

Remembering the Angel Gabriel

by Beryl Clemens Smith

Three hundred seventy years will mark
that day from Bristol Bay,
the Angel Gabriel's sails unfurled
on an English summer day.

She settled low in the water,
her holds were all packed tight.
Her robust crew swarmed her decks,
they would sail both day and night.

Her decks held thirty brave pilgrims
leaving home and kindred that day.
Her anchor lifted from the mud,
and she easily slipped the quay.

Her lanyards creaked, her stout masts cracked,
as the winds billowed her sails;
she plunged through the swells with eager step,
leaving England, Ireland and Wales.

Braving Atlantic's tempestuous swells,
that ocean broad they crossed;
and Angel Gabriel's sturdy bark surged on,
though she was easily tossed.

The New World held such promise
and dangers still unknown;
but naught would quench their stalwart faith,
though their dreams seemed tossed and blown.

They were bound for rugged Pemaquid,
they had heard that New-World call.
Leaving their homes, lands and friends,
they were stout, proud pilgrims all.

The colonists were called 'planters,'
and filled with hope were they.
They knew their Lord would care for them
and protect them all the way.

At last they were greeted by shorebirds;
and they knew landfall was sure.

The faith that brought them safe thus far

would through more trials endure.

An angry storm swept in from the sea,
next day on that new land;
and fear blew in to test the souls
of this hardy pilgrim band.

Though the storm tore the Gabriel asunder
and scattered her upon the sea,
the Angel of the Lord that morn
would not those pilgrims flee.

They braved the angry waves ten weeks,
those hearty saints of yore;
no storm could dash their hopes and dreams
on this much more friendly shore.

So we hail those brave, stout pilgrims
and Ralph Blaisdell's family,
as we worship the God who brought them
sailing o'er the sea.

Remember brave Ralph Blaisdell,

his wife Elizabeth and Henry too;
for 'twas their vision of real freedom
they passed on to me and you.

May God's grace continue to bless us,
may each of us seek His will;
and the vision of our forebears
will bring God's blessings still.

Rev. Beryl Clemens Smith, Auburn, California, is a descendant of Ralph Blaisdell through his father, Beryl Blaisdell Smith, Carlotta Joanna (Blaisdell) Smith, Charles Sumner Blaisdell, Mark Permit Blaisdell and Nicholas Blaisdell (6.179). Beryl wrote the poem in preparation for the worship service at the 15th Quinquennial of the Blaisdell Family National Association reunion July 7-10, 2005, Sheraton Hotel, South Portland, Maine.