

**THE NEBRASKA SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS
BURT & BECKY WHEDON 2017 MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENT**

THIS YEAR'S AWARD IS \$1,620.

**TRYSTAN ANDREW SCOTT BRANDT
EXETER-MILLIGAN HIGH SCHOOL/EXETER**



TRYSTAN IS A SENIOR AT EXETER-MILLIGAN HIGH SCHOOL IN EXETER. HE IS A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY AND STUDENT COUNCIL AND ACTIVE IN BAND, QUIZ BOWL, BASKETBALL, TRACK AND TRAP. HE RECEIVED THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA ARROW OF LIGHT AWARD IN 2010, THE AMERICAN LEGION CITIZENSHIP AWARD IN 2014 AND WAS A DELEGATE TO BOYS STATE IN 2016. HIS CUMULATIVE GPA IS 3.94.

IN HIS LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION, ONE OF TRYSTAN'S TEACHERS, MATT NICHOLAS, SAID "TRYSTAN'S GRADES ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO HIM, BUT MORE IMPORTANT IS LEARNING ABOUT AND UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD WE LIVE IN. HE HAS GREAT THINGS AHEAD OF HIM."

THIS YEAR'S ESSAY TOPIC FOCUSES ON THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT:

ON NOVEMBER 11, 1620, THE PILGRIMS COMPOSED AND SIGNED A DOCUMENT WE NOW KNOW AS THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT. SHIPS VISITING PLYMOUTH COLONY GAVE THE PILGRIMS THE OPPORTUNITY TO WRITE LETTERS TO THEIR FAMILIES IN ENGLAND AND HOLLAND.

APPLICANTS WERE ASKED TO COMPOSE AN ESSAY, BETWEEN 750 AND 1,000 WORDS, IN THE FORM OF A LETTER TO FAMILY IN ENGLAND DESCRIBING THE IMPACT THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT HAD ON THE EARLY LIFE OF PLYMOUTH COLONY. THE ESSAY INCLUDED REFERENCES TO DOCUMENT THE FACTS IN THE LETTER.

ESSAYS WERE EVALUATED FOR CONTENT, ORGANIZATION, STYLE, GRAMMAR AND CREATIVITY. SOURCES WERE CITED IN APPROPRIATE BIBLIOGRAPHIC STYLE.

APRIL 1, 1621

DEAR GRANDFATHER,

I MISS YOU VERY MUCH SINCE COMING TO THE NEW WORLD. I WISH YOU HAD BEEN WELL ENOUGH TO TRAVEL WITH US. WE LANDED ON NOVEMBER 11TH. DUE TO BAD WEATHER AND OTHER DANGEROUS CONDITIONS, WE WERE UNABLE TO LAND WHERE WE HAD ORIGINALLY PLANNED AND HAD TO SETTLE FURTHER TO THE NORTH. I FEAR THE WINTER WILL BE HARsher HERE THAN WHERE WE HAD PLANNED TO GO. LIFE HAS BEEN RATHER DIFFICULT SINCE WE ARRIVED, BUT IT IS SO EXCITING TO BE A PART OF CREATING A NEW COLONY. FORTUNATELY, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND ENOUGH WILD GAME AND FISH TO EAT. UNFORTUNATELY, MANY PEOPLE HAVE BECOME ILL BECAUSE IT IS SO COLD AND WET, NEARLY HALF HAVE DIED. WE SPENT MOST OF THE FIRST MONTH SCOUTING FOR THE BEST SITE TO BUILD OUR SETTLEMENT. SINCE THEN, WE HAVE WORKED VERY HARD TO CLEAR THE LAND AND BUILD SHELTERS. WE DECIDED TO SLEEP ABOARD THE SHIP UNTIL WE GOT ALL OF THE NECESSARY SHELTERS BUILT. WE ARE VERY TIRED AT NIGHT, BUT IT IS SO REWARDING TO BE FREE FROM TYRANNY AND KNOW THAT WHAT WE ARE CREATING WILL BE A BETTER SOCIETY THAN THAT IN THE OLD WORLD. WE FEEL VERY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE.

SINCE WE DID NOT LAND IN VIRGINIA, AND THEREFORE, WERE NOT LEGALLY UNDER THEIR JURISDICTION, SOME PEOPLE FELT WE DID NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO STAY HERE, AND EVERYONE FELT WE MUST FIND A WAY TO MAINTAIN ORDER. BEFORE WE WENT ASHORE FOR THE FIRST TIME, FORTY-ONE MEN CREATED AND SIGNED A UNIFYING DOCUMENT WE CALL, THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT. THE COMPACT BINDS EVERYONE TO STAY TOGETHER IN A CIVIL BODY POLITIC AND FORM OUR OWN GOVERNMENT. EVERYONE ALSO PROMISED TO ABIDE BY ALL OF THE LAWS THAT WE CREATE FOR THE GOOD OF ALL. IT WAS AGREED THAT ALL OF THE LAWS WILL BE JUST AND EQUAL. IT WAS FURTHER AGREED THAT WE MUST NOT BE SELFISH, AND DO WHATEVER IS BEST FOR THE ENTIRE GROUP. WE ARE NOT ALL ALIKE. IT IS STRANGE TO BE IN THE PRESENCE OF THOSE WHO HAVE DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS BELIEFS THAN OURS. HOWEVER, EVERYONE IS TOLERANT OF OUR DIFFERENCES AND WE ARE FREE TO WORSHIP AS WE CHOOSE. ON SUNDAYS, WE SEPARATE INTO GROUPS FOR PRAYER AND WORSHIP, AS WE EACH INTERPRET THE BIBLE IN

OUR OWN WAY. NO ONE TELLS THE OTHERS THAT THEY ARE WRONG IN THEIR BELIEFS.

I FEEL THE CREATION OF THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. IF THE SETTLERS DID NOT AGREE TO STAY TOGETHER IN AN ORDERLY FASHION, CHAOS WOULD ENSUE. WE HAVE ELECTED JOHN CARVER TO BE OUR FIRST GOVERNOR. I'M SURE EVERYONE WILL NOT LIKE ALL OF THE RULES THAT WE WILL CREATE, BUT IT IS NECESSARY TO DO WHAT IS BEST FOR ALL. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT OUR GOVERNMENT BE A DEMOCRACY. WHATEVER CHALLENGES WE FACE, ONE THING IS CERTAIN, LIFE WILL BE MUCH BETTER HERE THAN IT WAS IN THE OLD WORLD. HERE, WE WILL BE FREE TO BELIEVE IN WHATEVER WE FEEL IS RIGHT, AND LIVE AS WE WISH, AS LONG AS WHAT WE DO DOES NOT HARM OTHERS.

THE COMPACT IS ALREADY PROVING ITS USEFULNESS. WE HAVE RECENTLY STARTED FORMING OUR OWN MILITARY TO DEFEND OURSELVES AGAINST POSSIBLE ATTACKS BY THE NATIVES. THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW TENSE MOMENTS, AND WE ARE UNCERTAIN OF THEIR INTENTIONS. WE FELT IT BEST TO ORGANIZE OURSELVES AND BE PREPARED. MYLES STANDISH WILL BE THE COMMANDER OF OUR MILITARY. MUCH TO EVERYONE'S RELIEF, WE RECENTLY MET WITH A DELEGATION OF THE NATIVES AND ESTABLISHED A PEACE TREATY. HOPEFULLY, ALL WILL GO WELL AND WE WILL BE ABLE TO LIVE A PEACEFUL EXISTENCE WITH THE NATIVES.

AS THE MAYFLOWER PREPARES TO RETURN TO ENGLAND, I HOPE THIS LETTER WILL FIND YOU WELL. PERHAPS, IF YOU ARE FEELING BETTER, YOU WILL CONSIDER JOINING US HERE IN THE NEW WORLD. PLEASE TELL MY COUSINS ABOUT THIS OPPORTUNITY TO START A NEW LIFE WHERE WE ARE FREE FROM PERSECUTION. WE NEED MORE SETTLERS TO GROW OUR COLONY. NOW THAT THE WEATHER IS IMPROVING WE WILL BE CLEARING LAND TO GROW FOOD SOON. THERE IS STILL MUCH TO BE DONE TO IMPROVE OUR SETTLEMENT.

YOUR LOVING GRANDSON,

TRYSTAN

SOURCES:

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