalty.

## A LINE TO KING JOHN—AND BEYOND

One confirmed royal descent begins with **King John of England** (1166–1216), the infamous signer of the Magna Carta and youngest son of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry II. His son **Richard, Earl of Cornwall**, became King of the Romans and was one of the wealthiest men in Europe.

While Richard's legitimate children died young, he also fathered several children out of wedlock, including **Sir Richard de Cornwall**, likely by his mistress **Joan de Vautort**. Despite his illegitimacy, Sir

Richard held land, married into nobility, and passed down royal Plantagenet blood through generations.<sup>5</sup>

Here is the descent in brief:

1. **King John of England = Isabel of Angoulême**
2. **Richard of Cornwall**, King of the Romans (by his mistress, possibly **Joan de Vautort**)
3. **Sir Richard de Cornwall** = Joan \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Joan de Cornwall** = Sir John Howard
5. **Sir John Howard** = Alice de Boys
6. **Joan Howard** = Sir Peter de Braose (Brewes)
7. **Beatrix de Braose** = Sir Hugh Shirley
8. **Sir Ralph Shirley** = Joan Basset
9. **Beatrix Shirley** = John Brome
10. **Nicholas Brome** = Katherine Lampeck
11. **Elizabeth Brome** = Thomas Hawes
12. **William Hawes** = Ursula Colles
13. **Edmond Hawes Sr.** = Jane Porter
14. **Edmond Hawes, GATEWAY ANCESTOR**
15. **Desire Gorham = John Hawes**

Through this line, descendants of **Desire Gorham Hawes**<sup>3</sup> (**Desire**<sup>2</sup> **Howland**, **John**<sup>1</sup> **Howland**) trace their ancestry to **King John of England**, making them part of a royal story that spans from medieval courts to Plymouth Colony.

## MAGNA CARTA BARONS

Edmond Hawes's ancestry also ties into **two barons of the Magna Carta**:

- **Sir Robert de Ros**, one of the twenty-five sureties of the Magna Carta, is an ancestor via Mary de Ros.
- **William d'Aubigny**, Earl of Arundel, a leading noble of the period and supporter of the Charter cause.

These barons helped lay the legal groundwork for constitutional governance, and their blood flows through Hawes—and thus, through countless Mayflower descendants today.

## CAROLINGIAN AND CAPETIAN KINGS

Through noblewomen such as **Isabel d'Aubigny** and **Mary de Ros**, the ancestry of Edmond Hawes extends beyond England and into the royal courts of continental Europe. His lineage includes ties to **David I of Scotland**—a connection documented through Isabel de Brus (Bruce), whose descendants married into the de Ros and de Braose families.

While many noble lines intermarried over generations, the Hawes pedigree also intersects with families believed to descend from the **Capetian Kings of France** and the **Emperor Charlemagne** himself. In fact, **Edmond Hawes is officially recognized as a gateway ancestor by the Order of the Crown of Charlemagne**, a lineage society that verifies descent from the ninth-century Holy Roman Emperor.

These overlapping lines of nobility—Scottish, Norman, French, and Frankish—paint a vivid picture of how one New England colonist came to carry the blood of kings across the Atlantic.

## NOT JUST ONE ROYAL LINE—BUT MANY

Each marriage in this Hawes line brings in additional noble blood:

- **Agnes de Clifford**, grandmother of Sir Peter de Braose, descended from prominent Norman barons and Marcher lords. Through her parents—the Clifford and de Toeni families—she was also connected to noble lineages that intermarried with early Plantagenet lines.
- **Joan Basset**, wife of Sir Ralph Shirley, connects the line to early Norman nobles with lines back to the Dukes of Normandy.

Think of it as a family web—where pilgrims, kings, princes, and barons all end up in the same lineage.

## WHAT THESE CONNECTIONS MEAN FOR MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS

If you descend from Desire Howland through her daughter Desire Gorham and John Hawes, you not only trace your lineage to the *Mayflower* but also to medieval castles, royal courts, and the great empires of Western Europe.

These lines remind us that our ancestors were not one-dimensional. They were pilgrims, yes—but also

princes, knights, reformers, and rebels. And for genealogists, those relationships mean a wealth of records to explore—from parish registers to royal charters, peerage books to medieval chronicles.

So, the next time you raise a glass to the memory of your Mayflower ancestors, don't forget to tip your crown. The blood of kings—and courageous dissenters—run in the same family.

**Bonnie Wade Mucia is an Accredited Genealogist® in the New England region. She serves as Director of the Mayflower Families Silver Books and is a former Member-at-Large of the GSMD.**

1. John Howland's will naming daughter Desire Gorum: Plymouth Colony Records, Wills, vol. 3, 1669-1678, p. 49; digital image *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G97D-V3R5>; accessed 6 Aug 2025), image 331; Plymouth Town Clerk. Transcription of John Howland's will: George E. Bowman, "John Howland's Will and Inventory," *The Mayflower Descendant*, (Jan 1900, vol. II, no. 1), p. 72; digital image *American Ancestors* (<https://www.americanancestors.org/databases/mayflower-descendant-the/image?volumelid=12166&pageName=72>; accessed 4 Aug 2025); Boston. Transcription of John Gorham's estate: George E. Bowman, "Captain John Gorham's Estate," *The Mayflower Descendant*, pp. 153-58; digital image *American Ancestors* (<https://www.americanancestors.org/databases/mayflower-descendant-the/image?volumelid=12168&pageName=153&previousPage=DatabaseSearch&databaselid=407>; accessed 6 Aug 2025); Boston.
2. Plymouth Colony Records, Marriage Births Deaths Court Records 1636-1686, p. 48 digital image *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G979-7FRL>; 4 Aug 2025) image 188; Plymouth Registry of Deeds. Transcription: Nathaniel Shurtleff, *Records of New Plymouth Colony, Miscellaneous Records 1633-1889*, p. 44; digital image *Internet Archive* (<https://archive.org/details/recordsofcolonyo0708newp/page/n57/mode/2up>; accessed 4 Aug 2025), image 58.
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# Do You Have Royal Ancestors?

BY LISA PENNINGTON, GOVERNOR GENERAL

Many nineteenth-century Mayflower descendants searched in vain for royal ancestors through their Pilgrim passengers. They usually came away with frustration that they were not descended from any royal or aristocratic lines. If they had thought about it, however, they might have been prouder that their Pilgrim ancestors accomplished so much without distinguished pedigrees, connections, or the financial wherewithal those connections could provide.

We do know, however, that there are at least **three Pilgrim connections** to royal lines. In addition to the lines profiled in Bonnie Wade Mucia's article on page 33 of this issue profiling **Desire (Gorham) Hawes**, a Howland granddaughter, there are two more Pilgrims, **Richard More** and **Remember Allerton**, whose descendants can claim Magna Carta, royal and Charlemagne ancestors.

1. **Richard More** (bapt. 14 Nov 1614, Shipton, Shropshire, England—before 20 April 1696, Salem, Essex, Massachusetts).

Richard More was only six years old when he and his siblings were taken from their home in Shipton by their ostensible father, Samuel More, and given to John Carver and Robert Cushman to be transported to America on the *Mayflower* in 1620. Samuel was convinced that the children's mother, **Katherine More**, had committed adultery and that he was not the father of the four children. Tragically, Ellen, age 8, Jasper, age 7, and Mary, age 4, did not survive the first winter. Richard More did survive and grew up in the Brewster household in Plymouth Colony. He was apprenticed to Isaac Allerton who trained him to become a mariner. Richard later became a successful sea captain and tavern owner in Salem. He married twice, had seven children, and has living descendants today.

Richard's mother, **Katherine More**, (1586–aft 1622) has Magna Carta, royal and Charlemagne lines. She is descended from Malcolm III and David I of Scotland, as well as Edward I of England.<sup>1</sup> These royal ancestors take her back to Charlemagne.<sup>2</sup> She is also descended from seven Magna Carta sureties.<sup>3</sup>

2. **Remember Allerton** (abt. 1614, Leiden, Holland, Netherlands—bef. 22 Oct 1656, Marblehead, Essex, Massachusetts).

Remember was about six years old when she traveled on the *Mayflower* with her parents, Isaac and Mary (Norris) Allerton and her siblings, Bartholomew, age 8, and Mary, age 4. Her mother died the first winter, and her father Isaac married Fear Brewster, daughter of William and Mary Brewster in about 1626 at Plymouth Colony. Before 6 May 1635, Remember Allerton married **Moses Maverick**, son of Reverend John Maverick and his wife **Mary (Gye) Maverick**,<sup>1</sup> either in Plymouth Colony, Salem or Marblehead. Remember lived the rest of her life in Marblehead and had seven children, five of whom had children of their own and from whom there are living descendants.

Moses Maverick's mother, **Mary (Gye) Maverick**, is the royal line carrier.<sup>4</sup> She was born about 1580 in Prowse, Devon, England, and died after 9 Oct 1666 in Rhode Island.<sup>5</sup> She is descended from seven Magna Carta sureties<sup>6</sup> and has royal lines to Henry I and Henry II.<sup>7</sup> She also has several lines to Charlemagne.<sup>8</sup>

Although only one Mayflower passenger has direct royal lineage, at least two more married into families with royal bloodlines, thus producing descendants who can claim this lineage today. If you know of any more Pilgrims with royal connections, please let us know, and we will profile them here.

1. Douglas Richardson, *Royal Ancestry: A Study in Colonial and Medieval Families*, in 5 vols. (2013): **MORE**, vol. IV, 147-148.
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5. Douglas Richardson, *Royal Ancestry*, **GYE**.
6. Douglas Richardson, *Magna Carta Ancestry: A Study in Colonial and Medieval Families*, 4 vols., ed. Kimball G. Everingham, 2nd edition, (The author, 2011), vol. II:326, **GYE** 15.
7. Douglas Richardson, *Royal Ancestry*, **GYE**.
8. Douglas Richardson, *Royal Ancestry*, **GYE**.

FROM PLYMOUTH ROCK TO THE WAR OF 1812:

# A New Patriots Project

REV. MICHAEL R. DENNEY, ELDER GENERAL AND HISTORIAN GENERAL



## EXPLORING MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS IN AMERICA'S "SECOND WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE"

The General Society of Mayflower Descendants has long encouraged its members to explore how their Pilgrim ancestors' legacy continued through later generations of American history. One highly successful effort has been the Patriots of the American Revolution to Mayflower Passengers Project, which highlights the many descendants of the Mayflower Pilgrims who took up arms in the struggle for independence during 1775–1783.

Now, Muriel Cushing, Mayflower historian, dedicated researcher, and recipient of the Governor General's Commendation Award, has begun laying the groundwork for a related project—this time focusing on the "Second War for Independence," the War of 1812. Just as the Revolution connected Mayflower descendants to the founding of a new nation, the War of 1812 saw their descendants defending that hard-won independence and shaping America's identity in its early years.

### A NATURAL EXTENSION

Muriel notes that many Mayflower members who trace descent to Revolutionary War Patriots also discover service in the War of 1812 within the same families. "It's a natural extension," she explained. "The same families who fought for independence often had sons or grandsons who stood guard when that independence was threatened again."

The War of 1812, often overshadowed in our national memory, was pivotal in affirming America's sovereignty. From the burning of Washington, DC, to the defense of Fort McHenry (which inspired the words of "The Star-Spangled Banner"), and from the naval battles on the Great Lakes to Andrew Jackson's victory at New Orleans, it was a war that tested the resilience of the young republic. Mayflower descendants were part of that story.

### LOOKING TOWARD 2026 AND BEYOND

Out of respect for the upcoming 250th Anniversary commemorations of the American Revolutionary War,

Muriel has chosen not to launch the project fully until after 2026. Still, she believes it may be useful to begin planting the seed in members' minds. "I want to give the anniversary the full attention it deserves," she said. "But I also think members will be excited to know that this work is on the horizon."

A brief mention here in *The Mayflower Quarterly Magazine* serves as an early signal. Just as the American Revolutionary War project now provides a valuable reference tool on The Mayflower Society's website, the War of 1812 effort could, in time, become another rich resource for members tracing the continued service of their ancestors.

### BUILDING MOMENTUM

Members who have already identified veterans of the War of 1812 as ancestors in their family lines may wish to begin noting those connections now. Future calls for submissions will likely follow the pattern set by the American Revolutionary War project, encouraging members to provide documentation of service and lineage.

The American Revolutionary War project has helped foster pride and loyalty by reminding us that the Pilgrims' descendants continued to defend freedom in every generation. Extending that story to the War of 1812 underscores that the Pilgrim spirit endured beyond 1620, beyond 1776, and into the struggles that secured America's place in the world.

As Muriel puts it: "The story of the Mayflower does not end at Plymouth Rock. It lives on in the courage of their descendants—whether in 1775, in 1812, or in every generation since."

Muriel Cushing's email address: [1620flash@gmail.com](mailto:1620flash@gmail.com).

▲ The Constitution and the Guerriere (c. 1845), by Thomas Chambers (American). Public domain image courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Open Access). <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/10431>.

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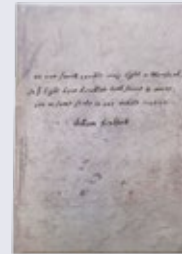


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### Mayflower Facts 1,000 Piece Puzzle

Puzzle image includes quotes from William Bradford's account of the Mayflower crossing, as well as information about the length of the voyage, the size of the ship, the passengers and more.

Completed puzzle measures 18.5" x 27.75".



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### Hardcover Journal

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Image is a reproduction of the cover of William Bradford's original journal, as well as a quote from the journal in his handwriting.



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