

**THE NEBRASKA SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS
BURT & BECKY WHEDON 2022 MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENT**

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

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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.

To my dearest son, Matthew,

I will first begin by saying I miss thee dearly, but I am unyielding in my decision to leave thee in the Old World. The severity of the voyage on the Mayflower was harsh and relentless. Disease was not only on the minds of all the patrons but also was amongst us at all hours. The 'tween decks were small and grim to hath accommodated us all. Rain battered down on the hatches day and night, and the lulling of the ship wrought our stomachs into continuous retching. Folk like us hath not the stomach for such a tolerance for sea like this. Grievances brought to us great sorrows by the actions of an insolent and secular young man, one of the sailors, and daily execrations burst forth from his mouth, all the while threatening that he shalt eventually throw all of us overboard before the voyage hath its end. Waves brung on by ceaseless storms beat on the sails of the ship, and her upper masts became very leaky. One of the main masts, bent and cracked, cast fear over us all. For once the sailors' fears matched ours, but we hath traveled so far and shalt not turn back. We helped in the only way we knew; we prayed "Yet Lord, thou can't save us". I talked amongst the other men who wert lingering beloweth the deck, remonstrating on the matter that hath come upon us. I hath become quite close to a gentleman by the name of William Brewster, talking amongst him, and he remembered the great iron screw for his printing press. With great haste, we began our search as we combed below the dreary deck of the Mayflower until others had begun to partake in the search. After a greatly exhausting search for the screw, it was found at last. The screw was twisted into the beam of the mast with a hideous screeching of wood like unto that of a pig before it goeth to the butcher. The mast, having begun to rise to its original position, we all let out a cry of joy and praise to the Lord our God, and for once we were in unison with the sailors. The distance to the New World wast closer to our fingertips than ever before, and we prayed as a congregation in the hull of the Mayflower every night as the waves hit her sides, and we petitioned that the Lord shalt deliver us to our promised land just as He hath delivered the Israelites.

I wast overwhelmed with the gratitude that God hath bestowed upon me as I crawled up the ladder that led from our dungeon and was met with fresh crisp air and the outline of our promised land. We fled from persecution, and this new land meant a new beginning, a new form of government that shalt last for generations. We came together in the hold of the ship to create a new set of laws and to abolish a forthcoming rebellion. The Mayflower Compact foretold the code of laws for the new world: every able body wast seen in every eye as equal with the primary focus being obedience and order and loyalty to the King. The most important deed of the compact, I write to thee, my son, is the furtherment of our faith, which is the foundation of the compact. We partook together in the signing of the legible document. I, Edward Fuller, along with the company of 40 other men, signed the compact. John Carver wast elected to be the governor for next twelvemonth and to guide us along the righteous path.

Hopeless of finding an adequate settlement after explorations of the land, the harsh winter air hath come upon us with a ferocity. Extensive explorations took place with winter fast approaching us. I came upon the remnants of a settlement where life hath existed in the past; makeshift shelters and patches of corn wert spread across the landscape. An agreement wast reached by the company of explorers, myself concurring, that there was no time for further exploration, if we had wanted to survive the winter. The building of the common house went very slowly, when we hadst almost finished one of the houses, we sawest that its roof was on fire, and there was nothing in the power of us men that couldeth put the fire to a stop. Despite our hard work, people became sick: eight hath died in December, six in January, and 'tis just the start of the second month. We must muster the strength for our families. The thought of thee, my son, one day bravely crossing the sea and coming home to me, thy father, brings me inexplicable joy. Away from the persecutors of mine faith and into the promised land of the Lord Almighty, this country of freedom giveth me strength for a new day in the harshness of these winter months. I pray that this letter findeth thee in exemplary health and spirit.

Lovingly, your father,

Edward Fuller.

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