

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

TOUR TALK

Issue #1

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GREETINGS

Our Great Migration tour to Suffolk and environs is now less than a year away. As we approach the date of the tour, we propose to issue this monthly bulletin to keep you informed about the details of the tour and also to provide background information on the sites we will be visiting, the New England immigrants who lived there, and a variety of related historical topics. We hope you find these messages helpful and that they will whet your appetite for this second Great Migration tour. If there are topics you would like to have covered in future issues, or questions you would like to have answered, please let us know.

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THE WINTHROP FLEET

Our tour concentrates on the immigrants to New England who sailed in the Winthrop Fleet of 1630. This was a group of about a dozen vessels which left England in April and May of that year, arriving at Salem in June and July, and carrying about seven hundred passengers. This fleet was organized in late 1629 and early 1630 by the newly created Massachusetts Bay Company, and was led by John Winthrop of Groton, Suffolk.

John Winthrop made his first appearance in the records of the Massachusetts Bay Company on 19 September 1629, but he must have been involved earlier than that date, for at this first appearance he was appointed to a committee to attend to one aspect of the Company's business. On 20 October 1629, in anticipation of the voyage the following year, Winthrop was elected governor of the company, succeeding Matthew Cradock, who would not make the voyage in 1630.

Winthrop was the hub around which the Massachusetts Bay Company and its colony revolved for the next twenty years, and he will be the principal focus of our tour. One of the highlights of our time in England will be a visit to his home parish of Groton in Suffolk, where we will see the parish church where he and many of his family were baptized, and the manor house that the Winthrop family owned and occupied for many years.

In future issues of *Tour Talk* we will be presenting more detailed information about the structure and organization of the Winthrop Fleet, and will be recommending books and articles to read in preparation for our journey. The most important book you can read, and the one to read if you are only able to read one, is Francis J. Bremer, *John Winthrop: America's Forgotten Founding Father*, published in 2003 by Oxford University Press. This biography supersedes all earlier work on Winthrop and will be our frequent guide and companion.

GREAT MIGRATION IMMIGRANTS FROM MISTLEY, ESSEX

On Wednesday, 22 August 2011, about two-thirds of the way through the tour, we will begin our day by taking the coach to Mistley, Essex, the most easterly location we will visit. Mistley is at the mouth of the Stour River, which is the boundary between Essex and Suffolk. Although there were no known inhabitants of Mistley who were on the Winthrop Fleet in 1630, there were a few Mistley residents who later came to New England, some with connections to other Great Migration immigrants. (Just to the west of Mistley is Dedham, our second stop of the day, which did provide passengers in 1630.)

Aside from the New England immigrants who derived from Mistley, the parish is of interest because of the unusual history of the church buildings themselves. A typical medieval church building once existed in the middle of the parish, about a mile south of the river, and in this building the seventeenth-century immigrants of interest to us were baptized and married. In the early 1700s, however, the leading family in Mistley shifted the center of economic activity to the north and west, to take advantage of the ease of shipping on the Stour. As a result, the old church was allowed to decay and a new church was built in 1735 in the new town center, close to the river. This building was of an unusual form for an English church, with two small towers, one at either end of the nave. This building in turn was allowed to deteriorate, and in 1868 a Gothic Revival church was built just a hundred yards to the south of the second church.

The coach will take us to the site of the oldest church, which is now reduced to the stone foundation in a private pasture. Beginning at this point, we will lead an optional walk across the parish, about a mile and a half through fields and woods and along peaceful lanes, ending at the Gothic Revival church. Those who do not wish to take this walk may reboard the coach to meet the walking group at that church. From that point the towers of the decayed second church are visible and may be reached by a walk of just a few minutes.

There are at least three Great Migration immigrants from Mistley:

1) **Henry Kimball** was born about 1590 and sailed for New England in 1634, settling at Watertown where he resided until his death in 1648 [GM 2:4:152-54]. He was the son of Richard Kimball of Lawford, Essex, a parish that sits between Mistley and Dedham. Henry's brother Richard Kimball also came to New England in 1634, the two brothers sailing together on the same vessel [GM 2:4:154-60]. Henry Kimball married at Great

Bromley, Essex, in 1628 Susan (Stone) Cutting, daughter of Henry Stone and widow of Richard Cutting. The two eldest children of Henry and Susan, daughters Elizabeth and Susan, were baptized at Mistley in 1629 and 1632.

2) **John Cheney** was born perhaps about 1600 and is first seen at Mistley with his first wife Amy, where we find the baptism of their daughter Mary on 24 July 1625, followed by daughter Martha in 1626 and son John in 1628. Amy must have died soon after this, for on 3 March 1630/1 John Cheney married Martha Smith at the adjoining parish of Lawford. Two more children were baptized there, in 1632 and 1634, after which, in 1635, the family sailed for New England and settled at Roxbury [GM 2:2:60-63]. (The evidence for what we know of John Cheney and his family in England was published in 2001 and 2008 by Leslie Mahler FASG [TAG 76:245-47; NEHGR 162:115-16].)

3) **Isaac Cummings** was born about 1602 and had arrived in New England by 1636, where he first settled at Watertown, but soon moved to Ipswich and then to Topsfield, where he died in 1677. His first four children were baptized at Mistley, in 1629, 1630, 1633 and 1635 (as published in 1991 by John Plummer [NEHGR 145:239-40]).

TOUR ARRANGEMENTS

The 2012 Great Migration Tour begins on Wednesday, 15 August 2012, at 10AM, when the coach arrives at the Sheraton Heathrow hotel to collect the participants. We strongly recommend that you arrange your flight plans so that you arrive in London by Tuesday, 14 August. In this way, there will be no uncertainty regarding flights arriving on Wednesday morning, and the tour will be able to commence smoothly. With this in mind, spending the night of the 14th at the Sheraton Heathrow would be convenient. We will provide additional details on this hotel in a separate e-mail. However, you are free to choose another Heathrow hotel, but the coach will only be able to make the one stop at the Sheraton Heathrow.

Later in the day on 15 August we will check into The Angel Hotel at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk. This will be our base for the next ten days. This hotel is in the center of the town, directly across from the massive and beautiful ruins of the Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, which provides the opportunity for morning and evening strolls through the carefully groomed grounds, for viewing the gardens and also for birdwatching. You may get a feel for The Angel Hotel by looking at their website: www.theangel.co.uk.

In the other direction from the hotel is the business and shopping district of Bury St. Edmunds. The main market square is two short blocks away. On Monday, 20 August, we will have a “quiet day” in Bury St. Edmunds, when you can pursue a variety of activities on your own. On five evenings you will be on your own for dinner in Bury St. Edmunds. You may, of course, have dinner on any of those evenings in the excellent restaurant in The Angel. There are, however, many and varied restaurants within easy walking distance of the hotel. In a future issue of *Tour Talk* we will describe a number of these eating places, with our personal comments on some.