

THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER  
NEWSLETTER  
OF  
THE SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER  
DESCENDANTS  
IN THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA



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## **THE HIGHLIGHTS**

### **ND Society Annual Meeting 2025**

The Annual Meeting is scheduled to be held in Bismarck. Mark your calendars!

**When:** Sunday, October 5th, 2025  
at 1:00 pm

Formal invitation to be sent at a later date.

### **Welcome New Members!**

Welcome to our newest members:

<i><b>Member</b></i>	<i><b>Descendant</b></i>
Staci Wyckoff	William Bradford
Kevin Fravel	Francis Cook

### **Junior Membership**

If you have a child, grandchild, niece or nephew who would like to become a ND Society Junior Member, contact us for more information and a list of requirements at [ndmayflowerhistorian@gmail.com](mailto:ndmayflowerhistorian@gmail.com).

Junior Membership is up to age 25!

Registration fee is \$15.00. A certificate and an age appropriate book about the Pilgrims will be sent to each new junior member.

P.S., Don't forget to upgrade your Junior Member's membership to full member once they reach the age of 25!

### **Historian Helpers**

Have you wondered how the genealogical link between you and your Pilgrim ancestor is traced?

Are you interested in learning more about the membership application process?

Contact Cindy, our Historian, [ndmayflowerhistorian@gmail.com](mailto:ndmayflowerhistorian@gmail.com)

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### **How You Can Help Our Newsletter**

Become involved by emailing newsletter editor Rachel Roe-Longtine at [reroe20@gmail.com](mailto:reroe20@gmail.com)

- ▶ Pictures
  - ▶ Did you take a picture of the family at Thanksgiving? Send in your pictures!
  - ▶ Get all of the cousins together for a Junior Membership photo
- ▶ Do you have any family activities or travels relating to the Mayflower, Plimoth, the Pilgrims you can share with us?
- ▶ Have you read any interesting books or information about the Mayflower, Pilgrims, Plymouth you wish to share with us?

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES**

### **Priscilla Mullins, Elizabeth Tilley, and Mary Chilton**

A great deal has been written about some of the more well-known signers of the Mayflower Compact, but until more recently, not much has been said of their wives and daughters. Below are brief sketches of three young women who made that perilous voyage and lived through the first winter in Plymouth Colony.

**P**riscilla Mullins, daughter of William Mullins from Dorking, Essex Co., England, was 18 years old in 1620. She was better educated than most and could read and write a bit. Her father was a well-respected shoemaker who chose to leave England, not for religious reasons, but because he hoped to have a more successful business in the New World. During the voyage, Priscilla met and fell in love with a young carpenter and barrel maker, John Alden. He had been hired by the Separatists to tend the water, wine, and food barrels while at sea. In the spring of 1621, he elected to stay in the colony when the Mayflower sailed back to England. Neither of Priscilla's parents survived that first awful winter, and she spent much of her time caring for them. In 1622, she and John were married. They had nine children. He died in 1686, just one year after Priscilla's death. At no time were they financially well off, but it would seem they both lived a happy life together.



**E**lizabeth Tilley was 13 years old in 1620. She was the daughter of John Tilley and Joan (Hurst) Tilley. She was the niece of fellow Mayflower passenger, Edward Tilley. John was a silk merchant in London. Both he and his wife Joan, and his brother Edward and his wife, Anne (Agnes?), succumbed to the "great sickness" early in 1621, in spite of Elizabeth's constant care. She became a ward of the John Carver Family until they died, about a year later. In 1624, she married John Howland, a fellow Mayflower passenger and servant of John Carver. (When the Carvers died in the spring of 1621, Howland evidently inherited much of their much of their estate.)

Some years after they were married, they moved to Swansea. They had 10 children, all of whom survived to adulthood. John and Elizabeth (Tilley) Howland founded one of the three largest Mayflower progenies.

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Elizabeth (Tilley) Howland's family is described in a later recollection of William Bradford: (Gov. Carver's) "...servant John Howland, married the daughter of John Tillie, Elizabeth, and they are both now living, and have \*10\* children, now all living; and their eldest daughter hath \*4\* children. And their \*2\* daughter, one, all living; and other of their children marriageable. So \*15\* are come of them."

Elizabeth died in 1687, making her one of the few original Pilgrims to see King Philip's War. John died in 1673.

When Mary Chilton, at age 15, sailed on the Mayflower with her parents, she considered herself engaged to John Winslow, whose brother, Edward, was also a passenger. John came over the following year on the Fortune. Mary's father, James, had been a tailor in Canterbury. They were not members of the Separatist group, but like the Mullins family, They hoped to improve their lives in the New World. Again, sadly, this was not to be. Before the year was out, James died of the "great sickness,k" and just after the new year, his wife also died. Mary, like Priscilla and Elizabeth, was strong enough to recover and in 1627, she and John Winslow were finally married. They moved first to Kennebec and then to Boston, where he died in 1674, at age 77. Mary died there in 1679. They had 10 children. One of the daughters, Sarah, married a son of Myles Standish.

As we honor our Pilgrim Fathers, we also have a special pride in these young women and their contemporaries who became our Pilgrim "Mothers".



## **THE FIRST HARVEST-HOME IN PLYMOUTH**

Reading comprehension written  
By W. DeLoss Love, Jr. (adapted  
and reproduced from [https://www.  
theholidayzone.com/thanks/](https://www.theholidayzone.com/thanks/))

**A**fter prayer and fasting and a farewell feast, the Pilgrim Fathers left the City of Leyden, and sought the new and unknown land. "So they left the good and pleasant city, which had been their resting place near 12 years," writes their historian William Bradford. "But they knew they were pilgrims and looked not much on those things, but lifted up their eyes to the Heavens, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits."

When, after many vexing days at sea, the pilgrims first sighted the New World, they were filled with praise and thanksgiving. Going ashore they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of Heaven. After that, whenever they were delivered from accidents or despair, they gave God "solemn thanks and praise." Such were the Pilgrims and such their habit day by day.

The first winter in the New World was marked by great suffering and want. Hunger and illness thinned the little colony, and caused many graves to be made on the near-by hillside.

The spring of 1621 opened. The seed was sown in the fields. The colonists cared for it without ceasing, and watched its growth with anxiety; for well they knew that their lives depended upon a full harvest.

The days of spring and summer flew by,

and the autumn came. Never in Holland or England had the Pilgrims seen the like of the treasures Nature now spread before them. The woodlands were arrayed in gorgeous colors, and swarmed with game of all kinds that had been concealed during the summer.

The little farm-plots had been blessed by the sunshine and showers. Now plentiful crops stood ready for the gathering. The Pilgrims, rejoicing, reaped the fruit of their labors, and housed it carefully for the winter. Then, filled with the spirit of thanksgiving, they held the first harvest-home in New England.

For one whole week they rested from work, feasted, exercised their arms, and enjoyed various recreations.

Many Indians visited the colony. Among them was their greatest king, Massasoit, with ninety of his braves. The Pilgrims entertained them for three days. And the Indians went out into the woods and killed fine deer, which they brought to the colony and presented to the governor and the captain and others. So all made merry together.

And bountiful was the feast. Oysters, fish and wild turkey, Indian maize and barley bread, geese and ducks, venison and other savory meats, decked the board. Kettles, skillets, and spits were overworked, while knives and spoons, kindly assisted by fingers, made merry music on pewter plates. Wild grapes, "very sweet and strong," added zest to the feast. As to the vegetables, why, the good governor describes them thus:

All sorts of grain which our own land  
doth yield,  
Was hither brought, and sown in

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every field;

As wheat and rye, barley, oats,  
beans, and peas

Here all thrive and they profit from  
them raise;

All sorts of roots and herbs in  
gardens grow,--

Parsnips, carrots, turnips, or what  
you'll sow,

Onions, melons, cucumbers,  
radishes,

Skirets, beets, coleworts and fair  
cabbages.

Thus a royal feast it was the Pilgrims  
spread that first golden autumn at  
Plymouth, a feast worthy of their Indian  
guests.

All slumbering discontents they  
smothered with common rejoicings.  
When the holiday was over, they were  
surely better, braver men because they  
had turned aside to rest awhile and be  
thankful together. So the exiles of Leyden  
claimed the harvests of New England.

This festival was the bursting into life of a  
new conception of man's dependence on  
God's gifts in Nature. It was the promise  
of autumnal Thanksgivings to come.

**Understand It. Answer the following questions based on the text:**

1. Where did the Pilgrims begin their journey to the New World?
2. How did they travel?
3. What kinds of problems did they encounter during their first winter?
4. What happened when autumn came?
5. How long did the first Thanksgiving celebration last?
6. What did the Pilgrims do to celebrate?
7. Who joined the Pilgrims as their special guests?
8. Was thanksgiving a normal part of the Pilgrims' lives? Use the text to justify your answer.
9. How did taking time to give thanks improve the lives of the people?

**Talk About It:**

1. Why did the Pilgrims willingly leave behind a "good and pleasant city" for a strange new land?
2. Read through the list of foods the pilgrims enjoyed during their Thanksgiving feast. How does it compare to the traditional Thanksgiving dinner of today? Which meal do you think you would enjoy more? Why?
3. How could "common rejoicings" smother "slumbering discontents"?