

GEORGE SOULE OF THE *MAYFLOWER*

Among those on board the ship *Mayflower* when it finally reached New England in November 1620 was a young man named George Soule, who came as a servant to Pilgrim Edward Winslow.

A religious group called the Separatists had fled from England to Holland to escape the fines and punishments for their illegal religious practices. Aft 10 years in Holland, the Separatists found that jobs were hard to find and they were poor. They did not approve of the Dutch customs and way of life, and they did not approve of their children mixing with the Dutch children. They wanted to keep their English customs and their own religion, so they decided to go to the New World in search of religious freedom.

After several financial and political problems, two ships were obtained. The *Speedwell* (which leaked and could not make the trip) sailed from Leyden, Holland with the Separatists. And the *Mayflower* sailed from Southampton, England with the London and English group. One problem after another delayed their departure until they had to cross the stormy North Atlantic Ocean during a bad time of the year. After 66 miserable days at sea with 102 passengers packed in that tiny ship, they finally anchored near Provincetown on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. Because of the mumbling and grumbling on board the ship, an agreement was signed by 41 men, including George Soule, called the Mayflower Compact. This famous historic document is an example of our country's earliest democratic government.

It was December and very cold before the area at Plymouth Rock was finally selected as the site to establish Plymouth Colony. Today we call this group of people who settled there the Pilgrims. George Soule survived that first terrible winter when half of those who had just arrived perished from some unidentified epidemic. He married a woman named Mary, whose maiden name was possibly Becket or Bucket who came over in the *Anne* in 1623.

George Soule became a part of the new Colony, giving financial assistance and becoming a freeman with the rights and responsibility of citizenship. He volunteered in the Pequot War and became a Deputy for Duxbury in 1642. Here he acquired considerable land before his death in 1679. Wife Mary died in 1676.

Children of George and Mary Soule:

1. JOHN married MARGARET, possibly Ford.
2. 2. JOHN married REBECCA SIMMONS and ESTHER (-----) SAMPSON.
3. 3. NATHANIEL married ROSE -----.
4. 4. GEORGE married DEBORAH -----.
5. 5. SUSANNA married FRANCIS WEST.
6. 6. MARY married JOHN PETERSON.
7. 7. ELIZABETH married FRANCIS WALKER.
8. 8. PATIENCE married JOHN HASKELL.
9. 9. BENJAMIN died unmarried.

Which child of Pilgrim George Soule is your Mayflower ancestor?