

# Francis Cooke Society Newsletter

October 2008

Vol. 6, No. 4

## About the Francis Cooke Society (FCS)

The FCS was formed in 2003 when it came to the attention of several founding members that there was no existing family society named in Pilgrim Francis Cooke's memory. In addition to honoring Francis Cooke's contributions to Plymouth Colony, FCS serves as a forum for members to exchange information and assists descendants of Francis Cooke in acquiring acceptable proofs of eligibility for membership in the General Society of Mayflower Descendants.

## President's Corner



Hello Cousins:

The October 2008 issue of the *Francis Cooke Society Newsletter* is devoted in large part to articles about our American national holiday, Thanksgiving.

As you know this holiday is based on the three day harvest celebration of 1621. Francis Cooke, our ancestor, and his other Mayflower passengers had survived their first cold New England winter of 1620/1621 and they came together to celebrate a bountiful harvest in the fall of 1621.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue and that you will give Judd and Chris your comments for the January 2009 issue.

DNA testing as a tool for determining genealogical relations is mentioned in our Newsletter as well as in the November & December 2008 issue of *AARP The Magazine*, please see [http://www.aarpmagazine.org/family/genetic\\_genealogy.html](http://www.aarpmagazine.org/family/genetic_genealogy.html)

We wish you the best for the Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends this 2008.

Sincerely,

Scott

**Comments by Chris Chirokas, Publicity Coordinator and Managing Newsletter Editor**

**September Issue of Mayflower Quarterly**

I'm sure many of you are members of the Mayflower Society and therefore receive The Mayflower Quarterly (MQ). If you don't receive MQ, you may want to check out the September 2008 issue (volume 74, number 3). John S. White has written a wonderful article, "A Stone for Mary – Finally." He writes about his successful efforts to have a gravestone made for Mary Cooke, daughter of Francis and Hester, and wife of John Thomson. The article includes a photograph of the stone, which was made to match a stone erected for Mary's husband in the 1970s (carved to look appropriate for the period in which John died) at Nemasket Hill Cemetery in Middleboro, Massachusetts. The article includes other interesting things about Mary and John, such as a photograph of the marker on the site of John and Mary's Halifax home.

Also in the September issue of MQ are articles on Thanksgiving, the reopening of the Pilgrim Hall Museum, information on historic site tours of England and Holland, and the Pilgrims' Dutch occupations. I found the story on the occupations in Holland to be particularly interesting, as it mentions Francis Cooke being a wool-comber. FCS member Richard Worthington wrote an excellent article in a past FCS Newsletter on just what a wool-comber did. To read, please go to [www.franciscookesociety.org](http://www.franciscookesociety.org), click on "Newsletters," then click on "October 2003."

If you want to read more, check your local library for a copy of MQ or order a back issue from GSMD in Plymouth for \$6.00 a copy.

**Book Reviews by Judd Taylor, Newsletter Editor**

***Remarkable Americans The Washburn Family*, by Kerck Kelsey**

Scroll down our web page until you reach the section titled **Famous Descendants of Francis Cooke**, click on this section, then scroll down to **William Drew Washburn**. William was one of the Maine Washburn family members that were descendants of **Francis Cooke and Hester Mahieu**.

They, as well as many of us, in FCS are descended from **Jane 2 Cooke** who married Experience Mitchell whose daughter **Elizabeth 3** (Mitchell) Washburn married John Washburn II. The book is a great read, written by Kerck Kelsey, great-great grandson of Cadwallader Washburn one of the founders of the company we know today as General Mills. Cad's brother William Drew founded the Pillsbury Company which is today a part of General Mills.

***Remarkable Americans The Washburn Family*** ISBN 978-0-88449-299-4 is published by Tilbury House Publishers; 2 Mechanic Street; Gardiner, Maine 043345; phone 800-582-1899; [www.tilburyhouse.com](http://www.tilburyhouse.com)

## **Thanksgiving: The Pilgrims' First Year in America**

By Glenn Alan Cheney

See the following web site for a review of this timely book: see:

<http://nllibrarium.com/>

This informative book explains how our Mayflower ancestors came together, bowed their heads and give thanks for their first harvest. This book is much more than a description of an event that later became an American national holiday. It starts with a history of the Pilgrims' journey that began as a business and religious incorporation by London merchants and those men & women seeking religious freedom.

### **Website Spotlight**

<http://www.newenglandancestors.org/research/services/dna.asp>

A similar lowered pricing was offered by Family Tree at the Mayflower Convention meeting in Plymouth this year for DNA testing.

### **New DNA Testing Benefit for NEHGS Members**

NEHGS President D. Brenton Simons today announced a new benefit of NEHGS membership: a DNA discount program offered in association with FamilyTreeDNA. NEHGS has instituted a study group with FamilyTreeDNA which permits NEHGS members to avail themselves of any one of FamilyTreeDNA's tests at a discounted price. "This offering will make a range of DNA tests more affordable to our members and encourage new scholarship," said Simons.

If you decide to take advantage of the NEHGS discount program, you will be enrolled in the Society's DNA study group, moderated by genetics editor Christopher Child. In addition to joining the NEHGS group, participants can join up to two other surname groups hosted by FamilyTreeDNA.

In order to receive the discount, you must order your test through [www.NewEnglandAncestors.org](http://www.NewEnglandAncestors.org)

### **Washburn-Norlands Fall Visit by Judd Taylor**

Last fall my son & I visited the Washburn Norlands Living History Center in Livermore, Maine. If you have not been to Norlands, I suggest you take a virtual tour by going to their web site <http://www.norlands.org> Norlands is the family home of the Washburns, one of the great political and industrial dynasties of the 19th century. Of the ten children born to Israel and Martha Washburn, seven sons rose to serve as governors, congressmen, a United States senator, Secretary of State, foreign ministers, a Civil War

general, and a Navy captain. Today, Norlands is a multifaceted museum offering in-depth experiences in 18th and 19th century rural life. Here, the visitor is an active participant in daily and seasonal farming and housework, and becomes involved in the social, political and educational activities of the times.

### **Thanksgiving Harvest Celebration:**

This is the 387th Thanksgiving after **Francis Cooke** and his fellow **Mayflower** passengers held their three day celebration at Plimoth Plantation in 1621. After a 66 day journey across the Atlantic Ocean in a small leaky wooden boat, 102 men, women and children landed in a place they named Plimoth. The New England winter had begun and they were forced to spend that first winter cramped below deck on the Mayflower. Spring finally came and for those who had survived the winter, they could only look forward to trying to plant gardens, build houses and a peaceful relationship with the native peoples.

Squanto, a Wampanoag Native American, taught the Pilgrims to plant native crops, fish and hunt for game. Had it not been for his friendship & the Native American leader King Massasoit of the Wampanoag tribe, Francis Cooke and our Pilgrim forefathers would not have survived. See:

[http://www.scholastic.com/scholastic\\_thanksgiving/feast/index.htm](http://www.scholastic.com/scholastic_thanksgiving/feast/index.htm) for one of many sites that tells the Thanksgiving story and their three day harvest celebration.

### **An Excellent Article**

Written by Cokie Roberts and Steven V. Roberts in the November 24, 2002 issue of **USA Weekend**. See:

<http://www.usaweekend.com/02issues/021124/021124mayflower.html> that details how diverse the descendants of the Mayflower are today.

### **TRY, TRY and Try Again**

This past September 7, 2008, the **Boston Globe** published an article titled "**Pilgrim Prestige**" which related how Mr. John Talcott at the age of 100, finally succeeded in proving his descent from Pilgrim James Chilton. See:

<http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2008/09/07/pilgrimprestige/> for details on this inspirational story.

### **Membership Information**

If you are interested in joining the Society (there is currently no fee charged) or you are a member who has not filled out the membership form, please contact Dianna Saario at [dsaario@comcast.net](mailto:dsaario@comcast.net).

## **New Members**

Welcome to our newest members:

**Linda Marie Meek:** Woodville, TX.

**Sharon Sorensen:** Loveland, CO.

There are places on this web site & people in our society that can aid you in your search for genealogical information. We are glad your joined our group.

## **The 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Generation Project**

One of our current projects is publishing a book with the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> generations of Francis Cooke descendants, continuing where the GSMD Silver Book left off.

If anyone has copies of wills or probate for their family from the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> generation Cooke descendants, please consider sending copies to Dianna for inclusion in the book.

Dianna Saario is managing this project and has put an amazing amount of time into this effort. She works on verifying each line submitted, which sometimes entails quite a bit of work. Dianna and Valeria Reckert also help many Cooke descendants with their research. Thanks Dianna and Val for all the time you give to the Society and its members!

## **Contact Information**

Members of the FCS are in communication through an e-mail group at [Francis\\_Cooke\\_Society@yahoogroups.com](mailto:Francis_Cooke_Society@yahoogroups.com)

Please go to our website for instructions on how to subscribe. This is our primary means of communication, so it is important to subscribe!

## **The FCS Website:**

<http://www.FrancisCookeSociety.org>

### **President:**

J. Scott McKay [scottsfamilytree@aol.com](mailto:scottsfamilytree@aol.com)

### **Membership Chair and head of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Generations Project:**

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Back issues of the FCS Newsletter are available for viewing at [www.franciscookesociety.org](http://www.franciscookesociety.org)