

**GREAT MIGRATION TOUR TO ENGLAND
15 TO 25 AUGUST 2012
WINTHROP FLEET**

TOUR TALK

Issue #2

October 2011

HEATHROW HOTEL

In the previous issue of *Tour Talk*, we made the strong recommendation that you fly to England no later than 14 August 2012, and stay that night at the Sheraton Heathrow hotel. Through the diligence of one of our registrants, we have learned that that hotel is fully booked for that evening, with the exception of a few rooms that are available at an exorbitant rate. We are working on finding an alternative, and will inform you as soon as we have done so, hopefully prior to the date of the next issue of *Tour Talk*.

THE ABBEY OF BURY ST. EDMUNDS

Edmund was a Saxon king who died in 869, fighting against the Vikings. He was initially buried at the site of the battle, which may have taken place at what is now the village of Bradfield St. Clare. About 903 Edmund's remains were moved a few miles to the northwest, to the nearby Saxon village of Bedricesworth, a settlement which would grow into the town of Bury St. Edmunds. He was probably elevated to sainthood a few decades later.

In 1020 King Canute established a Benedictine monastery at Bedricesworth, which soon became the resting place for St. Edmund. The abbey became one of the most important pilgrimage destinations in England and accumulated massive wealth. Although Bury St. Edmunds was never a diocesan seat, the abbey church, much of which was built in the twelfth century, rivalled in size the cathedrals at Norwich and Exeter.

The abbey was dissolved in 1539 and decayed rapidly. The remaining ruins, which dominate the center of town (and the view from our hotel), are spread over many acres and challenge the imagination in reconstructing what the massive buildings must have looked like during the first half of the second millennium. In future issues of *Tour Talk*, we will provide more detailed descriptions of what is still to be seen.

Recommended Reading

Frank Meeres, *A History of Bury St. Edmunds* (Andover, Hampshire, England, 2002, 2010). A well-written and comprehensive history of Bury St. Edmunds, this volume gives a good summary of the life of St. Edmund and of the growth of the abbey, along with citations to more detailed literature on all aspects of the town's history.

Jocelin of Brakelond, *Chronicle of the Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds* (Oxford, 2008). This brief chronicle, written by one of the monks of the abbey, provides a first-person account of life in the abbey and the town in the late twelfth century.

THE WIVES OF JOHN WINTHROP

John Winthrop, organizer of the Winthrop Fleet and Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, married four times, thrice in old England and once in New England. During the course of our tour, we will be visiting villages associated with two of these wives. We present here the basic information on each of these wives [GMB 2039-40]. In future issues of *Tour Talk*, we will publish more detailed accounts of each of these wives and their families.

1) At Great Stambridge, Essex, on 16 April 1605, John Winthrop and **Mary Forth** were married. She was buried at Groton on 26 June 1615.

2) At Groton, Suffolk, on 6 December 1615, John Winthrop and **Thomasine Clopton** were married. She died on 8 December 1616 and was buried at Groton on 11 December 1616. The Clopton family, including Thomasine's grandfather Richard, were prominent at Long Melford, Suffolk, which we will be visiting on the afternoon of Thursday, 16 August 2012.

3) At Great Maplestead, Essex, on 29 April 1618, John Winthrop and **Margaret Tyndal** were married. She followed her husband to New England, arriving at Boston late in 1631 and dying there on 14 June 1647. Our first stop on the morning of Thursday, 23 August 2012, will be Great Maplestead.

4) At Boston, soon after 20 December 1647, John Winthrop and **Martha (Rainsborough) Coytmore** were married. Martha was daughter of William Rainsborough and widow of Thomas Coytmore.

A WINTHROP FLEET IMMIGRANT FROM KERSEY, SUFFOLK

Saturday, 18 August 2012, will be the day we visit the English home of John Winthrop himself. We will begin the day by taking the coach to Groton, where we will first explore the parish church, then walk a short distance up the street to see the manor house occupied by the Winthrop family. This will be followed by an optional stroll through fields and woods to the next parish to the west, Edwardstone, which also had Winthrop associations, and from which a number of Winthrop Fleet passengers derived. We will next take the coach to Lindsey Tye, where we will have lunch at The Lindsey Rose.

After lunch we will end the day by taking the coach to Kersey, the parish immediately to the east of Groton. This is an interesting little village, set in a small valley, through which

runs a small stream, the River Brett, which is itself a tributary of the River Stour, the river that separates Suffolk from Essex. This stream which runs through the village of Kersey is so small that the villagers have never built a bridge across it, but simply allow it to flow across the main street through the village.

The parish church, which will be our main objective on this visit, sits on a small hill at the south end of the main street, looking down over the village. The village itself does not have many other attractions, except for a famous pottery, the Kersey Pottery, which you may visit online (www.kerseypottery.com) and which we will visit on foot.

A distinctive type of cloth, known as “kersey” and frequently listed in probate inventories of early New Englanders, presumably derived its name from this village. This type of cloth is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as “a kind of coarse narrow cloth, woven from long wool and usually ribbed.”

There is only one known Winthrop Fleet immigrant from Kersey, but he was a very interesting man, and he was followed to New England by other family members.

Edward Bendall was baptized at Kersey on 18 October 1607, son of Edward and Jane (_____) Bendall [GMB 151-56]. He joined the church at Boston in the winter of 1630-1, which is the evidence that he came in the Winthrop Fleet. No direct connection to John Winthrop prior to 1630 has been found, other than his residence in Kersey, adjacent to Groton.

Bendall resided in Boston for twenty-four years, although he made a number of trips back to England during that time. His residence was on the waterfront, facing the tidal flats where Faneuil Hall now sits. He was a merchant, ferryman and lighterman, making his living from the shipping traffic in Boston Harbor. He had three wives and six children, and returned permanently to England in 1654. Of his six children, only his eldest son, Freegrace, child of his first wife, remained in New England. He married and became a prominent Suffolk County court official.

Edward Bendall, father of this immigrant, was buried at Kersey on 6 April 1613. On 16 January 1615/6, also at Kersey, his widow, Jane, married George Scarlett, with whom she had two sons, John and Samuel, baptized at Kersey in 1618 and 1621. In 1635 Jane Scarlett came to New England, where she was admitted to Boston church on 6 December 1635. She presumably brought her two Scarlett sons with her in 1635, for they both appear in New England records within a few years thereafter [GM 2:6:199-200].

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