

An Exemplary Life

The Winthrop Society

Fleet News

Descendants of the Great Migration 1630-34

Volume 6, Number 1, Late Spring 2009

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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’S MESSAGE

Greetings members & friends!

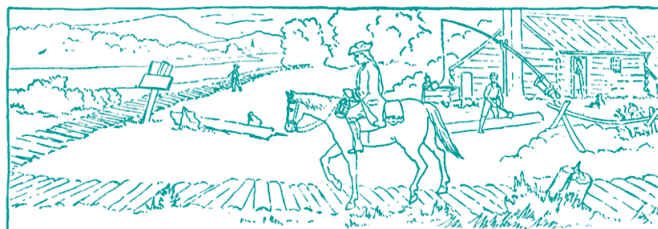
The current recession, mortgage crisis and banking bailout have affected us all and many retirement plans have lost 40% or more of their value. The larger loss, however, seems to be the loss of values that have shaped America since 1630.

The Charter of the Winthrop Society states that our society “is dedicated to honoring and preserving (our ancestors) memory, philosophy, and tradition, and transmitting their example of courage, faith, civic duty and integrity.” As we weather the storm, let us return to fundamentals and to the courage, faith, civic duty, and integrity of our ancestors.

“We must delight in each other; make others' conditions our own; rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work, as members of the same body. For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us.”
— John Winthrop

Yours in our common ancestry,

Barry A. Cotton



The Boston Post Road

was a system of mail-delivery routes between New York City and Boston, Massachusetts that evolved into the first major highways in the United States. The Upper Post Road was originally called the Pequot Path and had been in use by native Americans long before Europeans arrived.

The colonists first used this trail to deliver the mail using post riders. The first ride to lay out the Upper Post Road started on January 22, 1673. Later, the newly blazed trail was widened and smoothed to the point where horse-drawn wagons or stage-coaches could use the road. Large sections of the various routes are still called the King's Highway and Boston Post Road. Much of the Post Road is now U.S. Route 1, U.S. Route 5, and U.S. Route 20.

The three major alignments were the Lower Post Road (now U.S. Route 1 along the shore via Providence, RI), the Upper Post Road (now US 5 and US 20 from New Haven, CT by way of Springfield, MA), and the Middle Post Road (which diverged from the Upper Road in Hartford, CT, and ran northeastward to Boston via Pomfret, CT).

-Wikipedia

Boston Charter Days

*Boston, Massachusetts
will be held Sept 9 - Sept 13th, 2009.*

*The website is being developed
as we go to press...Ed.*

www.bostoncharterday.org



You are cordially invited to relive
700 Years of History 1309-2009

Come and celebrate with us at St. Botolphs, Lincolnshire, UK. To commemorate the year there will be events throughout 2009 covering visual and performance arts, architecture and heritage: a marvelous celebration for all.

<http://www.parish-of-boston.org.uk/anniversary>

* Stearns, Stearns, and Starns by Judith Creamer *

My ancestor, Helen May Stearns, drove Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, the former president of the U.S. (1901-1909) in a parade in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1912. The Arkansas Gazette made a big deal about Roosevelt having a young woman as his chauffeur.

Helen's father, Steven Amos Stearns, bought the fourth automobile in Little Rock. It was a Cole car and family history says it was purchased so Helen May would learn to drive in lieu of being allowed to go to work.

Col. Roosevelt was in Little Rock promoting a pet project, the Lakes-to-Gulf Waterway. Helen's father worked for the Little Rock Water Works and offered his car for the parade.



Both Steven and his daughter Helen are descended from a long line of Stearns whose contributions in America during its developing years have made a difference.

This includes the well-documented Isaac Stearns line that arrived on the Arbella in 1630 with the Winthrop Fleet. Many of the descendants of Isaac appear in the "Genealogies of the Families and Descendants of Early Settlers of Watertown" by Henry Bond in 1860.

In 1892, family in the Syracuse area formed a New York State Association of the Stearns Families. This group accessed "Bond's Genealogies" that pertained to the Stearns families and built on them by adding genealogies to the present day. "Genealogy and Memoirs of Charles and Nathaniel Stearns" and another book featuring Isaac Stearns, both written by Avis Stearns Van Wagenen, were also sources. We learn that the family first settled in Watertown, near Boston, until the Revolutionary War when they migrated to Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Kansas, and Arkansas. Over the years, vocations of the heads of household progressed from farming, postmaster, and miller, to map making, and finally water management.

Helen May Stearns joined another branch of the Stearns family when she married Dr. Luther Reagan, the sixth great grandson of Rhoda Starns (the southern spelling). The couple was not aware of this kinship during their lifetime. Rhoda's family had left Massachusetts and Connecticut to follow a new movement of religion called "Church of New Lights." This led them to Virginia and then the Carolinas. This movement has been credited with changing the face of religion in the South.

Rhoda Starns, the sixth great grandmother of Luther Reagan, descends from the Charles/Shubael Stearns line.

Did you know...

The Lakes-to-Gulf Waterway is a 1,530-mile system of rivers and canals connecting Lake Michigan and the Gulf of Mexico by means of the Illinois Waterway and the Mississippi River. A channel with a minimum depth of nine feet is maintained throughout the system by dredging and by dams. Traffic consists mainly of barges carrying bulk commodities such as coal, building materials, petroleum, grain, steel products, sulfur, and limestone. The waterway is toll-free and is maintained by the federal government.

The Illinois Waterway connects Lake Michigan with the Mississippi River. There are two routes from Lake Michigan, both of which lead to the Chicago Ship and Sanitary Canal. The northern route is by way of the Chicago River; the southern, by way of the Calumet River, Little Calumet River, and Calumet Sag Canal. From the Ship and Sanitary Canal, the waterway extends to the Mississippi by way of the Des Plaines and Illinois rivers.

The Mississippi River makes up the longest section of the Lakes-to-Gulf Waterway. From the mouth of the Illinois River, the Mississippi has a channel 9 to 35 feet deep, which is maintained primarily by dredging. The system is connected to various other waterways, including the Ohio and Missouri rivers and the Intracoastal Waterway. The Lakes-to-Gulf Waterway was opened in 1933, when the Illinois Waterway was completed.

- Wikipedia

age. Charles was mentioned as "kin" in Isaac Stearn's will. The thread that ran through all these generations were farming and strong religious belief.

The Stearns Family came to the new world to plant a New Jerusalem moving in many different directions to accomplish this common goal. The family boasts five Winthrop Society settlers and eleven American Revolution patriots.



Judith Crawford Creamer, the current Registrar of the Winthrop Society, is a granddaughter of Helen (Stearns) and Luther Reagan. This darling hooked rug depicting Helen Stearns driving Teddy Roosevelt in the parade in Little Rock was handcrafted by Mrs. Creamer.



Whether he or she received assurance from an immediate sense of God’s presence or from the validation offered by a sanctified life, a puritan was committed to following the path of righteousness, to be, to paraphrase



Thomas Goodwin, children of light walking in darkness. While perfection was impossible, one was called to strive for it. Each puritan sought to make him or herself a shining light, a small kingdom of God that would inspire others to godly living.

Yet what did it mean to live a godly life? How was sinfulness defined? Did puritanism make individuals joyless and repressed as the popular stereotype portrays them?

The clergyman Richard Baxter wrote that “overdoing is the ordinary way of undoing,” and this is perhaps the best guide to understanding puritan morality. Puritans believed that all of creation was a gift of God and intrinsically good. Sin came not from using what God had made available, but from abusing it. And no matter how excellent something was, it could be overdone. At one point in New England the civil magistrates expressed their concern to the clergy that so many religious lectures were being delivered that the settlers were neglecting their material tasks. This effort to define a line between use and abuse can be demonstrated by examining three areas commonly misunderstood.

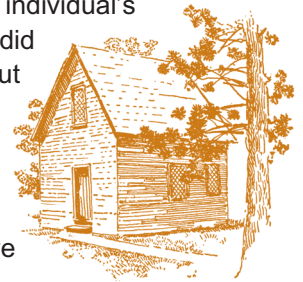
Puritans viewed drunkenness as a sin; drinking was acceptable. Indeed, this was an age when most of what Englishmen drank to quench their thirst had an alcoholic content. Water was contaminated by human and animal waste, making it a beverage of last resort. Milk too carried health risks in an age before pasteurization. Coffee, tea, and chocolate drinks were just making their way into European consciousness. So for Englishmen beers, ales, and stouts were the beverages of choice for adults. “Small beer” – a less potent brew -- was offered to children who had been weaned from their mother’s breasts.



Contrary to the way in which they have often been depicted, puritans did not all dress in drab colored clothing. Keenly aware of social status, like their contemporaries, puritans believed that men and women should appropriate dress for their station in life. Laborers dressed in woolens dyed in earth tones because such clothing was durable and less likely to show dust and dirt.

Puritans of a higher status could wear class-appropriate dress; inventories show that men and women owned outfits of silk and satins in a variety of bright colors. Magistrates and ministers were likely to have clothing dyed black, but this was a sign of their distinction since black was the most expensive fabric to make and a sign of high status, not sobriety.

The clergyman William Perkins set out the theory when he wrote that apparel for the scholar, the tradesman, the farmer, the gentleman, and all others should both be appropriate to the individual’s station in life. However, puritans did reject fashions such as bodices cut excessively low and exaggerated male codpieces, both of which they believed were sexually provocative. Deciding how many ribbons on a dress were excessive or how many fashionable slashes should be allowed on the sleeve of a gentleman’s outer shirt was contested within communities.



Sexuality is another area in which puritans were not “puritanical” as normally understood. Traditional Christian values were based on the notion that celibacy was a superior moral state and that sexual acts of any sort involved gratification of sexual desires that could easily become sinful.

Many medieval churchmen cautioned that while sex within marriage was allowed (and necessary) for procreation, engaging in sex frequently, or for the purpose of enjoyment, was sinful. This was changing in the Reformation era, a major shift occurring when Luther rejected the idea of clerical celibacy and embraced marriage as the normal state of life for a Christian.

While procreation was still seen as an important function of marriage, greater emphasis was placed on the importance of the union in providing companionship and support. Intercourse between husband and wife was encouraged not simply as a means for having children, but as a joyous expression of love that bound the couple together. This new emphasis potentially opened the door for dissolving marriages if the couple proved incompatible, a position strongly advanced by the poet and polemicist John Milton, though most of his fellow puritans rejected the idea.

Puritans were among those who advanced these new views on marriage and sex. While clearly some men and women in puritan societies still held to traditional positions, clergy could be heard reminding their parishioners of the “duty to desire.” The minister William Gouge wrote that intercourse between man and wife was to be conducted willingly, often, and cheerfully.

A Massachusetts man was excommunicated by the Boston church for withholding sexual favors from his wife. The letters of John Winthrop and his wife Margaret reveal their physical yearning for one another when they were apart. The New England poet Anne Bradstreet referred to her husband Simon as her missing sun, whose warmth melted the frigid colds of New England and whose heat gave them their children.

While intercourse between husband and wife was viewed by these men and women as the proper use of the sexual drives God gave them, any other form of sexual activity was viewed as an abuse. Puritans condemned fornication, adultery, homosexuality, bestiality and other sexual indulgences outside of marriage.



Such temptations were to be fought, and the London puritan Nehemiah Wallington reminded himself that one who even looked on a woman with lust had committed adultery with her in his heart.

But such condemnation was the reverse side of a celebration of marital sex, a celebration underlined by the comparisons puritans drew between the joy experienced in union with Christ and the joy of sexual love between husband and wife. Clearly, this was a comparison that would not have been made if puritans viewed sexuality as such as sinful. As in the use of drink, attire, and other such parts of the creation, the puritan’s attitude towards sex has been misinterpreted.



*A Letter to Her Husband
Absent upon Public Employment*

*My head, my heart, mine eyes, my life, nay more,
My joy, my magazine, of earthly store,
If two be one, as surely thou and I,
How stayest thou there, whilst I at Ipswich lie?
So many steps, head from the heart to sever,
If but a neck, soon should we be together.
I, like the Earth this season, mourn in black,
My Sun is gone so far in's zodiac,
Whom whilst I joyed, nor storms, nor frost I felt,
His warmth such fridged colds did cause to melt...*

Anne Bradstreet (1612–1672)

“An Exemplary Life” is an excerpt from the forthcoming book by Francis J. Bremer, “Puritanism: A Very Short Introduction” (Oxford University Press, 2009)

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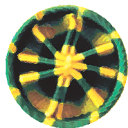
Verna Griffith Maleski (2008)
Verle Bresson (2008)

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West Melbourne, FL 32904



ROSETTE

● REGISTRAR/Judith Creamer

New Members † Ancestor

- Kevin Hays Burr † Jehue Burr
- Sara Stillman Drogin † Edward Garfield
- Charles Lee Dunford † Roger Williams
- David Richard Finch † William Bateman
- Timothy Lee Fischer † Elizabeth Fones
- Colin Foley †† Nicholas Knapp
- Michael Edwin Gary † John Winthrop
- Lyle Harris † Thomas Harris
- Robert Allan Hurrie † Andrew Alger
- Ronald Alberto Johnston †† Capt John Johnson
- Elizabeth May †† Lieut William Spencer
- Elizabeth Adrian Quinn † Gregory Baxter
- Mary Catherine Cassidy Quinn † Gregory Baxter
- Roy Christian Ritter III †† Nicholas Knapp
- Rev George Bull Salley Jr †† William Pynchon
- Jake Preston Shepherd †† John Gibson
- Kyle Anthony Shepherd †† John/Dau Elizabeth Firman
- Ronald Garfield Stillman † Edward Garfield
- John William Templeton † Jonas Weed
- Lucy Elizabeth Treat †† John/Dau Elizabeth Firman
- Samuel Nolan Treat †† John Gibson
- Timothy Frank Treat †† Isaac/Mary Stearns/Barker
- Tracey Salarda Treat †† Richard Harding
- Walter Thomas Treat †† Richard Harding
- Cheryl Ann Gillette Vislay †† Jonathan Gillett
- Cherry Ellen Walker †† Gov Thomas Dudley

†† Denotes a Life member

● INSIGNIA

Society Insignia is available to members by writing our Treasurer:

Bill Arnebeck
744 Fuzzy Zoeller Circle
Galloway, OH 43119

Made by City Pride, the miniature medallion is 3/4 inch in diameter and crafted of solid brass with an antique finish. It is suspended from a silk drape in the Winthrop Society's colors. \$40.00 each.

The rosette by Dexter Rosettes is about 1/2 inch and in the Winthrop Society's colors. \$10.00 each.



MEDALLION

● WEBMASTER/Charlie Banks

For those of you who missed the announcement in the last issue, we've **changed** our website address from www.winthropsociety.org to www.winthropsociety.com due to domain registrar problems. Please note the change in your Web browser's bookmarks. I've done my best to chase down dead links across the Web, but if you know of anyone with a site linking to any page on our old site, be so kind as to give them a heads-up to update their links. The site structure is exactly as it was before the switch, so for any of our site's pages all you need to do is replace ".org" with ".com" in the URL and the link or bookmark will be fine.

Immediately following our unexpected domain change in October, we naturally experienced a sudden dropoff in Web traffic: October saw 1050 unique visits to our site at an average of about 35 visits per day. Since then, happily, traffic has slowly regained its normal pace. Every month so far in 2009 (January through April and part of May, as of this writing) has totaled well over 2000 unique visits with at least 70 per day. Our most active month since the switch has been February, with 2615 unique visits at 93 per day.

● PUBLICATIONS EDITOR/Carol Taylor

OOPS - I promised a story from Dr. Frank Bremer on the witch hysteria. My misunderstanding; not in the works! Fortunately, he did contribute "An Exemplary Life", our featured story. Our Registrar, Judith Creamer, adds another interesting history to the mix. Thanks to both! Our members and interested historians are invited to submit articles for publication. Tell us about your qualifying ancestor. The feature article is 2 pages - others 1-2. Cite your sources especially if you have borrowed from the web. Please adhere to an informal style. Lengthy genealogies are not suitable for this format. Your art is welcome - subject to my graphic needs.

We also have *Watchamacallit* - send me your idea for a unique colonial item or gadget. Lastly, we have *Did you Know...* something relevant to the times of the Puritans, 16th century Mass Bay Colony (not the Pilgrims). Please note: *Fleet News* is a biannual publication.

Whatchamacallit?

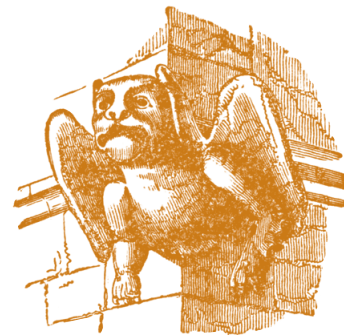
The answer is found on page 8.



The Shawmut Peninsula is a promontory of land on which Boston, Massachusetts was built. The peninsula, originally a mere 789 acres in area, is most remarkable for having more than doubled in size due to land reclamation efforts throughout the 19th century.

When Europeans arrived, Shawmut was thickly forested. The pre-settlement topography of the peninsula was marked by several summits: Copps Hill, in what is now the North End; Fort Hill, in today's Financial District; and the Trimountain, occupying today's Beacon Hill district. Of the three summits, the Trimountain was by far the largest and was really three connected hills: Mt. Vernon, Beacon Hill and Cotton Hill. Eventually the name, Trimountain, was shortened to Tremont.

The safe and capacious harbor, sheltered from the ocean by clusters of well wooded islands, offered additional advantage, and on September 7, 1630, the settlement was named Boston in honor of the Rev. John Cotton and other "Boston men," who fostered the Massachusetts Bay Company



"It is not the glorious battlements, the painted windows, the crouching gargoyles that support a building, but the stones that lie unseen in or upon the earth. It is often those who are despised and trampled on that bear up the weight of a whole nation."

By John Owen, 1616 – 1683, Puritan minister, poet, and theologian.
(Remember the olde English "s" looks like an "f" above.)





THE WINTHROP SOCIETY

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Spring 2009 Newsletter

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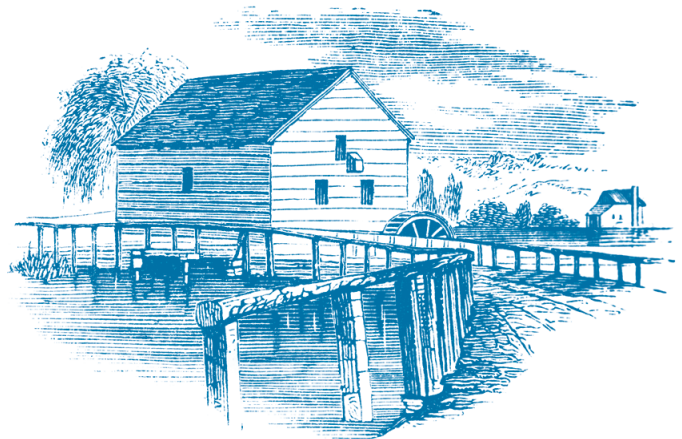
8



The first surge of interest in genealogy can be traced to the 1890s, when the U.S. experienced a burgeoning of historical societies, pioneer associations, family reunions, and hereditary organizations (the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Society of Mayflower descendants were founded in that decade).

Since then, interest in genealogy--or at least in genealogical publishing--has experienced occasional spikes: in the early twentieth century, in the 1930s, and in the 1970s, a thirty- to forty-year cycle that might be attributed to heritage as sustenance in times of change, generational curiosity, or periods of public concern about the function and future of the family as an institution.

Sheila O'Hare, "Genealogy & History", April 2002
www.common-place.org, vol. 2, no. 3



Whatchamacallit?

It is a millstone and they were used in windmills and watermills, including tide mills, for grinding corn or other grains.

