

the Thayer Quarterly

A QUEST FOR YOUR HERITAGE

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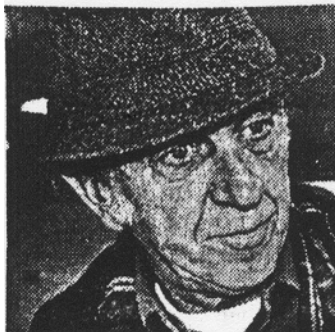
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This is a transcribed issue in order to create a usable electronic format. The masthead information is of our current design; the articles below are what appeared when this issue was printed.

FIRST ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

Quincy, MA; --Since the passing of our Secretary/Founder, Philip S Thayer, Sr. on February 2, 1993, your Board of Directors have been working overtime to pick up the pieces and consolidate everything to make this association strong and viable, one which Philip would be proud. This past September 18, 1993, the Board of Directors held it's first official meeting at the Quincy Historical Society, in Quincy, Massachusetts. The meeting was well attended, many items were discussed, voted on and passed. The two main topics on the agenda were the bylaws as presented with comments submitted by board members and to discuss the nomination of Patricia Thayer Muno to the position of Historian/ Genealogist. Patricia is a Family Historian in her home town of Beaverton, Oregon and is well qualified to take on an assignment of this nature.

Those present at the meeting were: William Russell Thayer, President, Brooklyn, NY; Thayer Eldridge, Acting Secretary, Plympton, MA; Raymond A (Rick) Thayer, Treasurer, North Quincy, MA; Paul W. Hutchins, Director, Concord, MI; Howard S. Thayer, Director, North Scituate, MA; Edwin R. Johnson, Director, Walpole, MA; and H. Hobart Holly, Advisor and Consultant to TF A. Braintree, MA. Other board members are: James B. Thayer, Vice President, Beaverton, OR; Garland J. Thayer, Director, Missoula, MT; Robert A Knighton, Director, Randolph, MA; and Katherine S. Naughton, Director, New York, NY. Katherine notified us prior to the meeting she was resigning as a director, but not as a member. She has accepted a position in a new venture which requires her to



Philip S. Thayer, Sr.

physically move to Poland. She further stated she would become more active in TF A when she returns in a year or so. We all wish her good luck.

Of further consequence of the meeting, Raymond A. Thayer was nominated to be the Secretary in addition to his duties as Treasurer. With some hesitation, he accepted and thus relieves Thayer Eldridge as Acting Secretary, but will remain as a Director. The next item voted on was changing the name of the group from Thayer Family Association to Thayer Families Association, suggested by Mr. Holly, so as to encompass the three male and the two female immigrants to America from Thornbury, England circa 1640. Also considered and passed was changing the fiscal year period of July 1 through June 30 to January 1 through December 31 each year. Next subject was the implementation of a regional framework to make family reunions and gaining new members easier for everyone. This was not decided but will be discussed and voted on in the future. One important bit of business reviewed and passed was the question

of just who is eligible to join TF A as a full member. One must show proof of descent from one of the five immigrants. The spouse, children and adopted children of such persons applying for membership are also eligible under the same terms. All others shall be associate members.

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We welcome comments and suggestions from the entire membership and we heartily invite any of you to send in articles for future newsletters and genealogical material which will help us in research for the eventual publication of a Thayer families genealogy, one of our main reasons for existing.

NEWSLETTER LOGO

We have been trying to dream up an appropriate title or banner for our newsletter. Nothing proposed so far seems to fit. Maybe we could make this a contest. We welcome your thoughts.

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The Board of Directors of your Association are truly pleased to extend to all of you a most Bountiful, Merry and Happy Holiday Season!!!

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Just a short piece that might interest some of you. Many Thayers are descendent cousins of Gen. Sylvanus Thayer. He is, perhaps, one of the most famous of all Thayers, and he had many titles and honors bestowed on him during his lifetime.



General Sylvanus Thayer
1785-1872

Some of the better, or commonly known titles were "Father of West Point," "Father of Engineering in America," and "Inventor of Technological Education in America". After he graduated Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, where he also taught, the engineering department was named the Thayer School Engineering. There is much more about our cousin to be told but that can be expounded upon some other time.

EXTRACTS FROM FOUNDER'S LETTERS

English Origins

Several members indicated interest in been pursuing Thayer origins in England. Many do not know their origin in Thornbury, Gloucestershire County, England was discovered in 1905, and all Thayer entries from the Parish Records of St. Mary's Church in Thornbury were published in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register of 1906 (Vol. 60). The birth records are very disappointing, since they show only sponsors (godparents) --- no parents!! Some genealogists, notably the Thayer-Ojedas of Chilean Branch, claim to have cracked the sponsor code and assign all recorded births to certain parents. Other more recent works cast doubt on these long assignments, and perhaps another look is necessary. Probate records for the Thayers of the Thornbury area were also abstracted in Vol. 60 of the register, and are not of much help. (Similar doubts of varying degrees of intensity apply to claims of a Thayer Coat of Arms; a German origin of the Family; a trans-England migration from Essex County to Gloucestershire County, England, etc. When American genealogists sail East of the Atlantic Coast, they sometimes get lost).

Genealogical Resources

As suggested above, there are other sources for Thayer genealogical data than the published work of Bezeleel Thayer (1874) and Elisha Thayer (1835). The former is so full of errors, factual, typographical and organizational, as to make it, frankly, frustrating and, at times, utterly useless. The latter is just too old and incomplete. Here in New England we rely heavily on two unpublished works,

which are particularly useful up through the 7th and 8th generations of descent from the Progenitors (immigrants). These are the works of (1) Ruth Thayer Ravenscroft (1940's), a six-volume typescript, available at the NEHGS, Library of Congress and the Mormon Family Library in Salt Lake City, and (2) the work of Waldo Chamberlain Sprague, a manuscript in eight (8) or nine (9) three-ringed binders, also deposited at the NEHGS. To minimize confusion of these organizations, send queries of the Ravenscroft and Sprague material to the Thayer Families Association, or to NEHGS. Left uncovered is the number of Thayer descendants who spread out over this country and the World, starting after the American Revolutionary War and continuing up to the present. For example, a significant proportion of TFA members live in the Western United States. At least one of our members is working on this problem, and we hope to have a more detailed report on progress before long.

Beware!

Several members with the Thayer surname have called about a recent advertising campaign from a "Norman P. Thayer", peddling what purports to be a genealogy of the Thayer family. Although we haven't seen this particular product, it sounds like other such books prepared for hundreds of families. Their genealogical material is often skimpy, poor and misleading. Their chief value appears to be in listing hundreds of your "cousins" names gleaned from telephone directories and similar compendia. Caveat Emptor! 1-Unquote.

LOOKING AHEAD

We are finally beginning to think in terms of preparing a much needed form *for* applicants wishing to be new members. We are also designing membership cards, but that will come later after more important issues have been settled. The application form will be as simple as possible, asking each applicant to provide the information to show his or her family or pedigree, going back to at least one of the five (5) Immigrants currently known. Those immigrants are; Thomas Thayer, Braintree, MA; Richard Thayer, Braintree, MA; Nathaniel Thayer,

Taunton, MA; Cecily Thayer wife of James Davis, Haverhill, and Agnes Thayer, wife of John Briggs, Taunton, MA. When each applicant has been approved for membership by the Association, he or she will be notified as soon as possible. The application fee, for the time being, will be \$10.00 which will be applied towards the annual membership dues for each member or family unit, as the case may be. The Association welcomes suggestions from the membership on any issue and at any time. Please do not hesitate to write or call us. For the time being, if you wish, call the Secretary, Raymond A. (Rick) Thayer, at 1-617-328-8236 in North Quincy, MA

PRESENT MEMBERSHIP

At last, October, 20, 1993, the Association had recorded 250 members which includes all the members of each family unit. Just nine months ago, in early February, the total was 125, almost double. We must be doing something right! We know there are many more of us out there, around the globe. The only way we can reach them is to conduct a continuing drive for members either by phone, mail or personal contact. To do this on a worldwide scale is a monumental task, which leads us to look at a regional system, which has already been suggested.

As an example, one of our members sent a list of about thirty names of what he called "Cousins". Twenty two letters were sent out, two of which were sent to Bangkok, Thailand. Another example, as mentioned earlier is, the possible existence of a Chilean Connection. Two probable brothers, Thomas Thayer Ojeda and Louis Thayer Ojeda, wrote a book on the Thayers, but is not considered helpful for much detailed research. It is very possible many of you have had that work come across your path in your research. Good luck to all of you!

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