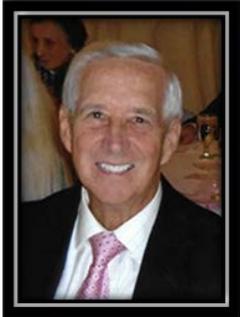


# THE KENTUCKY PILGRIM

The Society of Mayflower Descendants in the Commonwealth of Kentucky  
Spring 2020 Issue

## Governor Ben Talbott's Message



As we approach KSMD's Spring Meeting I realize that my three-year term as your Governor will come to an end on Saturday, April 25 when our new Governor will be elected. Therefore, in concluding my term, I wish to say that it has been a privilege, honor and great pleasure to represent our members in this role over these last three years.

Most importantly, however, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of our Board, and others of our members who have helped me so much in carrying out my duties to this organization. There are too many of you to name everyone individually, but there are a few who were so important that I would be derelict not to specifically name them.

First among those are Fay Charpentier-Ford and Jerry Ford who explained to me how to prepare our regular newsletter and our menu and agenda documents, etc., while Fay was also carrying out the important role of KSMD Treasurer. In addition, they have been tremendously helpful in the preparation of table decorations and the donation of gifts for our semi-annual drawings. In addition, Jerry has been hard at work in putting together our next KSMD Members Directory which should be coming out soon. These are just a few of the important things they do for our organization.

In addition, I wish to thank Martina Ockerman and Foster Ockerman for their wonderful assistance. For example, Martina is not only our Elder, but she has also



Martina & Foster Ockerman

acted as the Chair of the Fundraising Committee for the GSMD Meetinghouse for the last two years. Although we were committed to raise \$5,000 for that effort, we have actually raised over \$16,000, and we have seven more months to raise even more. The GSMD Meetinghouse acquisition and restoration has been described by GSMD as

being the most important project ever undertaken in the history of GSMD. Moreover, Martina and Foster have on several occasions attended with Sandy and me the GSMD

annual meeting in Plymouth and elsewhere. Furthermore, Foster, who joined the GSMD Color Guard, has twice acted as our speaker, once speaking about the Honor Guard itself and its *Mayflower* history, and more recently about Kentucky's most famous madam, Belle Brezing, who was the model for Belle Watling, the madam in the movie *Gone With The Wind*.

Also, I need to thank Anissa Davis, our Historian who has worked especially hard over the last three years to increase our KSMD membership from 166 members to 201 members, and with more to come. Anissa has also served as our First Deputy Governor, and recently she has been working hard on KSMD's special Kentucky projects designed to commemorate the *Mayflower's* 400th Anniversary- a big undertaking which she agreed to chair for this year of 2020.

I also should not forget to mention Carol Vaughn who has acted as our Secretary, and Howard Roberson, our web-master, and David Hampton, our Captain. Furthermore, I want to thank all three of my daughters, Betty Burton, Sandra Butler, and Libby Berryman for their help on various matters, but especially Libby for all the work she did in helping to raise funds for the GSMD Meetinghouse, and in running down the proper telephone numbers and addresses for members with whom we had lost contact over the last few years. Without this effort we would not be able to prepare a proper KSMD Members Directory.



Carol Vaughn

Needless to say, there are others who deserve special thanks also, such as Marie Dering and Evelyn Zolondek for their generous contributions to the GSMD Meetinghouse, and Bill Swinford, Dan Klinck, and Bill Carrell, II for their allowing us the use of their club memberships for our Annual Fall Meeting and Annual Spring Meeting.

Also, I wish to publicly recognize and thank my secretary, Patty Miller, for all her assistance, particularly in learning how to put together the articles and photos in the newspaper format of our *Kentucky Pilgrim* newsletter. Seeing her make everything properly fit together is like watching a miracle in progress.

And also, I especially want to thank my wife, Sandy, for her participation, help and encouragement which allowed me to carry out my duties to the best of my ability.

And finally, I wish to assure you that our Nominating Committee is already hard at work in selecting the nominees for our new officers to take charge of KSMD for the next three years.

### KSMD's Fall Meeting

November 2, 2019

On Saturday, November 2, 2019, the KSMD held its Fall Meeting in the beautiful Pendennis Club in Louisville, Kentucky.

Governor Ben J. Talbott opened the meeting at 12:00 noon by welcoming the forty-six attending members and guests and thanking them for coming. This was immediately followed by the Invocation given by Elder Martina Ockerman which was then followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Captain David Hampton.



Dr. Betty Burton

Governor Talbott then proceeded to make a number of announcements including that he and his wife, Sandy Talbott, along with their daughter, Dr. Betty Burton and her husband Dr. Steve Burton had attended the GSMD General Meeting in Denver, Colorado, at which time he presented another KSMD check to GSMD for \$1,550, causing our total contribution presently to exceed \$15,000.

Governor Talbott also mentioned that the GSMD was planning a number of events for the coming 400th anniversary of the *Mayflower* landing at Plymouth, including a planned voyage of the newly reconstructed *Mayflower* from Provincetown to Plymouth for a mere \$2,800 per person. In addition, the GSMD was expecting over 500,000 visitors to Plymouth in 2020, with approximately 3,500 people to become new members of the GSMD. He also noted that since the KSMD would be electing new Board members and officers at the Spring Meeting next April, he had appointed a Nominating Committee to recommend the nominees to be voted upon on April 25, 2020.

Following other announcements and remarks by Governor Talbott, KSMD Historian Anissa Davis then gave her membership report during which she reminded the attendees that when she was elected KSMD Historian we had only 166 members, but that we now have 201 members, for which she was given an enthusiastic applause.



Dr. Anissa Davis

Martina Ockerman next gave the Blessing which was immediately followed by a delicious Thanksgiving meal, including among other items, delicious carved turkey, cornbread stuffing and gravy, country style green beans, corn pudding and cranberry sauce, etc., all of which was

topped off with a delicious slice of warmed apple pie and a large helping of cinnamon ice cream.

The Compact ceremony was then performed by Historian and First Deputy Governor Anissa Davis, who also subsequently auctioned off a beautiful Alden plate which had been donated by Julia O'Hara-Slayton. That plate was then bought by Dr. Betty Burton for \$300.00, and the proceeds will be given to GSMD for its Meetinghouse restoration project.

Next, Governor Talbott introduced the speaker, Foster Ockerman, who was already well-known to the group, both as a former KSMD speaker, a GSMD Color Guard, and as the spouse of KSMD Elder, Martina Ockerman. His topic was "Belle Brezing, Lexington's famous Madam". Some of the interesting facts described in Ockerman's presentation are as follows:



Belle Brezing

Belle was born Mary Belle Cox in Lexington on June 16, 1860 to an unmarried dressmaker and part time prostitute. Her mother later married George Brezing and Belle took his name. At age 12, which was then the age of consent, she was seduced by Dionesio Mucci. He did not marry her although they continued together for two years. She became pregnant at 15 and had a daughter. Two months later her mother died.

During the funeral their landlord evicted Belle and her daughter.

Belle became a prostitute at 16 at Jenny Hill's house, which in earlier time was the home of Mary Todd Lincoln. Belle quickly became the most popular of the girls. At 21 she started her own house on N. Upper, 1881. In 1889 public outcry led to several houses of prostitution being concentrated in a "red light" district on the east edge of town, including Belle's. Once described as a "\$5 house in a \$1 neighborhood" Belle's house was run more like a private club, with white tie dress dinners, fine clothing for the girls, good food and wine. It stood two blocks from a trolley stop and three blocks from the old race track downtown.



Belle as a young girl

Among her customers were the best politicians, bankers, businessmen and attorneys, from whom she got good advice. And in 1882 when Belle was arrested for operating a "bawdy house" she was

pardoned by Ky. Gov. Luke P. Blackburn. When the US army, in Lexington for training prior to going into WWI, forced the houses to close, Belle became a recluse and lived off her savings. She contracted cancer and became addicted to morphine. She was so well known nationally that her obituary ran in *Time Magazine*, which described her brothel as "the most orderly of disorderly houses." Margaret Mitchell based the character Belle Watling in *Gone with the Wind* on Belle Brezing.

Following Ockerman's riveting speech about Belle Brezing, Fay Charpentier-Ford and her husband Jerry Ford presented a drawing for gifts which they donated, along with a very special hand-painted platter donated by our



David Hampton

Captain David Hampton. Those gifts were won as follows: (a) Ken Berryman won the Italian Murano glass vase; (b) Jan Sheeting won four Bombay Co. dark grey glass votives; (c) Herb Sheeting won the round cookie tin with a *Mayflower* type motif filled with imported cookies and a container of Harry and David Cocoa, and (d) Delores Kurowski won David Hampton's large hand-painted platter specially made with a rendering of the *Mayflower* ship in the center surrounded by the words "*The General Society of the Mayflower Descendants*" with the date 1620 on the left and 2020 on the right, in recognition of the sailing of the *Mayflower* four hundred years ago to the shores of what became Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Following the drawing, Governor Talbott thanked the members and guests for coming, and he especially thanked our speaker, Foster Ockerman, and our gift donors, Fay Charpentier-Ford and Jerry Ford for everything they do, and David Hampton for his amazing *Mayflower* platter which he had specially made, and Julia O'Hara-Slayton for her gift of a beautiful Alden plate which was auctioned off as referred to earlier in this article.

Governor Talbott concluded the meeting by announcing that the KSMD Spring Meeting would be held on Saturday, April 25, 2020 in Lexington, Kentucky at the Idle Hour Country Club beginning at 11:45 am. The meeting then closed with the Benediction by Elder Martina Ockerman.

### **KSMD'S Committee to Create Ways For Commemoration In Kentucky Of The *Mayflower's* 400th Anniversary**

At the KSMD Board Meeting last November 2, 2019, pursuant to a request of the GSMD, Governor Ben Talbott established a special *Committee to Create Ways For The Commemoration In Kentucky Of The Mayflower's 400th Anniversary*. Anissa Davis volunteered for and was appointed Chair of that committee, and several other Board Members immediately agreed to be on the committee and to assist Anissa Davis in that effort. Those persons included

Betty Burton, Evelyn Zolondek, John Ward, and Libby Berryman.

Governor Talbott also presented to this new committee a list of possible projects, some of which had been suggested by Jim Bentley, and others of which Governor Talbott had decided upon following his discussions with a number of other *Mayflower Society* State Governors at the GSMD Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado beginning on September 5, 2019. These possible projects are as follows:



Libby Berryman

1. To provide speakers to various schools, churches, clubs or other organizations around the State to speak about the history of the *Mayflower's* Landing at Plymouth and the importance of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims and the *Mayflower Compact* in the development of America.
2. To have a race during Derby Week at Churchill Downs named after the *Mayflower* in honor of the 400-year Anniversary.
3. To have a public recognition of Berea College by KSMD or GSMD by a plaque or similar object acknowledging the use of its white oak timber in the building of the new *Mayflower* ship.
4. To have a service of remembrance, thanksgiving and gratitude for the *Mayflower* Pilgrims and their concern for and spread of the Christian religion and Christian values and morals, including the principles of freedom of religion and separation of church and state, and the adoption of English common law. This could perhaps be done at several different churches and in various cities and towns in Kentucky. One such church suggested by Jim Bentley was Christ Cathedral in Louisville.
5. To seek formal recognition of the *Mayflower's* 400th Anniversary by the Kentucky Governor and by various mayors and other office-holders around the state.
6. To distribute the *Mayflower Compact* to interested schools all over Kentucky and to have it read in history or civics classes by their teachers. This could be joined with an instruction guide or paper explaining the historical significance of the *Mayflower Compact* in America's development.
7. To encourage schools to include a reading of Longfellow's "Courtship of Miles Standish" in English classes. Despite its somewhat misleading title, this poem is more appropriately about the courtship between John Alden and Priscilla Mullins.
8. To provide a bronze plaque of the *Mayflower Compact* to the City of Louisville or to the City of Lexington, or to Frankfort on condition that it be installed in an appropriate location for people to see and read.
9. To obtain some public recognition of the union of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims and the ninety or so Native Americans at the harvest thanksgiving feast at Plymouth generally referred to as the "First Thanksgiving," and to point out that the

Pilgrims had a long period of around 55 years of peaceful and friendly relations with their neighboring Native Americans.

**10.** To seek other ideas and participation from various Kentucky foundations, such as the Gheens Foundation, and related genealogical societies including for example, the Kentucky Society of Colonial Wars, and historical organizations such as the Filson Club, etc.

**11.** To provide public recognition of the *Mayflower*, the *Mayflower Compact*, and the early harmony between the Pilgrims and the Native Americans through newspaper articles and advertisements, and on TV news, etc.

**12.** To encourage our own members to speak to their friends and relatives about the importance of the *Mayflower* and the establishment of Plymouth Colony to the development of America, including its English language, laws and customs, some of which are with us to this day.

**13.** To obtain permission from a museum in Louisville, Lexington or Frankfort Kentucky for the placement of a display recognizing the landing of the *Mayflower* at Plymouth, Massachusetts, or the First Thanksgiving, or the signing of the *Mayflower Compact*, or some other such event strongly associated with the *Mayflower* Pilgrims. Such possible museums might include the Frazier History Museum, in Louisville; Sons of the American Revolution, in Louisville; the Liberty Hall Historic Site, in Frankfort, or the Lexington History Center, in Lexington.

**14.** Entering a float in the Derby Parade showing a few Native Americans and a few *Mayflower* Pilgrims sitting together and eating, with a banner or sign indicating that it represents a few of the participants at the First Thanksgiving dinner in 1621. It would presumably involve real people, probably KSMD members and/or children dressed as Native Americans and/or Pilgrims.

**15.** To spread information about the *Mayflower*, the Pilgrim passengers, the *Mayflower Compact*, Plymouth Colony, and their impact upon the development of America by encouraging television and radio stations to present shows referring to these matters. Such shows could be full length productions of the *Mayflower's* voyage to America and the establishment of the Pilgrims in and around Plymouth Colony, or it could be a discussion of such matters by a roundtable panel of historians, etc., or simply an acknowledgement of our 400th anniversary and its importance to the history of our country.

**16.** To spread information also of the existence of the KSMD and the GSMD and to encourage those who are eligible for membership to join these societies.

If any of our members or others who read this article would like to participate in this Committee's activities, please contact Committee Chairperson Anissa Davis. Your assistance or special contacts might well be invaluable to these efforts. Anissa's email address is [dr.anissa.davis@gmail.com](mailto:dr.anissa.davis@gmail.com)

## Importance of the *Mayflower* and Plymouth Colony in United States History

By Ben J. Talbott, Jr.

It is generally, although not universally recognized today, and it has been for over 200 years, that the *Mayflower* voyage and the Plymouth settlement of the *Mayflower's* 102 passengers hold a pre-eminent place in American history. But the question is: Why? After all, America was not discovered by the *Mayflower* passengers, and Plymouth was not the first European settlement in America.

This question has recently been extensively explored by the historian, James W. Baker, in his lengthy article, "Pilgrim Images V", published in Vol. 3, No. 2, of GSMD's Fall 2018, *Mayflower Journal*. Some of the ideas of this essay are borrowed from that article.

For example, it is undisputed that a number of Spanish settlements, including St. Augustine in 1565, and Santa Fe in 1607, were established before Plymouth, which was not established until 1620. This was also true of the English settlement of Jamestown, Virginia, which was similarly established in 1607, that is, approximately thirteen years before the colony of Plymouth came into existence in what is now Massachusetts. So why does Plymouth hold such a pre-eminent position today in the hearts of most Americans in connection with the founding of our country? In other words, why hasn't that credit instead gone elsewhere?

To begin with, there are several reasons why the Spanish cities are not considered. First of all, none of them was a part of the first thirteen states. Florida did not become a state until 1845, and New Mexico and California were even later. Secondly, none of them was English-speaking, and none of them initially adopted the English common law, or the principles of democracy established in the *Mayflower Compact*, or the principles of freedom of religion, separation of Church and State, and right of assembly, all of which were adopted by the Plymouth settlers following their voyage to America and became the foundation stone and lodestar of American law. Thus, it is easy to see why these early Spanish settlements are not considered as the national model for America's early settlement.

But what about Jamestown? This was an English settlement originally of a little more than one hundred persons, and it was established thirteen years before Plymouth in the colony of Virginia which largely became part of the United States' original thirteen states.

The answer to this puzzle seems to reside principally in the numerous differences between these two settlements, both how and why they came about, and how they later developed.

For example, Plymouth came about as a result of the religious convictions of its founders and their desire for, and belief in, religious liberty. Jamestown, however, which was financed by the Virginia Company of London, was

borne simply out of the founders' desire to find and acquire gold and silver and goods for trade. Thus, while the Plymouth founders were guided by religion and moral conviction, the motivating factors of the Jamestown founders were thought to be profit, commerce and trade. Furthermore, the Jamestown settlers did not come to America to seek or acquire religious liberty. Nor did they soon thereafter sign any document creating a democratic form of governance.

It should be noted, however, that while the *Mayflower* Pilgrims certainly believed in "freedom of religion" for themselves, and in the "separation of Church and State" in the sense that the State could not in any manner impede their practice of their religion, these terms did not have the meanings to the Pilgrims that they have today. For example, the Pilgrims clearly did not understand the term "freedom of religion" to include "freedom from religion", and neither could they have imagined that the words "separation of Church and State" would be interpreted as prohibiting the installation of a cross, crucifix, or crèche in the public square.

In addition, the original 104 founders of Jamestown were only males and they did not include women or families like the *Mayflower* passengers. Thus, Jamestown functioned much more violently than Plymouth. Unlike Jamestown, in Plymouth fits of anger were often tempered by the calmer and softer spirits of the wives, mothers and daughters, as well as by the strong religious convictions of the Pilgrims. Furthermore, many of the original Jamestown settlers, and perhaps even most of them, did not necessarily intend to make America their permanent home.

Plymouth also had the better American story. For example, the *Mayflower* Pilgrims got along much better with the surrounding Native Americans than did the Jamestown settlers. This was due in part to the moral temperament of the Pilgrims, but also to certain fortunate conditions. For example, because of the prior ravages of disease in the area where the *Mayflower* later landed, many of the Native Americans, who otherwise would have occupied the area of Plymouth, had been wiped out by illness, thus, leaving the area open and uninhabited.



Statue of Squanto

In addition, the *Mayflower* Pilgrims were blessed by the presence of the Native Americans, Samoset and later Squanto, both of whom had learned English and became helpful to the Plymouth Pilgrims in multiple ways, including in their relations with the Wampanoag tribe.

Also, Plymouth was blessed by the goodwill of the Wampanoag chief, Massasoit, because Edward Winslow, who was trained in the practice of medicine, had saved Massasoit's life by curing him from a serious illness which

Massasoit believed would surely kill him. Thus, Plymouth maintained a relative peace with the Native American Wampanoags for nearly fifty-five years, while the Jamestown colony was almost wiped out by its surrounding tribes in less than two years.

Another redeeming factor for the *Mayflower* Pilgrims was that they entered into the *Mayflower Compact* which gave an equal vote to all the male adults. It was basically democratic. Jamestown was much less so. Furthermore, the *Mayflower* Pilgrims came to America seeking religious freedom, safe from the dictates of the King of England. However, the Jamestown settlers were not motivated by that purpose, but they had the explicit sanction of King James I for whom Jamestown was named.

The story of Jamestown was further sullied by the horrors of starvation, which forced its settlers to eat their own domestic animals, and later to eat their leather shoes, hats and other garments, and in some cases even to eat parts of the bodies of their own deceased friends and relatives. Plymouth did not encounter such a dire and hideous situation, and undoubtedly, the Pilgrims would have viewed the idea of cannibalism as totally detestable and sinful. But in Jamestown, it may have saved lives.

Jamestown's lack of food arose in part because its settlers' frantic search for gold and silver was not only fruitless, but it derailed the manual resources needed to grow crops or otherwise obtain the food necessary to keep them alive. As a result, by 1609 Jamestown was consumed by the problems of starvation and illness and in 1610 the survivors temporarily abandoned Jamestown, but shortly later resettled it when new settlers arrived from England.

In addition, because Jamestown was largely motivated by mercenary purposes, beginning in 1619 it also engaged in slavery. The Plymouth colonists did not.

Thus, in 1619 the Dutch introduced approximately twenty African slaves into Jamestown. This began the first large introduction of slavery into America, and by 1660 the practice of slavery was fully established in Virginia, largely because of their use in growing tobacco, and later in growing and picking cotton.

This is not to say, however, that Jamestown was the first colony in the New World to have slaves, because slaves existed in St. Augustine long before they were introduced into Jamestown. But the practice did not expand from St. Augustine as it did from Jamestown, where it spread throughout the Virginia Colony.

Due to the numerous problems engendered by the swampy landscape, poor water quality, mosquito infestation, and attacks by the Native Americans, in 1699 Jamestown was almost completely abandoned, with most of its settlers going to Williamsburg, Virginia.

Over the next almost 300 years, the Jamestown site itself appeared to be lost, but in 1996 its remains were rediscovered. Today it is a site of wonderful archeological discovery and preservation, including a few tourist sites.

However, Jamestown never had the long and consistent survival as a living city that Plymouth has had. And at the time of the American War of Independence, and later the establishment of our U.S. Constitution, and even through the next 200 years, Jamestown did not exist, except as a past memory and a mostly abandoned swamp. However, its descendants lived throughout the state of Virginia.

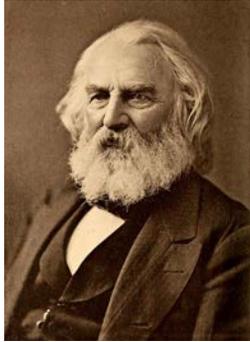
Another factor which may have played a role in establishing the *Mayflower* settlers and Plymouth Colony so firmly in the favorable consciousness of the American founding was the poem written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in 1858. Although named "*The Courtship of Miles Standish*", the poem is actually a long and beautiful story about the sweet and touching love, courtship and marriage between the *Mayflower* passengers John Alden and Priscilla Mullins. The poem acquires its name from the fact that although John Alden was already himself attracted to Priscilla Mullins, he agreed out of his friendship with the considerably older Miles Standish to attempt to persuade Priscilla to marry Standish. It did not take long, however, for Priscilla to suggest that John Alden should be courting her for himself, and not for some other older person who was even too timid to court her directly. Simply said, although its accuracy is open to questions, it's a lovely and touching tale of young love and romance between two of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims which has radiated through the ages as a result of Longfellow's masterfully tender and revealing poem.

But then Jamestown also had its own story of romance which has become legendary over the ages. It's the story of Captain John Smith and the Indian princess Pocahontas who saved his life when he was about to be executed by Pocahontas' father, Chief Powhatan. According to Smith, Pocahontas, who was then only fifteen or younger, saved his life by throwing herself upon him and pleading with her father not to execute him as Smith's head was about to be smashed with large stones.



Captain John Smith

Smith and Pocahontas became close friends, but in 1614 she married another Jamestown settler, John Rolfe, and she bore three children with him before dying very young in 1617. Before her marriage, Pocahontas converted to Christianity and adopted the Christian name of Rebecca as her new name. In any event, the story of Captain John Smith and Pocahontas is



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

probably at least as famous, if not more so, than the story of Priscilla Mullins and John Alden, so it is doubtful that the Alden-Mullins love story resulted in Plymouth's apparent historical ascendance over Jamestown.

Thus, in the final analysis, it may have been the Thanksgiving story which elevated Plymouth to its historic high post. After a year of difficulty, the fifty-three surviving *Mayflower* passengers decided to have a period of feasting with around ninety of their new Native American friends who brought five slaughtered deer to the feast. This period of celebration, feasting and thanksgiving to the Almighty lasted for three days. As a consequence of history, the event later became popularly known as the First Thanksgiving. Eventually, this event was recognized as a national holiday by many of our early U.S. Presidents, beginning with George Washington, and finally the Thanksgiving Day holiday was made permanent under President Abraham Lincoln in 1863. Today, it is the Thanksgiving holiday which cements the *Mayflower* and the Plymouth colony permanently in the minds of most Americans as holding a very special place in the history of our nation

On Saturday, November 7, this year, around sixty members and guests of the Kentucky Society of Mayflower Descendants (KSMD) will gather together to celebrate their annual Fall Meeting and Thanksgiving lunch at the Pendennis Club. This event will be held as always to commemorate the *Mayflower Compact* and the First Thanksgiving of our Pilgrim ancestors who came over on the *Mayflower* from England in 1620 to settle in the New World. Thus, Thanksgiving Day itself is a special event for all *Mayflower* descendants, but also for all American citizens who are happy and amazed about what our ancestors accomplished and what our country has grown to become over the last 400 years.

In many respects, the survival of those first Plymouth Pilgrims during their initial year in the New World, was considered providential. After all, they had survived months of stormy seas, inadequate food, bitter cold, illness, the threat of being wiped out by neighboring Indians, and many other difficulties also. But by the grace of God and good fortune, they were able to make friends with their Native American neighbors and learn

how to farm this new land with its different soil and climate, and its different grains, particularly corn, which became so important to them. This could probably not have happened if there had not been a Samoset and a Squanto to guide them through their initial dangerous contacts with the Native Americans. In addition, it was a huge blessing and good luck that Edward Winslow had been able to save the life of Chief Massasoit, the leader of the Wampanoag tribe, thus



Edward Winslow

turning that tribe, the Pilgrims closest neighbors, into a grateful and friendly defender.

Furthermore, in several ways, even the *Mayflower* voyage itself seemed to be divinely inspired and providentially protected. For example, the fact that storms blew the *Mayflower* off course and caused it to land where it did, instead of in Virginia, led to the *Mayflower Compact* and kept the Pilgrims miles away from the murderous Native Americans who inhabited Virginia. And when the *Mayflower* passenger, John Howland, was washed overboard by a stormy sea, he seemingly miraculously was able to grab a rope hanging from the ship, and was able to hang on long enough to be pulled back on board by other passengers who had seen him washed off the ship. Moreover, as referred to above, numerous providential events seemed to the Pilgrim settlers to be divinely inspired to contribute to their survival in the New World they had chosen.

The *Mayflower* Pilgrims certainly believed these events had been divinely inspired, and later generations of New England Americans also came to believe they must have been providential. As a consequence, Thanksgiving Day is a special time for all proud Americans to be thankful that we live in this great country- the most free and most prosperous country on earth, at the highest point of mankind's technological development and related comfort and benefits in the history of the world.

Thus, from the very beginning of the *Mayflower's* perilous crossing of the Atlantic in 1620, and continuing with their colonization of the New World, the Pilgrims became widely known for their strong faith, their devout love and devotion to God, and for their love and respect of one another and also of their Native American neighbors with whom they quickly became friends. In addition, they became known for their courage, bravery, perseverance, fortitude, honesty and independence. And finally, by their signing of the *Mayflower Compact* prior to disembarking on the shores of New England, the *Mayflower* Pilgrims were the first people to introduce the concept of democracy into America. It was a consequence of these qualities and actions that the *Mayflower* Pilgrims are often referred to as the "most famous colonists in the world." Today, what these Pilgrims established on our continent beginning in 1620 is generally viewed as the "cornerstone of a new nation", namely, the United States of America.



President Calvin Coolidge

In President Calvin Coolidge's first Thanksgiving Address to the nation he referred to the *Mayflower* Pilgrims and Plymouth Colony as follows: "Out of their quest for an avenue for the immortal soul came America, an empire magnificent beyond their dreams... We are the beneficiaries of that little colony, which is now known to all the earth. No like body ever

cast so great an influence on human history. Plymouth Rock does not mark a beginning or an end, but a revelation of that which is without beginning and without end- a purpose shining through eternity with a resplendent light, undimmed even by the imperfections of men."

Regardless, however, of the credit, acclaim or reputations of Plymouth, Massachusetts or Jamestown, Virginia with respect to our nation's founding, one thing is beyond dispute- if either of these colonies had never existed, America would be a markedly different country than it is. Indeed, it might not exist at all. Instead, we might have been a French or Spanish colony, or some combination of various nations.

But because of Plymouth and Jamestown, English influence took precedence. And as the country developed, no two places were more important than Massachusetts and Virginia in the waging and winning of the American Revolutionary War and in the drafting and adoption of the U.S. Constitution. Without such men as Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, John Adams, John Hancock, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison, the United States might not have come into existence at all. It certainly would not be what it is today.

Therefore, our appreciation and gratitude for both Plymouth and Jamestown cannot ever be overstated or forgotten. And for the miracle that is the United States of America, the Thanksgiving holiday is an appropriate time for all of us to thank Almighty God that we live in this very blessed land.

### KSMD's Upcoming Spring Meeting

As is usually the case, the next KSMD Spring Meeting will be held at the Idle Hour Country Club in Lexington, Kentucky beginning at 11:45 a.m. on the last Saturday in April, i.e. April 25, 2020.

This year's meeting will differ from the last two years because at this meeting the KSMD members will be asked to elect a new slate of officers and board members as recommended by the present KSMD Board of Assistants.

In addition to the usual Spring Meeting activities, including various reports and announcements, a delicious lunch, and the raffle for prizes donated by Fay Charpentier-Ford and Jerry Ford, KSMD members and guests will be treated to a presentation by Dr. Terry E. Conners, Ph.D., regarding the *Mayflower II*, its recent reconstruction and current status, and its importance and relevance to the original *Mayflower* voyage and the 400th anniversary of that voyage. Dr. Conners' talk will include a power point presentation and pictures and will be fascinating and informative. Dr. Conners' doctorate degree is in the field of forestry and wood products, and among his many other accomplishments, he has been a professor of forestry and wood products at the University of Kentucky. In addition to working for many companies involved in the manufacture of wood products, Dr. Conners was involved in the locating and selection of the high-grade white oak

lumber selected from the Berea College Forest for the *Mayflower II* renovation.

With this year being the 400th anniversary of the *Mayflower* voyage, Governor Ben Talbott believes that Dr. Conners' presentation will be especially relevant and interesting, and he highly recommends that our members sign up for this important Spring Meeting which will include also the election of our new officers who will govern our society for the next three years. The invitation acceptance forms for this meeting and luncheon are enclosed with this newsletter.

### Regular Attendees Of KSMD Meetings

For any organization to survive and thrive, it is important that its members actively participate. One way to do that is by attending its regular meetings. KSMD has two such regular meetings annually, the Fall Meeting and the Spring Meeting. Some of those who regularly attend these meetings are pictured below. The KSMD Board thanks all of those members who take the time to attend these meetings.

Do yourself a favor. Come to our Spring Meeting on April 25th. Join in the fun and excitement of the *Mayflower's* 400th anniversary. Enjoy the company and conversation of your distant cousins. The food is delicious, and the raffle for prizes is a blast. It's all great fun. We hope to see you there.

