



Soule Kindred Newsletter

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Fall 2010

2010 ELECTION RESULTS

SKA Members Vote by Mail for the First Time 40% Turn Out!

The slate of candidates endorsed by the Board of Directors was elected by 40% of the membership (132 votes) in Soule Kindred’s first membership-wide election. Previously, only members who attended the annual reunion had an opportunity to vote. “This is a good beginning,” said Karen L. McNally, President and Chair of the Nomination Committee, “we expect the ballot number to grow in future years as members become more familiar with the process.”

The new Board members are Anna L. Bristol, Helen A. Soulé and Andrew B. Turner. They were elected for a three-year term and join the six continuing board members: Sue Fogg Eisdorfer, Marjorie Everoski, David Hargreave, Karen L. McNally, Margaret A. Rocke and Kathleen L. Strauss. Marcy Kelly Brubaker, as the immediate past president, remains for a year as a nonvoting member. Brubaker said she hopes “the new election process encourages more members to become active. We are only as good as our volunteers.”

Outgoing members of the Board are: Betty-Jean Haner, Christine Hill, Judith Hill, Mary Soule Kelly, Rosemary Soulé Peters, Christine Schlosser and Norman Soulé. Interesting family relations on last year’s board include two sisters, a father and daughter, and two mothers and daughters.

Thank you to all who sent in ballots.

**The 2010-2011 Board took office on October 15.
Following are the new officers:**

Karen L. McNally, President

David Hargreave, Vice President

Helen A. Soulé, Secretary

Andrew B. Turner, Treasurer

*Preserving Soule Heritage
for Future Generations*

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Fall is election season. And as the cover story indicates, this year, for the first time, the entire Soule Kindred membership had the opportunity to participate in the election of new Board members in September.

The study of Pilgrim history tends to focus on the men of Plymouth Colony, but women were participants in that history, too. Marcy's story on the women of the Mayflower discusses the role of women during the early Colonial era and highlights the fact that the women who survived until the first harvest celebration in 1621 played a vital role in the survival of the Colony.

Just what kind of food did the Pilgrims eat at that first harvest feast? You can sort out the myths from the realities of the first Pilgrim Thanksgiving by reading A. J. Jacob's article, *Be a Pilgrim For A Day*. Eel, anyone?

Fall also is a time of Thanksgiving for us as well. We look back to our ancestors George and Mary (Becket) Soule and are thankful that they were willing to venture forth to the New World and persevere through numerous hardships to create a successful life for themselves and their children. They laid a solid foundation upon which we, their many descendants, have flourished.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Marcy Kelly Brubaker

Karen L. McNally

If you would like to submit an article for publication, have a comment or correction, or would like to work on the Newsletter, please contact us at editor@soulekindred.org or call us at 1-888-SKA-1620.

Soule Kindred in America, Inc.

1348 E. Vinedo Ln.
Tempe, AZ 85284-1667
1-888-SKA-1620

Website: soulekindred.org

E-mail: info@soulekindred.org

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Soule Kindred Newsletter

Fall 2010 Edition Written and Edited by

Marcy Kelly Brubaker
Karen L. McNally

Proofreaders

Anna L. Bristol
Joyce E. McNally

Contact

editor@soulekindred.org

Printer

eDigital Graphics
Green Brook, NJ 00812
info@edigitalgraphics.com

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Pilgrims wore green, gold, and maroon.

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Outgoing Board Legacy

The 2009-2010 Board of Directors can look back on the past year with pride. And members should already be seeing the fruits of the Board's labor. Here are some of its accomplishments:

- Adopted a new election process with member participation.
- Launched a new and expanded website.
- Enabled online payment of dues and donations.
- Placed SKA archives at the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society.
- Published the first annual Membership Directory.
- Added email, phone and lineage information to member profiles.
- Established the Soule Family Tree Committee to help identify member lineage.
- Created a discounted 5-year membership category.
- Constructed a communication network with toll-free numbers and e-mail addresses.
- Initiated contact with general membership by e-mail.
- Established an Advisory Council for experts on SKA related topics.

Thank you to all 2009-2010 Board Members!

*With Deep Appreciation and Gratitude to
Outgoing Board Members...*

**Betty-Jean Haner, Christine Hill, Judith Hill,
Mary Soule Kelly, Rosemary Soulé Peters,
Christine Schlosser, Norman Soulé**

Thank You for your Service to the Kindred.

Meet the Soule Kindred

Board of Directors

Officers

Karen L. McNally
President

David Hargreave
Vice President

Helen A. Soulé
Secretary

Andrew B. Turner
Treasurer

Directors

Susan Fogg Eisdorfer
Karen L. McNally
Kathleen G. Strauss
Marjorie Everoski
David Hargreave
Margaret "Peg" Rocke
Anna L. Bristol
Helen A. Soulé
Andrew B. Turner

Contact Information

General Information:
info@soulekindred.org

1-888-SKA-1620

Annual Reunion:
reunion@soulekindred.org

Membership:
membership@soulekindred.org

Newsletter Editor:
editor@soulekindred.org

Soule Family Tree Project:
familytree@soulekindred.org

Volunteer:
volunteer@soulekindred.org

HERSTORY: Women of the *Mayflower*

By Marcy Kelly Brubaker

When the *Mayflower* sailed for America in 1620, it carried 102 passengers; among them were 18 adult married women passengers and 11 girls, ranging in age from one to 17. Three of the women were pregnant in their last trimester and four girls, between the ages of 4 and 13, were indentured servants. William Bradford, Governor of Plymouth Colony, later reported that there was concern that the "weak bodies of women" would render them unsuited to travel by ship, which explains why they were outnumbered three to one. Many of the married male passengers left their wives and daughters behind until the new settlement could be established, a decision that would prove wise.

Survival. Sickness. Death.

While all of the women and girls survived the voyage, most of the women perished after arriving in Massachusetts. The first to die was Dorothy Bradford, William's wife, who accidentally fell from the *Mayflower* into the frigid waters off Provincetown on December 7, 1620 and drowned.

For the next four months, the women and children lived aboard the cold, damp and crowded ship anchored off Plymouth while the men spent their time outdoors clearing land, erecting shelter and drinking fresh water. Colds, pneumonia and disease spread rapidly on the ship. Soon 13 of

the women and 2 of the girls were dead. (The young girls proved most resilient—half of the men and crew died and more than a third of the boys.)

By the time of the first Thanksgiving almost a year later, half of those who began the journey in England were dead—parents, spouses, children and friends. Only four women, Elizabeth Hopkins, Susanna White Winslow, Mary Brewster and Eleanor Billington, were still alive. The situation was dire: medical treatment was barbaric, domiciles primitive, diets limited, and Indian attacks always imminent. The four women were now responsible for cooking and caring for the colony's remaining forty-eight men and children, many now widowers and orphans.

It would be three long, arduous years before the ship *Anne* arrived with farm animals and some of the wives and children left behind in England. Among the passengers was young Mary Becket who would marry *Mayflower* passenger George Soule.

Religion. Magic. The Pilgrims' faith permeated all aspects of their lives. Not only was the Bible their religious guide, it also served as their primary legal document. Church attendance was mandatory. When things were bad, suffering was considered God's punishment and a day of

continued on next page

The Women of the Mayflower

Mary (Norris) Allerton

Eleanor Billington

Dorothy (May) Bradford

Mary Brewster

Susanna Chilton

Alice Closford

Sarah Eaton

Mrs. Edward Fuller

Elizabeth (Barker) Hopkins

Mary (Prower) Martin

Alice Mullins

Alice Rigsdale

Rose Standish

Ann (Cooper) Tilley

Joan (Hurst) Tilley

Mrs. Thomas Tinker

Elizabeth (Barker) Winslow

Susanna (Fuller) White

fasting and humiliation was required. If things went well it signaled God's pleasure and a day of thanksgiving and praise was declared. The harvest celebration of 1621 that we now celebrate as the first Thanksgiving was a secular event. The first religious day of thanksgiving took place in 1623 after a rain shower saved the colony's crops.

The God of the Separatists' faith recognized that women were equal to men, but its ministers preached that they were inferior and more inclined to sin and error. In addition to God and the Bible, the Pilgrims believed in the supernatural, magic and the presence of malevolent spirits who brought misfortune. This would later lead to the witch scares.

Education. In the early days, most women could not read or write. If they were taught to read, it was only so that they could read the Bible. Few were taught to write, as there was no reason to have this skill, although one-third could sign their names.

By the 1670s, schools were established: Dame schools for girls provided rudimentary lessons in reading and homemaking skills; Latin schools for boys taught Latin, Hebrew, and Greek and prepared them for a higher profession such as the ministry.

Rights. Status. Marriage in Plymouth was a civil, not religious, ceremony. When addressing a married woman, the prefix Goodwife was used and usually shortened to Goody. Mary Becket Soule would have been called Goody Soule. Second marriages, usually within a year after a spouse's death, were common. The term "now-wife" came into usage, reflecting the large number of women's deaths and remarriages.

While a woman was expected to be subservient to her father until she married and then to her husband, she did have more extensive property and legal rights in the new Colony than in England. A widow, for example, could not be expunged from her husband's will and was guaranteed a full third of the family's property

upon his death. It was common for women entering into a second marriage to sign contracts allowing them to retain control of their property separate from their husbands. Sometimes women were allowed to sit on juries.

Chores. From sun up to sunset, a Pilgrim woman's work never ceased. She was expected to cook, preserve food, sew, make soap and candles, and clean while caring for children, her own and orphans. After the animals arrived, milking the cow and tending to the chickens and other small animals would be added to her chores. Contemporary analyses of women's financial contributions to the family at that time are estimated as high as 50%.



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Mayflower Women

Meals. At dinner, her husband ate first, and then it was the wife's turn followed by the children. Everyone ate with their fingers from trenchers or long wooden boards. Women placed large napkins on their laps while eating; men put them across their shoulders. Beer was the usual drink for everyone. Children began drinking it when their mothers stopped nursing them. After dinner the family might smoke a pipe together. Everyone, even young members of the family, participated.

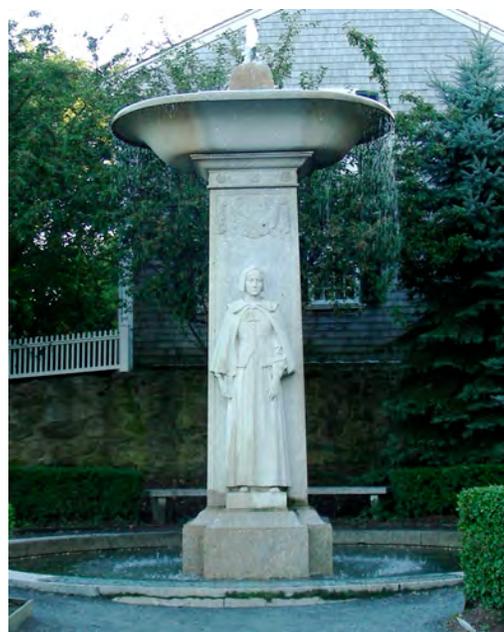
Clothing. The wife made clothes for the family from imported cloth during the early years of the Colony. Steel needles were used to sew seams. Contrary to common understanding, Pilgrims only wore black and white on Sundays or special occasions. Usually they wore earthy tones such as maroon, russets and green. A woman's daily wardrobe consisted of a shirt-like garment called a shift. Next she put on stays and petticoats. Outer clothing consisted of a dress or a waistcoat and skirt. Pins of brass or iron were used to position collars and cuffs. Her hair was tucked under a cap called a coif.



Fertility. Mary Becket Soule had eight children; the average number Pilgrim women bore. That is, if they lived long enough. Mortality rates were high: one in five women died in childbirth; twelve percent of children died before their first birthday.

Lifespan. The life expectancy at birth for English people in the early 1600s was about 40 years, due mostly to the high rate of infant and child mortality. If a woman (or man) reached the age of 30 in the new world, she could expect to live to 59.

Pilgrim women were tough, resourceful, brave, and endured hardships beyond imagination. They were not the quaint, romantic figures so often depicted in paintings and Thanksgiving reproductions. The men of the Mayflower are lionized because they are known to us. They signed the Mayflower Compact, left us written documents and their surnames. But, the contributions of Pilgrim women were no less because they could not write or hold office. Too often their role in the founding of our country is overlooked.



Memorial to the Women on the *Mayflower*
Plymouth, MA

Sources: *Daily Life in the Plymouth Colony 1636*; Plimoth Plantation; *Patches from the Past* by Judy Anne Johnson Breneman; Caleb Johnson, MayflowerHistory.com; Scholastic.com.

Be a Pilgrim for a Day

by A. J. Jacobs

This time of year, most people like to wish each other “Happy Turkey Day.” But in my home, we prefer “Happy Deer Day,” “Happy Eel Day,” or “Happy Swan Day.”

Let me explain. A few months ago, my 4-year-old asked me if the Pilgrims’ first Thanksgiving featured a SpongeBob float in the parade.

No, I said. They didn’t even have a Snoopy balloon. This vision of hardship shocked him.

It also made me realize I didn’t know much more about the first Thanksgiving than he did. I knew there were the Pilgrims and Wampanoag Indians and they ate some food together. Then, afterward, they, um, unbuckled their shoes and watched a football game? I had no idea.

The point is, many of us have become disconnected from the original celebration of the holiday. And since I believe in hands-on—or stomach-on—learning, I decided we’d recreate the first Thanksgiving. The real menu, prayers, games, everything.

The best chefs create your perfect Thanksgiving

My wife reluctantly agreed, as long as I promised not to wear a loincloth. I realized we needed a guide for our culinary adventure and found the perfect one in historian Richard Pickering, deputy director of Massachusetts’ Plimoth Plantation, home of the Pilgrims. He agreed to help us.

“The Thanksgiving we practice today has more to do with myth than reality,” Pickering said. The food we eat is much closer to the cooking of 1860s America—when President Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving a national holiday—than to 1620s Pilgrim fare.

“Was there even turkey at the original dinner?” I asked Pickering. It’s unclear, he replied. The only eyewitness account of the event mentions “wildfowl,” but that could have meant ducks, swans, passenger pigeons, or other birds native to the region.

Venison was definitely one of the main dishes in 1621, and we know the Wampanoag Indians provided five deer. The tables may also have contained lobster, eel, mussels, fish, Indian corn, radishes, turnips, and spinach.

Oh, and there wasn’t a buckle in sight—the Pilgrims never wore them. Victorian-era magazine illustrations erroneously showed the Pilgrims wearing accessories with buckles, and the idea stuck.

Armed with my new knowledge, I started calling stores and browsing supermarkets, asking the clerks questions like, “Do you have any liverwort?” and, “What about black carrots?” (Today’s orange carrots are a newfangled 18th-century hybrid.) They shook their heads. Nor, thankfully for all concerned, was I able to track down swan.

Finally I did manage to pull together a smorgasbord of authentic ingredients. I planned to roast and boil all of the dishes, since sautéing and stir-frying were unheard of then.

Thanksgiving in Half the Time

On the big day, my wife, children, and I went to Central Park to gather branches and twigs for the fireplace in our New York apartment. After returning, I lit the fire and stoked it. I went to the kitchen to grab a mallard duck to roast.

Then I heard sirens outside. This modern noise! What a nuisance! How could I get into the Pilgrim mind-set with all this hubbub?

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Pilgrim For a Day

Fists pounded on our door. “Something burning in there?” a voice yelled. I opened the door and saw five New York City firefighters.

As it turned out, our chimney was sending plumes of smoke into our neighbor’s apartment. One of the firefighters sprayed foam on our fire, and the blaze—and my duck—sputtered out.



“I’m sorry about this,” I told them. “Can I offer you some radishes? Or turnips?”

They politely declined all root vegetables. My only consolation was that the first Thanksgiving also had unexpected guests—the Wampanoag—so I wrote off

our visitors as a tribute to them. (Yes, the Native Americans essentially crashed the Pilgrims’ party. Contrary to what many of us learned in school, the first Thanksgiving was not a carefully-orchestrated diplomatic event. It was serendipity.)

Around then, Pickering arrived to assist with the preparations and keep us true to our 17th-century mission. A *Mayflower* descendant with a gray-flecked beard, he brought energy and wisdom—and two lumpy heirloom pumpkins. He was able to join us because we were holding the feast not in November but in September. The first Thanksgiving is thought to have occurred in either September or October, and it lasted for three days.

We cooked the rest of the meal on the stove without tripping the fire alarm. Guests trickled in: parents, in-laws, friends, and cousins. We ended up with about a dozen participants—short of the original 150 but not bad for a city apartment.

“A little etiquette,” I announced as we sat down at the table. “First, no forks. The Pilgrims And used only their hands, spoons, and knives. they held their spoons like shovels, not like felt-tip pens.” Pickering had brought a 17th-century book of manners, and I read aloud

some rules. “Save teeth picking for later and moderate your spitting. No smacking your lips like hogs. While sitting, do not move back and forth, lest your fellow diners think you are breaking wind.”

I passed around a hand-washing bowl filled with water and leaves of basil and marjoram. (Though in this flu season, I offered Ye Olde Purell as well.)

By this time, Pickering had changed into period costume, a purple wool suit trimmed with silk braid and topped off with a beaver felt hat. He said a prayer, and we dove in.

We started with the fowl. For our meal, we included turkey. Pickering told me that if the Pilgrims did eat turkey, they’d have eaten a wild bird, leaner than today’s Pamela Anderson types and with more dark meat. I found one at a gourmet butcher, and we cooked it Pilgrim-style, in a stew with herbs and toast. It was a little gamy.



The lobster, boiled in red-wine vinegar, was a big hit. Although our lobsters are shrimpy compared to those of 1621, when the crustaceans commonly

weighed 20 pounds and had claws the size of a human arm.

As for deer, a friend had venison in his freezer. (Bonus: He’s a descendant of Miles Standish!) We cooked it in a stew thickened with ground walnuts to mixed reviews. Next up were grits, turnips and a boiled salad (yes, boiled) of spinach and currants.

We saved the eel for last, boiled in white wine and sprinkled with fennel seed. But maybe I should have called the Butterball Eel Hotline, because it was downright nasty—a mix of rubbery eel flesh and hard bone. As my friend Shannon said, “My gag reflex is getting quite a workout.”

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Rocco DiSpirito's Turkey 911

We washed down our food with water and white wine. The Pilgrims (and, in fact, the Puritans) approved of beer, wine, and spirits, but they frowned on drunkenness.

The overall verdict of the meal? Surprisingly edible—but not so edible you'd overeat. Although the flavors weren't overpowering, it wasn't as tasteless as I'd imagined. The Pilgrims did sneak in some seasoning.

As we digested, Pickering treated us to a Pilgrim-era riddle: "What goes over the water and under the water but doesn't get wet?" Pickering asked.

"A tunnel?" people guessed. "An extremely early submarine?"

Pickering shook his head. "No, a duck's egg that is still inside the duck." Hmm—I guess you had to be from 1621.

Other kinds of entertainment enjoyed at the original Thanksgiving were running races (I let my sons play Wii Fit Jogging), shooting off guns in military exercises (we substituted water pistols), and a charming game called "Kick the Shins." The last is played exactly like it sounds: We stood in a circle and kicked one another in the shins until only one person was left standing. My 5-year-old son thought this was even more fun than Wii.

The real miracle of Thanksgiving, Pickering explained, was that the Pilgrims and Native Americans had any fun at all. "This was their first harvest after a devastatingly harsh winter," he said. "Forty-eight of the original 102 Pilgrims died that winter."

He let it sink in. Half of the Pilgrims died of scurvy or exposure—half. The Wampanoag weren't much better off, since they had just come off a lethal plague. "Some Native American populations suffered a 90% death rate," Pickering said. "And some villages, like Patuxet, the original site of the Pilgrims' colony, were completely wiped out."

The 1621 revelers had undergone a mind-boggling amount of suffering. And yet there they were at the first Thanksgiving, sharing their harvest, running races, and overflowing with gratitude.

If they could appreciate life amid such chaos, pain, and uncertainty, I could give thanks for all the good things in my relatively cushy life. I'm thankful for this night, for the courage of the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag, for the love and tolerance of my wife, for the Snoopy float, for the abundance of food, for our families, for our health, for our Wii Fit, and for the fact that my neighbor forgave me for almost burning down his apartment.



Soule Kindred News

2011 REUNION UPDATE

The details of the 2011 Soule Kindred Annual Reunion in Salt Lake City, Utah, have been completed. Local arrangements are being handled by Ancestor Seekers, a group based in Salt Lake City that is in the business of coordinating research trips to that city. With their help, an exciting Reunion has been planned and we hope you will be able to join us in June 2011.

Here are some highlights:

Dates – Tuesday, June 14 through Friday, June 17, 2011.

Place – Salt Lake City, Utah.

Program – Research opportunities at the Family History Library plus sightseeing in the area.

Hotel – Adjacent to the Family History Library and historic Temple Square.

Cost per person – Complete package from \$416.50 to \$633.00.

Registration – At website listed below with payment by means of check, PayPal, credit or debit card.

Full details are available by clicking on <http://www.ancestorseekers.com/slcrct/view.php?type=overview&id=22>

Once on the website, you can click on THE PROGRAM, THE COST, or THE DETAILS for more information. You can even register for the Reunion while you are there.

If you have any questions, please contact Andrew Turner, 2011 Reunion Chair, at reunion@soulekindred.org or (520) 577-0586.



**This is the Place Heritage Park
Salt Lake City**



Elizabeth Ragle Soule

Elizabeth “Bettie” Ragle Soule of Sandwich, Massachusetts, died Friday, August 27. Mrs. Soule met her Navy Physician husband, Dr. Francis G. “Frank” Soule, in Honolulu where her father was stationed shortly before the attack on Pearl Harbor. They married in 1943 and after numerous

assignments, including Subic Bay in the Philippine Islands and Bethesda, MD, eventually moved to Sandwich in 1979.

Dr. Soule supervised the construction of a new wing of the Sandwich Public Library, which was dedicated in his honor. Last year, Mrs. Soule donated to the library scores of modern and classic children’s books she had collected over the years.

She is survived by three sons, John, Richard, and Robert Soule. Mrs. Soule was an early member of Soule Kindred, having joined in 1970. She became a Life Member in 1976.

REMINDER

Renewal notices are in the mail.
You can now pay your dues online at soulekindred.org.

The deadline for updates to the Soule Kindred Membership Directory is December 31.

Updates may be sent to membership@soulekindred.org.

Help Wanted - Volunteers Needed

ANYONE GOING TO LONDON?

Soule Kindred needs help finding the original August 30, 1586, marriage record for Jan Solis and Maeken Labis. Louise Walsh Throop, Compiler of the Soule edition of the Mayflower Families in Progress series, believes a copy may be found at the Austin Friars Church in downtown London. It is Throop's theory that Jan and Maeken may be George Soule's parents. If you are going to be in London and are interested in volunteering for this assignment, please e-mail info@soulekindred.org or call 1-888-SKA-1620. If you solve the mystery of George Soule's origins, your Kindred will be forever grateful.



ORAL HISTORY COORDINATOR WANTED

The year 2017 will mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of Soule Kindred. As we look ahead to this momentous occasion, we also need to look back and preserve the remembrances of those who were there at



the beginning with an Oral History Project that highlights founders, long-time members, former officers, and others who have made a significant contribution to the organization. Interviews will be featured in the Newsletter and on the website. If you are interested in overseeing this project, interviewing, or helping in any capacity, don't be shy. Call 1-888-SKA-1620 or e-mail info@soulekindred.org.

Want to be more involved?

Don't see anything on this page that inspires you?

Well, you're in luck. Soule Kindred does offer other opportunities to volunteer and be actively engaged in the organization. To find out more, just contact us at volunteer@soulekindred.org

Love Genealogy?

If you have have a passion for genealogy or have ever been the recipient of one or more Random Acts of Genealogy Kindness and would like to pay that kindness forward, this is your chance to do so. We're looking for volunteer genealogists to assist Soule Kindred members in discovering their Soule lineage. Contact us at familytree@soulekindred.org or 1-888-SKA-1620 to become part of the Soule Family Tree Project team.

Thirty Years Ago in Soule Kindred History

The year is 1980 and it begins with great joy. In the January newsletter, Soule Kindred Historian, Col. John E. Soule, proudly announces, "THE BOOK has gone to press." "THE BOOK" is *Volume III, Mayflower Families Through Five Generations: George Soule* and Col. John is its co-author along with Dr. Milton E. Terry, Soule Kindred President.

A gold-stamped personal copy of *Volume III* is presented to Col. John on April 4 and it is a particularly gratifying moment for him. The publication of *Volume III* caps more than 40 years of researching and collecting Soule family genealogical data. Betty Soule Merritt writes in the July newsletter that her brother "had a varied and interesting career and received many awards, none of which in his heart can touch the publishing of the 'Five Generations'."

In April Col. John resigns as Soule Kindred Historian. He has held the Historian's job since the founding of the organization in 1967.

The year 1980 ends with great sadness. Col. John E. Soule, a 10th generation descendant of Pilgrims George Soule, William Brewster, Edward Fuller, and John Howland, and co-founder of Soule Kindred, passes away quietly in his sleep on Tuesday, November 18. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors on November 21.

If you have memories or stories you would like to share about a particular year or event in Soule Kindred History or about Col. John, please send them to editor@soulekindred.org. We'll print as many as we can in future issues of the newsletter.

Soule Kindred in America, Inc.
1348 E. Vinedo Ln.
Tempe, AZ 85284-1667

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The First Thanksgiving



*When the Pilgrims
first gathered together to share
with their Indian friends
in the mild autumn air,
they lifted the voices
in jubilant praise
for the bread on the table,
the berries and maize,
for field and for forest,
for turkey and deer,
for the bountiful crops
they were blessed with that year.
They were thankful for these
as they feasted away,
and as they were thankful
we're thankful today.*

Unknown