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DEGORY PRIEST, HATTER - OR, WHAT'S IN A NAME?

*Degory, Degory Priest –
He died and missed the feast.
With no male heir,
His name is rare.
Poor Degory, Degory Priest*

Yes, Degory did not attend the “first Thanksgiving” in 1621 because he died within months of the arrival of the *Mayflower* in Plymouth, New England, in the “great sickness” that took the lives of 31 of the 53 men who had been passengers.

Degory was about 40 years old and had made the voyage without his wife Sarah and two children, daughters Mary and Sarah. As you may know, because the ship *Speedwell* that was to accompany the *Mayflower* had to be left behind due to it having developed non-repairable leaks, many of the families and family members were left behind to await a future crossing. Degory’s wife and children were among them and they did not come over until she had remarried and accompanied her new husband hat maker Godbert Godbertson on the *Anne* in 1623.

Degory’s name is also recorded as Digory, Diggore Pryst, and Digerie. Words were normally spelled according to how they sounded to the writer and the writer often spelled the same word in different ways. Governor William Bradford’s history of *Plymouth Plantation* is an example. Although an English language dictionary had been published as early as the 1580s, it wasn’t until Samuel Johnson published his in 1755 that users began to accept one spelling for a word. The first year of the Oxford English Dictionary was 1928. Of course even today the way Americans spell some words is not the same as they are spelled in England! An example is tire and tyre.

If you are a fan of the “Chronicles of Narnia” then you are aware of the major character Digory Kirke. Regardless of how you spell it, the name Degory is very rare. In the 31 pages of the Index of Persons in the Mayflower Society’s 5 generation publication for

Degory Priest listing about 3,200 individuals not one chose to name a child Degory or one of its alternative spellings! There was a famous English historian Degory Wheare (1573-1647). Only three of our current PA Society members out of 760 members have proven descent from Degory Priest. A recent study of US phone books revealed only 12 listings of the first name Degory and 4 were in TX, 3 in MA, and 1 each in FL, GA, MO, NM, and TN. Caution: Before you think of naming a child Degory remember how some names just seem to beg being made fun of.

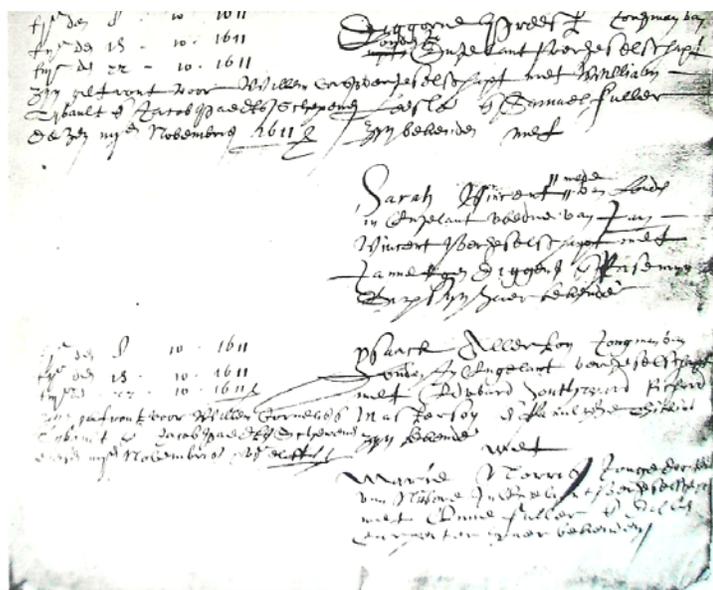


The Hat Makers
etching by J. J. van Vliet
Courtesy of
Jeremy Dupertuis Bangs, PhD

Consider that there was an old radio show “The Life of Riley” in the 1940s with a character Digby O’Dell who was called “Digger O’Dell the friendly undertaker”!

Degory’s birth place is unknown. A Digorius Prust was baptized in Harland, Devonshire, England in 1582 but historians believe that it is unlikely that a Separatist would have been from there. The

age difference could be a problem too. Degory Priest had fled to Holland and ended up in Leiden by 1611 when he married Sarah Vincent, a widowed sister of Pilgrim Isaac Allerton. He became a citizen of Leiden in November 1615 and his name appears numerous times in the Leiden town records there as a hat maker. He seems to have been a popular witness to affidavits. His signature was a mark indicating that he was probably illiterate. There is no known will or estate inventory. Of course the only portrait or image of a Pilgrim is that of Edward Winslow that hangs in Pilgrim Hall.



Copy of the page of the official Leiden, Holland, record of the marriages of Degory Priest to Sarah Vincent and Isaac Allerton to Mary Norris. Courtesy of Jeremy Dupertuis. Bangs, PhD



Leiden Town Hall - Built 1595 (Facade) & 1929
 Because the Pilgrim Separatists did not believe marriage to be a religious rite, they were married in this 16th century Town Hall that still is the seat of government. Fire destroyed the area behind the facade in 1929.

DEGORY PRIEST FACTOIDS

1. Degory was a signer of the “Mayflower Compact.”
2. With the exception of Bradford’s list of *Mayflower* passengers, Degory is not mentioned in the two early “prime sources” Bradford’s *Of Plymouth Plantation* or *Mourt’s Relation*.
3. Degory has at least one memorial in Plymouth. His name is included on the Sarcophagus on Cole’s Hill which may contain some of his bones along with others who died during the first winter.
4. Godbert Godbertson who came on the 1623 *Anne* and who had married Degory’s widow Sarah Allerton, in the 1623 land division, in addition to his own 2 acres, received 4 acres that would have been assigned to Degory had he lived, Sarah, and their two daughters. This land was “on the other side [i.e. south] of the town towards the Eel River.” Pilgrim Richard Warren also had land in this area and today’s living history museum, the 1627 Plimoth Plantation (www.plimoth.org), is on the north bank of Eel River.
5. The source for Degory and Sarah Allerton Priest’s descendants is *Mayflower Families Through Five Generation: Descendants of the Pilgrims Who Landed at Plymouth, Mass., December 1620, Volume Eight, Second Edition - Family of Degory Priest*. See: <http://www.themayflowersociety.com/book.htm>.

DOES ANYONE HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL?

Your editor is always looking for stories or artwork about the Pilgrims, their Native American friends, famous descendants and our own members. You may contact the editor at the address listed below.



THE PILGRIMS WOULD NOT HAVE SAID “Happy Holidays” in any language because they did not recognize religious holidays but if you were in Leiden, Holland, during this season you could say “Gelukkige valanties!”

ANSWER TO THE GOV. WILLIAM BRADFORD CRYPTOGAM: “On the day called Christmas Day, the Governor called them out to work as was used. But the most of this new company excused themselves and said it went against their consciences to work on that day.”

Any comments or suggested topics for the feature articles of this newsletter? Perhaps an article for consideration? If so, please contact Stacy B. C. Wood, Jr., Editor, “JR PA Mayflower,” 1530 South Juniper Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147-6218 or by e-mail at sbcwjr@comcast.net.

UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS AND THEN MATCH WITH THE HAT PICTURE

A. AELR GIILMPR hat =

B. WOCYBO hat =

C. AEFIMNR hat =

D. ATC NI HET THA hat =

E. AILORS hat =

F. AGINST hat =

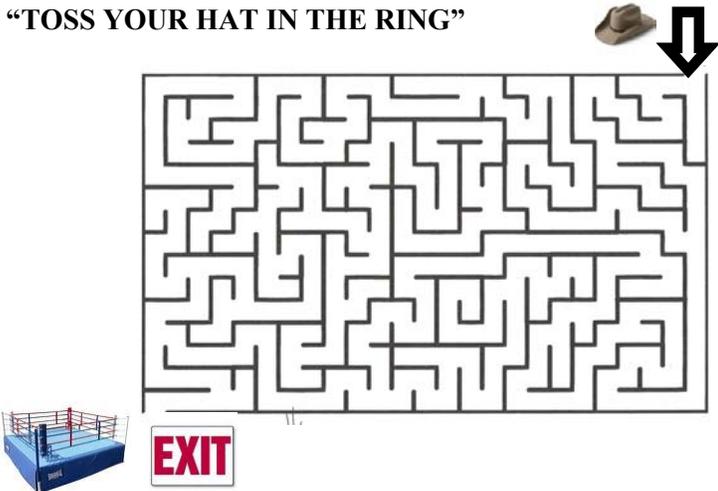
G. AGHORTSW hat =

H. AEFLS hat =



ANSWERS: A = "g" real Pilgrim, B = "e" cowboy, C = "a" fireman, D = "h" cat in the hat, E = "f" sailor, F = "c" Giants, G = "b" Hogwarts, H = "d" false (not real Pilgrim hat).

"TOSS YOUR HAT IN THE RING"



A GOVERNOR WILLIAM BRADFORD CRYPTOGRAM
 Answer on page 2.
 FD ROL PNY WNBBLP WOKTQRCNQ PNY ROL MFULKDFK
 WNBBLP ROLC FSR RF VFKA NQ VNQ SQLP. ESR ROL
 CFQR FI ROTQ DLV WFCGNDY LXWSLP ROLCQLBULQ
 NDP QNTP TR VLDR NMTDQR ROLTK WFDQWTLDWLQ
 RF VLDR FD RONR PNY. (Knopf p. 97)

ANSWER: Unused letters in the 16 X 20 WordSearch spell: "ten Families Through Five Generations Vol. 8, Family of Degory Priest. and fifty seven known respectively." Source: GSMID Mayflower

DEGORY 16 X 20 WORDSEARCH

E T G C D N A L L O H E S S E N K C I S
 N R N A H T U O M Y L P D I G O R Y D P
 T S I T A R A P E S W O L S N I W R L E
 H D V H P N O S T R E B D O G T N A O E
 U I I D S O F N I V Y F I T N U D M R D
 S G G C Y N R S I H A T T E R A E U F W
 B B S L T V O T E C A P C T U C T M A E
 A Y K E N I A V R R L S S G K A A N M L
 N O N I N N O O E A E E H O N Y A O I L
 D D A D R W S N N D I T S G F L N S L A
 G E H E E S E T A R E T I L L I E N Y I
 E L T N I G A N P R R S O E E S Z H K N
 B L N N L T O T S P Y W R E C T I O I R
 A A G P I L G R I M E T A T S E T J R A
 A C C O M P A N Y R O T N E V N I I K N
 V D N A L R A H E N E R D L I H C L E Y

DEGORY 16 X 20 WORDSEARCH The following words are found in this issue. The unused letters answer the question "How many grandchildren and great grandchildren did Degory and Sarah Allerton have?" ACCOMPANY, ALLERTON, ALTERNATIVE, ANNE, BEG, CAUTION, CHILDREN, CHRONICLES, CITIZEN, CROSSING, DAUGHTERS, DEGORY, DESCENT, DEVONSHIRE, DICTIONARY, DIGBYODELL, DIGORY, ESTATE, FAMILY, GENERATION, GODBERTSON, HALL, HARLAND, HATTER, HOLLAND, HUSBAND, ILLITERATE, INVENTORY, JOHNSON, KIRKE, LEIDEN, MARY, MAYFLOWER, NARNIA, OLD, PILGRIM, PLANTATION, PLYMOUTH, PORTRAIT, PRIEST, SEPARATIST, SICKNESS, SIGNATURE, SPEEDWELL, THANKSGIVING, TIRE, TYRE, WINSLOW

DIFFICULTY LEVEL?

		E	T	Y					
	E				Y				
	T				E				
	G	H	A	T	O				
Y	R	O				T	A	H	
	Y	H	R	D	A	G	E		

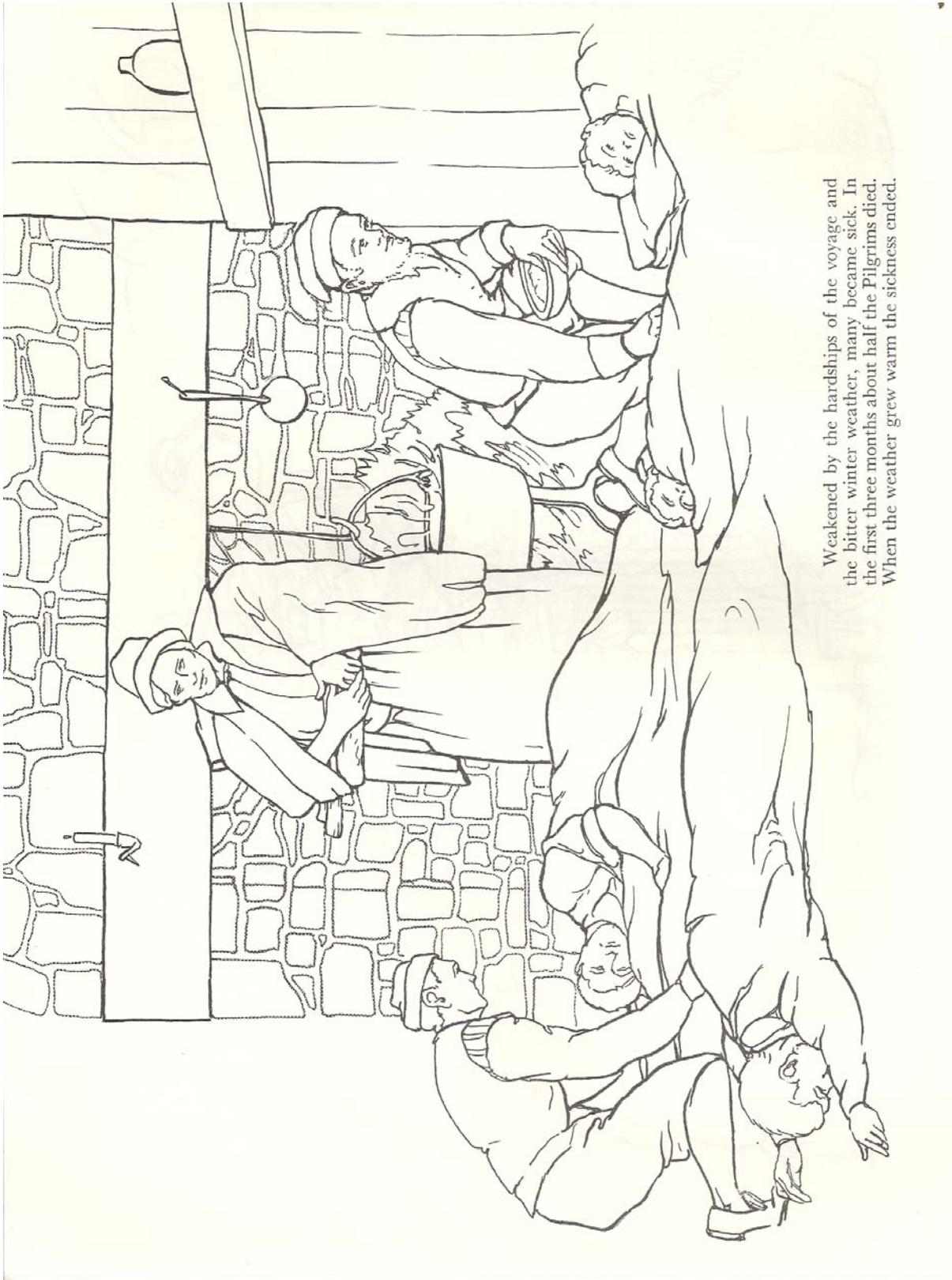
The Hat Degory Sudoku puzzle uses nine non-repeating letters instead of numbers. The answer is below.

D	H	R	G	O	V	A	T	E
V	O	V	E	H	T	D	G	R
T	E	G	V	R	D	A	H	O
H	V	A	D	E	D	G	O	R
R	O	Y	R	O	H	A	T	D
G	O	Y	R	E	D	G	H	A
V	A	R	A	D	G	H	Y	R
O	O	G	O	D	Y	T	A	H
G	D	Y	A	R	O	H	T	A

HAT DEGORY SUDOKU CLUE: One column or row spells the keyword in the clear either top to bottom or side to side..

“THE GREAT SICKNESS” - A PAGE TO COLOR

Which do you think might be sick Pilgrim Degory Priest among this group? Color his coat green. That may be Pilgrim William Brewster’s wife Mary standing in front of the fire place. She did not get sick. That also may be John Howland kneeling at the left and teenager Henry Samson kneeling at the right.



Weakened by the hardships of the voyage and the bitter winter weather, many became sick. In the first three months about half the Pilgrims died. When the weather grew warm the sickness ended.

From *The Pilgrim Story* = A picture book For Coloring, Drawings by Charles H. Overly Courtesy of Plimoth Plantation.