

## WILLIAM WHITE OF THE *MAYFLOWER*

Among those on board the ship *Mayflower* when it finally reached New England in November, 1620 was a man named William White with his wife Susanna and sons Resolved and Peregrine, who was born on board the ship while it was still at anchor in Plymouth Harbor. Two servants came with them.

A religious group called the Separatists had fled from England to Holland to escape the fines and punishments for their illegal religious practices. After about 10 years in Holland, the Separatists found that jobs were hard to find and they were poor. They did not approve of the Dutch customs and way of life, and they did not approve of their children mixing with the Dutch children. They wanted to keep their English customs and their own religion, so they decided to go to the New World in search of religious freedom.

After several financial and political problems, two ships were obtained. The *Speedwell* (which leaked and could not make the trip) sailed from Leyden, Holland with the Separatists. And the *Mayflower* sailed from Southampton, England with the London and English group. One problem after another delayed their departure until they had to cross the stormy North Atlantic Ocean during a bad time of the year. After 66 miserable days at sea with 102 passengers packed in that tiny ship, they finally anchored near Provincetown on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. Because of the mumbling and grumbling on board the ship, an agreement was signed by 41 men, including William White, called the Mayflower Compact. This famous historic document is an example of our country's earliest democratic government.

It was December and very cold before the area at Plymouth Rock was finally selected as the site to establish Plymouth Colony. Today we call this group of people who settled there the Pilgrims. Wife Susanna and the two sons survived that first terrible winter when half of those who had just arrived perished from some unidentified epidemic, but William White died February 21, 1621. Widow Susanna then married on May 12, 1621 Edward Winslow by whom she had at least four children. Theirs was the first marriage performed in Plymouth Colony.

Children of William and Susanna (-----) White:

1. RESOLVED was born either in Leyden, Holland or in England about 1615. He married JUDITH VASSALL and ABIGAIL ----- and had eight children.
2. PEREGRINE was the first English child born in New England. He married SARAH BASSETT and had seven children.

Which son of Pilgrim William White is your Mayflower ancestor?