

*Wintering In*

# The Winthrop Society

## Fleet News

*Descendants of the Great Migration 1630-40*

*Volume 18, Number 2, Fall/Winter 2021-2*

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Massachusetts Bay Company Seal

*"Whereas the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Company and their elected Governor, John Winthrop, emigrated to New England in 1630 to found a "City on a Hill," the Winthrop Society, Descendants of the Great Migration, is dedicated to honoring and preserving their memory, philosophy, and tradition, and transmitting their example of courage, faith, civic duty, and integrity."*

*Excerpt from the Winthrop Society Charter*

**PRESIDENT - Anne Caussin Henninger**

*Greetings Winthrop Society Members!*

**I**t is hard to believe that a new administration will be coming on board in April 2022. How quickly time has flown! While the past two years have not been without their challenges – and COVID only one of these – our Society has made great strides forward. We were dismayed to hear of the death of our long-time Treasurer, Walter Seelye, of Colorado. Walt served the Winthrop Society in many capacities over the years and we send our heartfelt condolences to his wife Marie and their family.

Our website continues to be a work in progress. While access to the members-only section was restored, we continue to experience site-related issues. Leda Behseresht, our Website Coordinator, is exploring the possibility of moving the website to a new host as well as several other enhancements to improve both the look and functionality of the site.

The scanning project that I wrote about in our last issue of Fleet News is completed and new applications are scanned as they are approved. We have an agreement with the National Society Dames of the Court of Honor to share their secure storage facility in Washington, DC and have moved our scanned documents into it. Consequently, short of a catastrophe of monumental proportions, our historic holdings are safe.

**I** cannot say enough good things about your Society's Board. Vice President Jane Power stepped up to assist by assuming the position of Treasurer Pro Tem and has worked tirelessly to keep the financial posture of our organization functioning and on a sound footing.




Gayle Coan, our Secretary & Chairman of the Nominating Committee, put together a proposed slate that will not only carry on the work of this administration but move it forward in a new and positive direction. Alex Bannerman agreed to take over as Registrar. He has cleared out a backlog of pending applications and supplementals, reworked our application form, and streamlined the entire application process.

Dr. George Hill, in his role as Chaplain, offered prayers during our meetings, reached out with notes of condolence or support when requested, and has been a good friend and mentor to all of us. Deborah Brownell and Katherine King were thoughtful and diligent in performing their duties and offering suggestions.

Carol Taylor has been our Editor and the Graphic Designer of Fleet News since 2004. This year she will be retiring. We are grateful for the time and effort she put into making our newsletter a stellar publication. All the issues Y.T.D. are in the Members Only section of our website.

Thank you all for your hard work and support. It has been a memorable and rewarding experience for me! Alas, we have had to cancel our in-person meeting in Washington, D.C. We will schedule an electronic meeting on or around the 18th of April, 2022. More information is forthcoming as the date draws nearer.

*Until then, keep well, Anne* 

## The First Snowfall by James Russell Lowell



*Poet James Russell Lowell (1819 – ) could see his family lot at Mount Auburn Cemetery from his family's home, Elmwood. In 1847 he wrote this poem in remembrance of the daughter he had just buried in Mount Auburn after watching the first snowfall of the season from his study window. Mabel was the second daughter of the poet. Among his four children, only she survived past infancy. His wife Maria died in 1853. Lowell would marry again and accepted a professorship of languages at Harvard where he taught for 20 years. Lowell's poem about the snow falling at "Sweet Auburn" remains a New England favorite we are told.*

The snow had begun in the gloaming,  
And busily all the night,  
Had been heaping field and highway  
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock  
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,  
And the poorest twig on the elm-tree  
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara  
Came Chanticleer's muffled crow,  
The stiff rails softened to swan's-down  
And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window  
The noiseless work of the sky,  
And the sudden flurries of snowbirds  
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn  
Where a little headstone stood,  
How the flakes were folding it gently  
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel  
Saying, "Father, who makes it snow?"  
And I told of the good All-Father  
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snowfall  
And thought of the leaden sky,  
That arched o'er our first great sorrow  
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience  
That fell from that cloud like snow,  
Flake by flake, healing and hiding  
The scar that renewed our woe.

And again to the child I whispered  
The snow that husheth all,  
Darling, the merciful Father  
Alone can make it fall !

Then, with eyes that saw not I kissed her  
And she, kissing back, could not know  
That my kiss was given to her sister  
Folded close under deepening snow.



*Mount Auburn Cemetery is the first rural, or garden cemetery, in the U.S. It is located in Cambridge, MA, 4 miles west of Boston. It is the burial site of prominent Bostonians as well as a National Historic Landmark. Dedicated in 1831 and set with classical monuments in a rolling landscaped terrain, it marked a distinct break with Colonial-era burying grounds and church affiliated graveyards. The appearance of this type of landscape coincides with the rising popularity of the term "cemetery," derived from the Greek for "a sleeping place."*

## Disease & Epidemics in the Early Modern

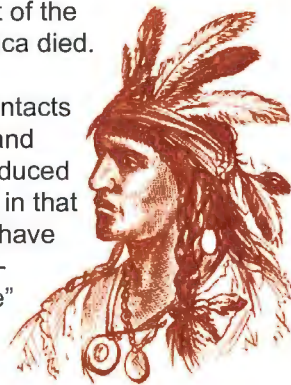
*On a November day in 1721, a small bomb was hurled through the window of a local Boston Reverend named Cotton Mather. Attached to the explosive, which fortunately did not detonate, was the message: "Cotton Mather, you dog, damn you! I'll inoculate you with this; with a pox to you." This was not a religiously motivated act of terrorism, but a violent response to Reverend Mather's active promotion of smallpox inoculation.*

With the world-wide devastation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic over the past few years, it is understandable that there is interest in past pandemics. Readers of Fleet News will be particularly interested in those experienced by both the Natives of New England and the colonists who settle in the region.

Years ago the scholar Alfred Crosby wrote an influential book entitled *The Columbian Exchange* in which he discussed biological and bacterial transfers across the Atlantic. Foods previously unknown in Europe such as potatoes, tomatoes, maize, and peanuts were brought home by early explorers and over time various plants and fruit trees were brought to America by colonists. But there was a dark side to contact between worlds which had historically been separate. Diseases that had been absent in one world were introduced to a virgin biological situation in the other.

While there is evidence that some New World diseases (or at least more virulent strains) were transferred from the New World to Europe, the most notable exchanges went in the other direction. It is believed that the introduction of what was likely swine flu in the Caribbean islands in 1493 led to the death of most of the Native population. Smallpox, unknown in the Americas, was first recorded in the New World in 1518. Over the next hundred years it is estimated that over eighty percent of the Native population of central America died.

Focusing on New England, the contacts between early explorers, traders and fisherman with coastal tribes introduced pathogens previously nonexistent in that part of the world, prompting what have been referred to as "virgin soil epidemics." Referred to as a "plague" by contemporaries, the exact nature of the disease or diseases is still debated, with yellow fever, smallpox, Weil syndrome, and actual bubonic or pneumonic plague offered as possibilities. What is not debatable is the consequence.



In coastal communities mortality rates of 50% were common and some experienced the death of over 90% of the population. Native customs of gathering and comforting the sick contributed to the actual spread of the disease. An example was the thriving Native community of Patuxet, from which the young Tisquantum (often referred to as Squanto) was abducted by an English trader in 1614. When he eventually returned to his home in 1619, Patuxet no longer existed. Most of its residents had died, the remnant relocating in other villages. The next year the abandoned site of Patuxet would be chosen as their home by the Mayflower passengers.

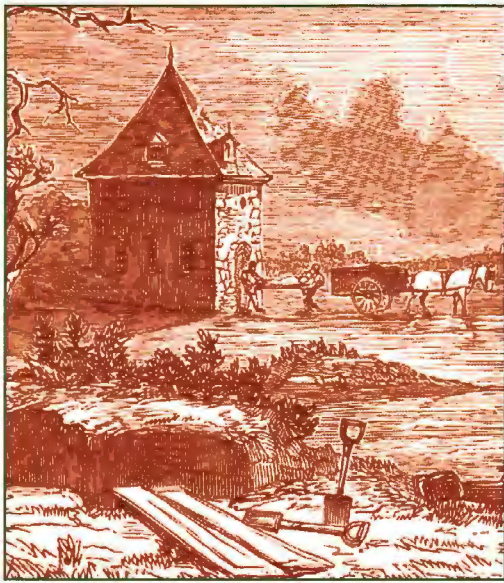
In 1622 there was another surge of the disease and Plymouth's governor William Bradford recorded the sufferings of Natives who "lie on their hard mats, the pox breaking and ... running one into another, their skin cleaving ... to the mats they lie on; when they turn ... a whole side will flay off at once as it were, and they will all be a gore blood, most fearful to behold." On a later occasion he wrote that the Natives "fell down so generally of this disease that they were in the end not able to help one another, not to make a fire nor to fetch a little water to drink, nor any to bury the dead."

While this essay has focused thus far on "virgin soil" transmission of disease, epidemics could recur in populations previously visited, with deadly consequences for those without antibodies. The English colonists were familiar with periodic waves of bubonic plague. While ravaging the countryside as well, in the early seventeenth century plagues in London in 1603 and 1625 each killed roughly 20% of the population, despite the practice that had been adopted of seeking to quarantine those infected to prevent spread.

## World by Dr. Francis J. Bremer PhD

John Davenport, who would found the New Haven colony and be pastor of its church, was pastor of St. Stephen's Coleman Street in London during the 1625 outbreak. Unlike many clergy, he remained in his post and did what he could for his congregation members who were not quarantined.

Once in the New World, colonists still suffered from diseases they had been familiar with back home, including smallpox and measles. As trade developed with the Caribbean, yellow fever was introduced into New England. Smallpox appeared in New England in 1633 and recurred roughly every decade. There was significant mortality among the colonists, and disfigurement among the survivors. John Winthrop wrote to a correspondent that in Newtown (soon to be renamed Cambridge), many had died, including Thomas Hooker's young son.



Plague Pits, Finsbury, London, 1625

In Plymouth, he continued, the wives of Isaac Allerton and Governor Prentice had died of the disease. The 1633 epidemic spread to Native peoples, who suffered greater mortality due to their minimum or limited prior exposure to the disease, particularly affecting interior tribes who had been relatively unexposed to early outbreaks of European diseases. Winthrop recorded in his Journal that there was "a great mortality among the Indians" and cited as an example that "Chickatabut, the Sachem of the Naponsett, died, and many of his people."

It should be noticed that both Natives and Europeans saw a closer connection between the natural and supernatural realms that most modern Americans accept. Thus, all these epidemics were seen as "providential" in some form or other. Whether we look at the London plague outbreaks, the Native "Great Dying" pre-1620, or the smallpox epidemics of later decades, it was common to look to identify what neglect of rituals or sins had brought the punishment. Native shaman healers, paw paws, fasted and danced as they sought to communicate with spirits to find the answers to their people's affliction. Puritans gathered in churches on specially appointed fast days to acknowledge their sins and seek God's forgiveness.

While viewing epidemics and other diseases, Natives and colonists sought to alleviate suffering with the use of natural remedies and procedures. Contrary to stereotypes that puritans were antiscientific, they embraced the rational faculties God had bestowed upon them and sought to cure disease or at least alleviate suffering. John Winthrop Jr. was noted as a physician and he was called upon by many, including John Davenport's wife Elizabeth for medicines that enabled them to perform as local healers. Early in the 18th century Cotton Mather promoted inoculation as a means of protection from smallpox and compiled a massive compendium of medical practices titled "*The Angel of Bethesda*".



*Cotton Mather (1663 - 1728) was a Puritan clergyman and a prolific writer. Educated at Harvard College, in 1685 he joined his father, Increase, as minister of the Old North Church of Boston. There he continued to preach for the rest of his life. Mather was a major intellectual and public figure. As an historian of Colonial New England, Mather is noted for his *Magnalia Christi Americana*, published in 1702.*



● REGISTRAR - A. N. Bannerman **NEW MEMBERS** November 2021 - February 2022

Robert L. Stoecklin, Carson City, NV  
 Gabrielle Hadyka, Corpus Christi, TX  
 Barbara Greeley, Gettysburg, PA  
 Leo Carl Forrest, Poquoson, VA  
 Michael James Morris, Brooklyn, NY  
 Ruthe Taber, Portland, OR  
 Craig John Millard, W. Palm Beach, FL  
 David William Van Hoof, E. Lansing, MI  
 Kenny Bannister, South Burlington, VT  
 Peter J. Williamson, Henrico, VA  
 Don Wolfe, Huntsville, AL  
 Clyde Getman, Bartlett, TN  
 Jessica Lee Jacob, Honolulu, HI  
 Fawn R. McGee, Beverly Hills, FL  
 Janet Hunter, Boonton, NJ  
 Sally Ann Halpin, Middletown, RI  
 Joseph Fondaco, Rockaway, NJ  
 Sonja "Sunny" Hayes, Addison, IL  
 Diane Bell Price, Bolivia, SC

Ambrose Gibbons, 1630, Piscataqua  
 William Denison, 1631, Roxbury  
 William King, 1635, Salem  
 John Cornish, 1637, Salem  
 Thomas Boyden, 1634, Scituate  
 William Dyer, 1635, Boston  
 Abigail Purchase, 1633, Dorchester  
 Thomas Lombard, 1630, Dorchester  
 Stephen Bachiler, 1632, Lynn  
 Thomas Dudley, 1630, Boston  
 George Barber, 1635, Dedham  
 John Warren, 1630, Watertown  
 Thomas Dudley, 1630, Boston  
 William Towne, 1639, Salem  
 John Winthrop, 1630, Boston  
 John Winthrop, 1630, Boston  
 John Winthrop, 1630, Boston  
 Nathaniel Woodward, 1633, Boston  
 William Curtis, 1632, Roxbury

**Supplemental Ancestry**

Frederick Carrington, Phoenix, AZ:  
 John Warren, 1630, Watertown  
 William Andrews, 1634, Cambridge

Donna Dunford, Bluefield, VA:  
 Robert Coe, 1634, Watertown  
 Matthew Mitchell, 1635, Charlestown  
 Lawrence Leach, 1629, Salem  
 Jonas Austin, 1635, Cambridge  
 Thomas Lincoln, 1636, Hingham  
 Samuel Packard, 1638, Hingham  
 Samuel Skelton, 1629, Salem  
 John Marsh, 1634, Salem  
 John Benson, 1638, Hingham  
 Henry Andrews, 1638, Taunton  
 Miles Tarne, 1638, Boston

Amy Hall, Framingham, MA:  
 Humphrey Atherton, 1636, Dorchester  
 Richard Leeds, 1635, Watertown



Medallion

Visit our website to order our Society's Medallion or its Rosette at [www.winthropsociety.com](http://www.winthropsociety.com)



Rosette

Contact Anne Henninger to order our Cockade - a limited edition item.

[president@winthropsociety.com](mailto:president@winthropsociety.com)



Cockade

*Please note, each application can take from one hour to several months. As well as checking new applications, an additional 15-25 hours per week answering questions (by email), suggesting where to look for proofs, doing research to verify information, suggesting a qualifying ancestor, and obtaining missing information can occur.*

- Words of wisdom from Marie Seelye, our past Registrar.

## Winthrop Society Board 2020 - 2022

**President – Anne C. Henninger**  
**VP & Treasurer Pro Tem – Jane R. Power**  
**Secretary – Gayle M. Coan**  
**Archivist – Katherine C. King**  
**Registrar – Alexander N. Bannerman**  
**Chaplain – Dr. George J. Hill**  
**Historian – Deborah C. Brownell**  
**Parliamentarian – David J. Stringfellow**

**Editor/Graphic Design – Carol L. Taylor**  
**editor@winthropsociety.com**  
**Fleet News is a biannual publication,**  
**with exceptions, since 2004**

### ● CONTRIBUTOR – Francis J. Bremer PhD

Dr. Francis J. Bremer has been a regular contributor to Fleet News for many years. Frank fulfills our need to “educate” our members as a nonprofit society. He is the author of numerous works on the puritans, including “*John Winthrop: America’s Forgotten Founding Father*” and “*Building a New Jerusalem: John Davenport, a Puritan in Three Worlds.*” His “*Lay Empowerment and the Development of Puritanism*” focuses on the participatory nature of puritan faith and politics. His collection can be found on Amazon.com: Francis J. Bremer: books, biography in hardcover and Kindle.

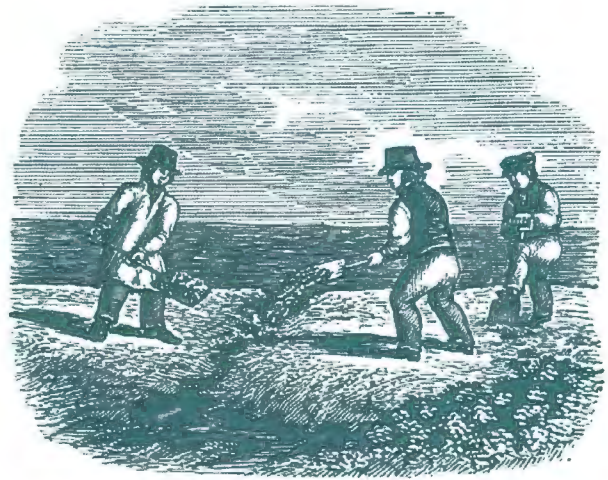
He has more to offer us as we go forward. Keep him on the front burner. - Your Editor, CLT

### ● TREASURER – Jane R. Power

Make sure that Fleet News reaches you! Please inform us well in advance if (and when) you will have an address change, including a seasonal address. We offer credit card processing at our website for dues payment, insignia purchases, and meeting reservations using PayPal services. PayPal offers secure, and confidential transaction processing. Questions or suggestions are welcome. Please send them to me at

*treasurer@winthropsociety.com*

## Stop the Beginning of Evil



*“The dyke keeps out the roaring ocean tide,  
 a little stream is running through the side,  
 a little earth the active men into it throw,  
 and keep the sea from flooding all below.”*

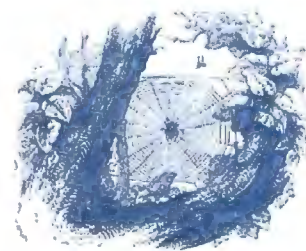
*John W. Barber, 1857, The Handbook of Illustrated Proverbs*

### ● EDITOR – Carol L. Taylor

Having been the creative developer of Fleet News since 2004, my love of Early American history and graphic design has been fulfilled. I have enjoyed the honor of being your Editor as well as a Life Member of this prestigious society. My qualifying ancestors, Lydia & James Penniman, would be amazed how far we all have come in the lonely outpost they settled.

### ● WEBSITE – Leda E. Behseresht

A new design is being developed for our website. What would you like to see featured? Your suggestions and design ideas are welcome. Back issues of Fleet News are available in the Members Only section as you know.

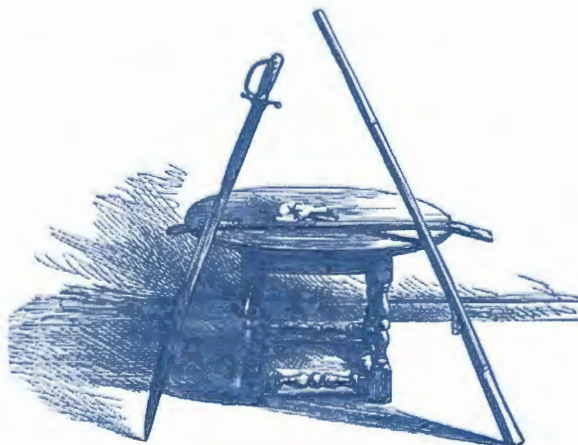


## Wessagusset Colony

*When I was a girl, my twin sister Karen, brother Teddy and I would visit Dad's brother Edwin and family in nearby Weymouth. Sometimes in summer we kids would get to swim at Wessagusset Beach nearby. Weymouth is bordered on the north by Hingham Bay and Boston Harbor in what is known as the South Shore.*

Wessagusset Colony was a short-lived English trading colony in New England located in today's Weymouth, Massachusetts. It was settled in August 1622 by between fifty and sixty colonists who were ill-prepared for colonial life we are told. The colony was settled without adequate provisions and was dissolved in late March 1623 after harming relations with local Indians.

Surviving colonists joined Plymouth Colony or returned to England. It was the second settlement in Massachusetts, predating the Massachusetts Bay Colony by six years. It is best remembered for the battle there between Plymouth troops led by Myles Standish and an Indian force led by Pecksuot. This battle scarred relations between the Plymouth colonists and the Indians and was fictionalized two centuries later in Longfellow's 1858 poem, *"The Courtship of Miles Standish"*.



Captain Myles Standish was an English born officer hired by the Pilgrims as military advisor for Plymouth colony (also known as Miles we are told).

In September 1623, a 2nd colony was created on the abandoned site at Wessagusset, led by Gov. General Robert Gorges. This colony was rechristened as Weymouth, was also unsuccessful, and Governor Gorges returned to England the following year. Despite that, some settlers remained in the village and it was absorbed into the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630.

- Wikipedia

### Did you know?

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 – 1882) was an American educator and poet whose works also included *The Courtship of Miles Standish* mentioned herein as well as *"Paul Revere's Ride"*, *"The Song of Hiawatha"*, and *"Evangeline"*. He was one of the five members of the Fireside Poets, that I featured in our Fleet News issue, Summer, 2021. Longfellow was a favorite poet of my Literature teacher. We students had to memorize more than a few passages for English class. I got an "A" for my efforts ... all those years ago!

- Your Editor, CLT