

RICHARD MORE OF THE *MAYFLOWER*

Among those on board the ship *Mayflower* when it finally reached New England in November, 1620 were four young children, two girls and two boys, by the name of More. Elinor, born in 1612, was under the care of Edward Winslow; Jasper, born in 1613, was cared for by John Carver; and Richard, born 1614, and Mary, born in 1616, were assigned to William Brewster. Where were the parents of these young children?

Samuel More was married at age 16 to his 21-year-old cousin Catherine More. It was probably an arranged marriage to keep the land in the More family. The children were born one after another, and Samuel finally realized that they did not look like him and that he was probably not their birth father. Catherine mistreated her children and rejected them. Following their divorce, the four children were left as Samuel More's responsibility. He provided generous funds for their care and maintenance and the cost of the voyage to America. The children could have a fresh start in a New World.

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. The three men who became guardians of the More children were influential leaders of this religious group.

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 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. Richard More survived that first terrible winter when half of those who had just arrived perished from some unidentified epidemic, but John Carver as well as Elinor, Jasper and Mary More died.

Though his story is sad, Richard More was a child of landed gentry with royal descent from Malcolm III and David of Scotland.

Richard More had seven children by his first wife, Christian Hunt (or Hunter). Three of these children lived to marry and have children of their own:

- 1 RICHARD married SARAH ----- and had six children.
- 2 SUSANNA had four children by her first husband, SAMUEL DUTCH.
- 3 CHRISTIAN married JOSHUA CONANT and had one child.

Which child of Pilgrim Richard More is your Mayflower ancestor?

Compiled by Margaret Harris Stover from various sources, 2006
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