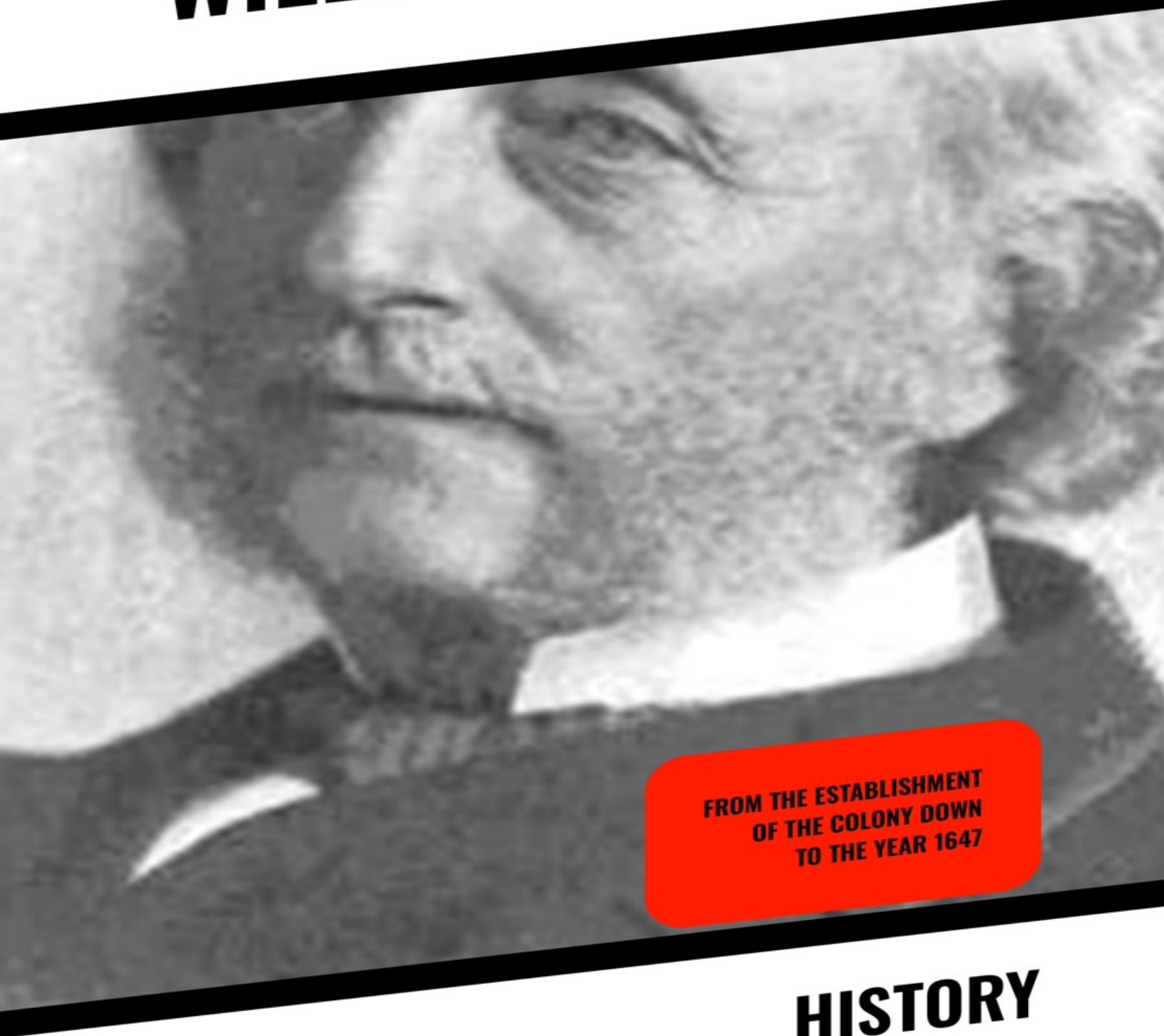




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WILLIAM BRADFORD



**FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE COLONY DOWN
TO THE YEAR 1647**

HISTORY OF THE PLYMOUTH COLONY

William Bradford

History of the Plymouth Colony

**From the Establishment of the Colony Down to the
Year 1647**

Sharp Ink Publishing
2022

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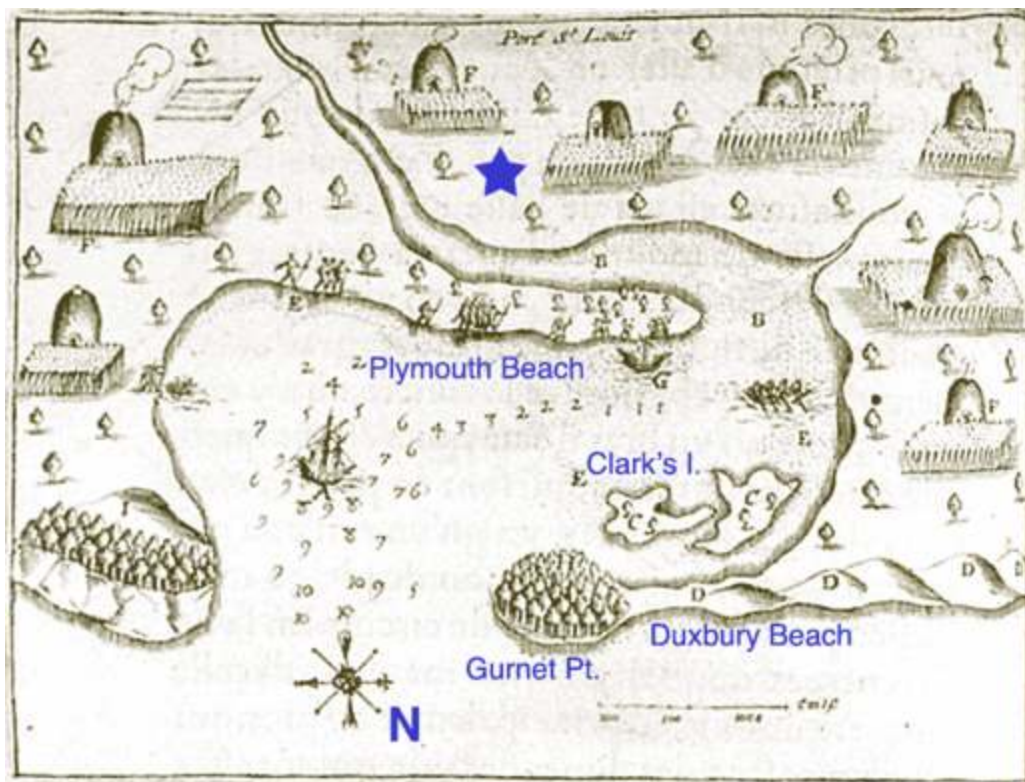


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To many people the return of the Bradford Manuscript is a fresh discovery of colonial history. By very many it has been called, incorrectly, the log of the "Mayflower." Indeed, that is the title by which it is described in the decree of the Consistorial Court of London. The fact is, however, that Governor Bradford undertook its preparation long after the arrival of the Pilgrims, and it cannot be properly considered as in any sense a log or daily journal of the voyage of the "Mayflower." It is, in point of fact, a history of the Plymouth Colony, chiefly in the form of annals, extending from the inception of the colony down to the year 1647. The matter has been in print since 1856, put forth through the public spirit of the Massachusetts Historical Society, which secured a transcript of the document from London, and printed it in the society's proceedings of the above-named year. As thus presented, it had copious notes, prepared with great care by the late Charles Deane; but these are not given in the present volume, wherein only such comments as seem indispensable to a proper understanding of the story have been made, leaving whatever elaboration may seem desirable to some future private enterprise.

It is a matter of regret that no picture of Governor Bradford exists. Only Edward Winslow of the Mayflower Company left an authenticated portrait of himself, and that, painted in England, is reproduced in this volume. In those early days Plymouth would have been a poor field for portrait painters. The people were struggling for their daily

bread rather than for to-morrow's fame through the transmission of their features to posterity.

The volume of the original manuscript, as it was presented to the Governor of the Commonwealth and is now deposited in the State Library, is a folio measuring eleven and one-half inches in length, seven and seven-eighths inches in width and one and one-half inches in thickness. It is bound in parchment, once white, but now grimy and much the worse for wear, being somewhat cracked and considerably scaled. Much scribbling, evidently by the Bradford family, is to be seen upon its surface, and out of the confusion may be read the name of Mercy Bradford, a daughter of the governor. On the inside of the front cover is pasted a sheet of manilla paper, on which is written the following:—

"Consistory Court of the Diocese of London

In the matter of the application of The Honorable Thomas Francis Bayard, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in London of the United States of America, for the delivery to him, on behalf of the President and Citizens of the said States, of the original manuscript book entitled and known as The Log of the Mayflower.

Produced in Court this 25th day of March, 1897, and marked with the letter A.

HARRY W. LEE

Registrar.

1 Deans Court

Doctors Commons"

Then come two manilla leaves, on both sides of which is written the decree of the Consistorial Court. These leaves and the manilla sheet pasted on the inside of the front cover were evidently inserted after the decree was passed.

Next comes a leaf (apparently the original first leaf of the book), and on it are verses, signed "A. M.," on the death of Mrs. Bradford. The next is evidently one of the leaves of the original book. At the top of the page is written the following:

—

This book was rit by govener William bradford and given to his son mager William Bradford and by him to his son mager John Bradford. rit by me Samuel bradford mach 20, 1705.

At the bottom of the same page the name John Bradford appears in different handwriting, evidently written with the book turned wrong side up.

The next is a leaf bearing the following, in the handwriting of Thomas Prince:—

TUESDAY, June 4—1728

Calling at *Major John Bradford's* at Kingston near Plimouth, son of Major Wm. Bradford formerly Dep Gov'r of Plimouth Colony, who was eldest son of Wm. Bradford Esq their 2nd Gov'r, & author of this History; ye sd Major John Bradford gave me *several manuscript octavoes* wh he assured me were written with his said Grandfather Gov'r Bradford's own hand. He also gave me a *little Pencil Book* wrote with a Blew lead Pencil by his sd Father ye Dep Gov'r. And He also told me yt He had lent & only lent his sd Grandfather Gov'r Bradford's History of Plimouth Colony wrote by his own Hand also, to judg Sewall; and desired me to get it of Him or find it out, & take out of it what I thought proper for my New-

England Chronology: wh I accordingly obtained, and This is ye sd History: wh I found wrote in ye same Handwriting as ye Octavo manuscripts above sd.

THOMAS PRINCE.

N.B. I also mentioned to him my Desire of lodging this History in ye New England Library of Prints & manuscripts, wh I had been then collecting for 23 years, to wh He signified his willingness—only yt He might have the Perusal of it while He lived.

T. PRINCE.

Following this, on the same page, is Thomas Prince's printed book-mark, as follows:—

This Book belongs to
The New-England-Library,
Begun to be collected by Thomas Prince, upon
his entring Harvard-College, July 6
1703; and was given by

On the lower part of a blank space which follows the word "by" is written:—

It now belongs to the Bishop of London's Library at Fulham.

There are evidences that this leaf did not belong to the original book, but was inserted by Mr. Prince.

At the top of the first page of the next leaf, which was evidently one of the original leaves of the book, is written in Samuel Bradford's hand, "march 20 Samuel Bradford;" and just below there appears, in Thomas Prince's handwriting, the following:—

But major Bradford tells me & assures me that He only lent this Book of his Grandfather's to Mr. Sewall & that it being of his Grandfather's own hand writing He had so high a value of it that he would never Part with ye Property, but would lend it to me & desired me to get it, which I did, & write down this that sd Major Bradford and his Heirs may be known to be the right owners.

Below this, also in Thomas Prince's handwriting, appears this line:—

"Page 243 missing when ye Book came into my Hands at 1st."

Just above the inscription by Prince there is a line or two of writing, marked over in ink so carefully as to be wholly undecipherable. On the reverse page of this leaf and on the first page of the next are written Hebrew words, with definitions. These are all in Governor Bradford's handwriting. On the next page appears the following:—

*Though I am growne aged, yet I have had a long-
ing desire, to see with my own eyes, something of
that most ancient language, and holy tongue,
in which the Law, and oracles of God were
write; and in which God, and angels, spake to
the holy patriarks, of old time; and what
names were given to things, from the
creation. And though I cañot attaine
to much herein, yet I am refreshed,
to have seen some glimpse here-
of; (as Moses saw the Land
of canan afarr of) my aime*

*and desire is, to see how
the words, and phrases
lye in the holy texte;
and to dicerne some-
what of the same
for my owne
contente.*

— — —
— —
—
J

Then begins the history proper, the first page of which is produced in facsimile in this volume, slightly reduced. The ruled margins end with page thirteen. From that page to the end of the book the writing varies considerably, sometimes being quite coarse and in other places very fine, some pages containing nearly a thousand words each. As a rule, the writing is upon one side of the sheet only, but in entering notes and subsequent thoughts the reverse is sometimes used. The last page number is 270, as appears from the facsimile reproduction in this volume of that page. Page 270 is followed by two blank leaves; then on the second page of the next leaf appears the list of names of those who came over in the "Mayflower," covering four pages and one column on the fifth page. The arrangement of this matter is shown by the facsimile reproduction in this volume of the first page of these names. Last of all there is a leaf of heavy double paper, like the one in the front of the book containing the verses on the death of Mrs. Bradford, and on this last leaf is written an index to a few portions of the history.

For copy, there was used the edition printed in 1856 by the Massachusetts Historical Society. The proof was carefully compared, word for word, with the photographic *facsimile* issued in 1896 in both London and Boston. The value of this comparison is evident in that a total of sixteen lines of the original, omitted in the original first copy, is supplied in this edition. As the work of the Historical Society could not be compared, easily, with the original manuscript in London, these omissions, with sundry minor errors in word and numeral, are not unreasonable. The curious will be pleased to learn that the supplied lines are from the following pages of the manuscript, viz.: page 122, eight lines; page 129, two lines; the obverse of page 201, found on the last page of Appendix A, two lines; page 219, two lines; pages 239 and 258, one line each. The pages of the manuscript are indicated in these printed pages by numerals in parentheses.

There are several errors in the paging of the original manuscript. Pages 105 and 106 are marked 145 and 146, and pages 219 and 220 are marked 119 and 120, respectively. Page 243 is missing.

Such as it is, the book is put forth that the public may know what manner of men the Pilgrims were, through what perils and vicissitudes they passed, and how much we of to-day owe to their devotion and determination.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE

JOURNAL OF THE SENATE.

Monday, May 24, 1897.

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The following message from His Excellency the Governor came up from the House, to wit:—

BOSTON, May 22, 1897.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives.

I have the honor to call to your attention the fact that Wednesday, May 26, at 11 A.M., has been fixed as the date of the formal presentation to the Governor of the Commonwealth of the Bradford Manuscript History, recently ordered by decree of the Consistory Court of the Diocese of London to be returned to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by the hands of the Honorable Thomas F. Bayard, lately Ambassador at the Court of St. James; and to suggest for the favorable consideration of your honorable bodies that the exercises of presentation be held in the House of Representatives on the day and hour above given, in the presence of a joint convention of the two bodies and of invited guests and the public.

ROGER WOLCOTT.

Thereupon, on motion of Mr. Roe,—

Ordered, That, in accordance with the suggestion of His Excellency the Governor, a joint convention of the two branches be held in the chamber of the House of Representatives, on Wednesday, May the twenty-sixth, at eleven o'clock A.M., for the purpose of witnessing the exercises of the formal presentation, to the Governor of the Commonwealth, of the Bradford Manuscript History, recently ordered by decree of the Consistory Court of the Diocese of London to be returned to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by the hands of the Honorable Thomas F. Bayard, lately Ambassador at the Court of St. James; and further

Ordered, That the clerks of the two branches give notice to His Excellency the Governor of the adoption of this order.

Sent down for concurrence. (It was concurred with same date.)

JOURNAL OF THE SENATE.

Wednesday, May 26, 1897.

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Joint Convention.

At eleven o'clock A.M., pursuant to assignment, the two branches met in

CONVENTION

in the chamber of the House of Representatives.

On motion of Mr. Roe,—

Ordered, That a committee, to consist of three members of the Senate and eight members of the House of Representatives, be appointed, to wait upon His Excellency the Governor and inform him that the two branches are now in convention for the purpose of witnessing the exercises of the formal presentation, to the Governor of the Commonwealth, of the Bradford Manuscript History.

Messrs. Roe, Woodward and Gallivan, of the Senate, and Messrs. Pierce of Milton, Bailey of Plymouth, Brown of Gloucester, Fairbank of Warren, Bailey of Newbury, Sanderson of Lynn, Whittlesey of Pittsfield and Bartlett of Boston, of the House, were appointed the committee.

Mr. Roe, from the committee, afterwards reported that they had attended to the duty assigned them, and that His Excellency the Governor had been pleased to say that he received the message and should be pleased to wait upon the Convention forthwith for the purpose named.

His Excellency the Governor, accompanied by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor and the Honorable Council, and by the Honorable Thomas F. Bayard, lately Ambassador of the United States at the Court of St. James's, the Honorable George F. Hoar, Senator from Massachusetts in the Congress of the United States, and other invited guests, entered the chamber.

The decree of the Consistorial and Episcopal Court of London, authorizing the return of the manuscript and its delivery to the Governor, was read.

The President then presented the Honorable George F. Hoar, who gave an account of the manuscript and of the many efforts that had been made to secure its return.

The Honorable Thomas F. Bayard was then introduced by the President, and he formally presented the manuscript to His Excellency the Governor, who accepted it in behalf of the Commonwealth.

On motion of Mr. Bradford, the following order was adopted:—

Whereas, In the presence of the Senate and of the House of Representatives in joint convention assembled, and in accordance with a decree of the Consistorial and Episcopal Court of London, the manuscript of Bradford's "History of the Plymouth Plantation" has this day been delivered to His Excellency the Governor of the Commonwealth by the Honorable Thomas F. Bayard, lately Ambassador of the United States at the Court of St. James's; and

Whereas, His Excellency the Governor has accepted the said manuscript in behalf of the Commonwealth; therefore, be it

Ordered, That the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts place on record their high appreciation of the generous and

gracious courtesy that prompted this act of international good-will, and express their grateful thanks to all concerned therein, and especially to the Lord Bishop of London, for the return to the Commonwealth of this precious relic; and be it further

Ordered, That His Excellency the Governor be requested to transmit an engrossed and duly authenticated copy of this order with its preamble to the Lord Bishop of London.

His Excellency, accompanied by the other dignitaries, then withdrew, the Convention was dissolved, and the Senate returned to its chamber.

Subsequently a resolve was passed (approved June 10, 1897) providing for the publication of the history from the original manuscript, together with a report of the proceedings of the joint convention, such report to be prepared by a committee consisting of one member of the Senate and two members of the House of Representatives, and to include, so far as practicable, portraits of His Excellency Governor Roger Wolcott, William Bradford, the Honorable George F. Hoar, the Honorable Thomas F. Bayard, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Bishop of London; facsimiles of pages from the manuscript history, and a picture of the book itself; copies of the decree of the Consistorial and Episcopal Court of London, the receipt of the Honorable Thomas F. Bayard for the manuscript, and the receipt sent by His Excellency the Governor to the Consistorial and Episcopal Court; an account of the legislative action taken with reference to the presentation and reception of the manuscript; the addresses of the Honorable George F. Hoar, the Honorable Thomas F. Bayard and His Excellency Governor Roger Wolcott; and such other papers and illustrations as the committee might deem advisable; the whole to be printed under the direction of the

Secretary of the Commonwealth, and the book distributed by him according to directions contained in the resolve.

Senator Alfred S. Roe of Worcester and Representatives Francis C. Lowell of Boston and Walter L. Bouvé of Hingham were appointed as the committee.

DECREE OF THE CONSISTORIAL AND EPISCOPAL COURT OF LONDON

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DECREE.

MANDELL by Divine Permission LORD BISHOP OF LONDON—
To The Honorable THOMAS FRANCIS BAYARD Ambassador
Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Her Most Gracious
Majesty Queen Victoria at the Court of Saint James's in
London and To The Governor and Commonwealth of
Massachusetts in the United States of America Greeting—
WHEREAS a Petition has been filed in the Registry of Our
Consistorial and Episcopal Court of London by you the said
Honorable Thomas Francis Bayard as Ambassador
Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Her Most Gracious
Majesty Queen Victoria at the Court of Saint James's in
London on behalf of the President and Citizens of the United
States of America wherein you have alleged that there is in
Our Custody as Lord Bishop of London a certain Manuscript
Book known as and entitled "The Log of the Mayflower"
containing an account as narrated by Captain William
Bradford who was one of the Company of Englishmen who
left England in April 1620 in the ship known as "The
Mayflower" of the circumstances leading to the prior
Settlement of that Company at Leyden in Holland their
return to England and subsequent departure for New
England their landing at Cape Cod in December 1620 their
Settlement at New Plymouth and their later history for
several years they being the Company whose Settlement in
America is regarded as the first real Colonisation of the New

England States and wherein you have also alleged that the said Manuscript Book had been for many years past and was then deposited in the Library attached to Our Episcopal Palace at Fulham in the County of Middlesex and is of the greatest interest importance and value to the Citizens of the United States of America inasmuch as it is one of the earliest records of their national History and contains much valuable information in regard to the original Settlers in the States their family history and antecedents and that therefore you earnestly desired to acquire possession of the same for and on behalf of the President and Citizens of the said United States of America AND WHEREIN you have also alleged that you are informed that We as Lord Bishop of London had fully recognised the value and interest of the said Manuscript Book to the Citizens of the United States of America and the claims which they have to its possession and that We were desirous of transferring it to the said President and Citizens AND WHEREIN you have also alleged that you are advised and believe that the Custody of documents in the nature of public or ecclesiastical records belonging to the See of London is vested in the Consistorial Court of the said See and that any disposal thereof must be authorised by an Order issued by the Judge of that Honorable Court And that you therefore humbly prayed that the said Honorable Court would deliver to you the said Manuscript Book on your undertaking to use every means in your power for the safe transmission of the said Book to the United States of America and its secure deposit and custody in the Pilgrim Hall at New Plymouth or in such other place as may be selected by the President and Senate of the said United States and upon such conditions as to security and access by and on behalf of the English Nation as that Honorable Court might determine AND WHEREAS the said

Petition was set down for hearing on one of the Court days in Hilary Term to wit Thursday the Twenty fifth day of March One thousand eight hundred and ninety seven in Our Consistorial Court in the Cathedral Church of Saint Paul in London before The Right Worshipful Thomas Hutchinson Tristram Doctor of Laws and one of Her Majesty's Counsel learned in the Law Our Vicar General and Official Principal the Judge of the said Court and you at the sitting of the said Court appeared by Counsel in support of the Prayer of the said Petition and during the hearing thereof the said Manuscript Book was produced in the said Court by Our legal Secretary and was then inspected and examined by the said Judge and evidence was also given before the Court by which it appeared that the Registry at Fulham Palace was a Public Registry for Historical and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to the Diocese of London and to the Colonial and other possessions of Great Britain beyond the Seas so long as the same remained by custom within the said Diocese AND WHEREAS it appeared on the face of the said Manuscript Book that the whole of the body thereof with the exception of part of the last page thereof was in the handwriting of the said William Bradford who was elected Governor of New Plymouth in April 1621 and continued Governor thereof from that date excepting between the years 1635 and 1637 up to 1650 and that the last five pages of the said Manuscript which is in the handwriting of the said William Bradford contain what in Law is an authentic Register between 1620 and 1650 of the fact of the Marriages of the Founders of the Colony of New England with the names of their respective wives and the names of their Children the lawful issue of such Marriages and of the fact of the Marriages of many of their Children and Grandchildren and of the names of the issue of such

marriages and of the deaths of many of the persons named therein And after hearing Counsel in support of the said application the Judge being of opinion that the said Manuscript Book had been upon the evidence before the Court presumably deposited at Fulham Palace sometime between the year 1729 and the year 1785 during which time the said Colony was by custom within the Diocese of London for purposes Ecclesiastical and the Registry of the said Consistorial Court was a legitimate Registry for the Custody of Registers of Marriages Births and Deaths within the said Colony and that the Registry at Fulham Palace was a Registry for Historical and other Documents connected with the Colonies and possessions of Great Britain beyond the Seas so long as the same remained by custom within the Diocese of London and that on the Declaration of the Independence of the United States of America in 1776 the said Colony had ceased to be within the Diocese of London and the Registry of the Court had ceased to be a public registry for the said Colony and having maturely deliberated on the Cases precedents and practice of the Ecclesiastical Court bearing on the application before him and having regard to the Special Circumstances of the Case Decreed as follows—(1) That a Photographic facsimile reproduction of the said Manuscript Book verified by affidavit as being a true and correct Photographic reproduction of the said Manuscript Book be deposited in the Registry of Our said Court by or on behalf of the Petitioner before the delivery to the Petitioner of the said original Manuscript Book as hereinafter ordered—(2) That the said Manuscript Book be delivered over to the said Honorable Thomas Francis Bayard by the Lord Bishop of London or in his Lordship's absence by the Registrar of the said Court on his giving his undertaking in writing that he will with all due care and diligence on his

arrival from England in the United States convey and deliver in person the said Manuscript Book to the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the United States of America at his Official Office in the State House in the City of Boston and that from the time of the delivery of the said Book to him by the said Lord Bishop of London or by the said Registrar until he shall have delivered the same to the Governor of Massachusetts he will retain the same in his own Personal custody—(3) That the said Book be deposited by the Petitioner with the Governor of Massachusetts for the purpose of the same being with all convenient speed finally deposited either in the State Archives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the City of Boston or in the Library of the Historical Society of the said Commonwealth in the City of Boston as the Governor shall determine—(4) That the Governors of the said Commonwealth for all time to come be officially responsible for the safe custody of the said Manuscript Book whether the same be deposited in the State Archives at Boston or in the Historical Library in Boston aforesaid as well as for the performance of the following conditions subject to a compliance wherewith the said Manuscript Book is hereby decreed to be deposited in the Custody of the aforesaid Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and his Successors to wit: —(a) That all persons have such access to the said Manuscript Book as to the Governor of the said Commonwealth for the time being shall appear to be reasonable and with such safeguard as he shall order—(b) That all persons desirous of searching the said Manuscript Book for the bona fide purpose of establishing or tracing a Pedigree through persons named in the last five pages thereof or in any other part thereof shall be permitted to search the same under such safeguards as the Governor for

the time being shall determine on payment of a fee to be fixed by the Governor—(c) That any person applying to the Official having the immediate custody of the said Manuscript Book for a Certified Copy of any entry contained in proof of Marriage Birth or Death of persons named therein or of any other matter of like purport for the purpose of tracing descents shall be furnished with such certificate on the payment of a sum not exceeding one Dollar—(d) That with all convenient speed after the delivery of the said Manuscript Book to the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts the Governor shall transmit to the Registrar of the Court a Certificate of the delivery of the same to him by the Petitioner and that he accepts the Custody of the same subject to the terms and conditions herein named AND the Judge lastly decreed that the Petitioner on delivering the said Manuscript Book to the Governor aforesaid shall at the same time deliver to him this Our Decree Sealed with the Seal of the Court WHEREFORE WE the Bishop of London aforesaid well weighing and considering the premises DO by virtue of Our Authority Ordinary and Episcopal and as far as in Us lies and by Law We may or can ratify and confirm such Decree of Our Vicar General and Official Principal of Our Consistorial and Episcopal Court of London IN TESTIMONY whereof We have caused the Seal of Our said Vicar General and Official Principal of the Consistorial and Episcopal Court of London which We use in this behalf to be affixed to these Presents DATED AT LONDON this Twelfth day of April One thousand eight hundred and ninety seven and in the first year of Our Translation.

HARRY W. LEE

Exd. H.E.T.

Registrar

(L.S.)

RECEIPT OF AMBASSADOR BAYARD.

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In the Consistory Court of London

In the Matter of the Original Manuscript of the Book entitled and known as "The Log of the Mayflower."

I THE HONOURABLE THOMAS FRANCIS BAYARD lately Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America at the Court of Saint James's London Do hereby undertake, in compliance with the Order of this Honourable Court dated the twelfth day of April 1897 and made on my Petition filed in the said Honourable Court, that I will with all due care and diligence on my arrival from England in the United States of America safely convey over the Original Manuscript Book Known as and entitled "The Log of the Mayflower" which has been this twenty ninth day of April 1897 delivered over to me by the Lord Bishop of London, to the City of Boston in the United States of America and on my arrival in the said City deliver the same over in person to the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at his Official Office in the State House in the said City of Boston AND I further hereby undertake from the time of the said delivery of the said Book to me by the said Lord Bishop of London until I shall have delivered the same to the Governor of Massachusetts, to retain the same in my own personal custody.

(Signed) T. F. BAYARD

29 April 1897

RECEIPT OF GOVERNOR WOLCOTT.

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His Excellency ROGER WOLCOTT, *Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in the United States of America.*

To the Registrar of the Consistorial and Episcopal Court of London.

Whereas, The said Honorable Court, by its decree dated the twelfth day of April, 1897, and made on the petition of the Honorable Thomas Francis Bayard, lately Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America at the Court of Saint James in London, did order that a certain original manuscript book then in the custody of the Lord Bishop of London, known as and entitled "The Log of the Mayflower," and more specifically described in said decree, should be delivered over to the said Honorable Thomas Francis Bayard by the Lord Bishop of London, on certain conditions specified in said decree, to be delivered by the said Honorable Thomas Francis Bayard in person to the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, thereafter to be kept in the custody of the aforesaid Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and his successors, subject to a compliance with certain conditions, as set forth in said decree;

And Whereas, The said Honorable Court by its decree aforesaid did further order that, with all convenient speed after the delivery of the said manuscript book to the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the