

**ARE WE  
WHERE  
YET ?**



**BY BILL RENFRO**

# **THIS BOOK**

***THIS** BOOK IS ABOUT A REAL STORY OF MY FAMILY ANCESTORS WHO CAME FROM SCOTLAND, TRAVELED ACROSS ENGLAND AND SET SAIL FROM LONDON IN THE 1600'S ON WHAT THEY BELIEVED WOULD BE A BETTER LIFE IN THE AMERICAS. THIS BOOK IS NOT ONE OF HISTORY AS IT IS THE COST THEY PAID AND THE THINGS THEY ENDURED DURING THIS TWO MONTH JOURNEY. WHILE THE STORY IS TRUE, THE INTERACTION STORIES OF THE PEOPLE ARE FROM MY OWN IMAGINATION AS TO WHAT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED !*

***THE** FAMILY OF **JOHN AND BESSY AND THEIR SON ROBERT** ARE FICTION, THE CHARACTER OF **SYMON RENFRO** IS REAL.*

***I** WILL BEGIN THE BOOK WITH SOME OF MY FAMILY HISTORY TO ADD CREDITIBILITY WHERE IT MAY BE NEEDED.*

# **ARE WE THERE YET ?**

*MY NAME IS JOHN WILSON, MY WIFE IS BESSY, AND WE HAVE ONE SON NAMED ROBERT . WE WERE ALL BORN IN THE TOWN OF RENFREW IN THE COUNTY OF RENFREWSHIRE, IN THE COUNTRY OF SCOTLAND, IN THE EARLY 1600'S. WE HAVE A FRIEND NAMED SYMON RENFREW. WE HAVE BEEN TALKING LATELY ABOUT MOVING FROM SCOTLAND TO THE NEW COUNTRY OF THE AMERICAS. MOST OF THE TALK HAS COME FROM SYMON, WHO WAS BORN IN 1613 , IS YOUNGER THAN MY WIFE AND I, WHO ARE IN OUR MID 20'S AND OUR SON IS ALMOST 7 YEARS OLD, AND WOULD NOT ENJOY ALL OF THE HARDSHIPS THAT WE MAY BE GETTING OURSELVES INTO. BUT SYMON HAS BEEN MOST CONVINCING, AND MY WIFE AND I HAVE TALKED ABOUT IT A LOT., AND I MUST SAY THAT THE THOUGHT OF A NEW LIFE, WITH FREE LAND AND THE CHANCE TO LIVE WITHOUT THE CONSTANT TAXING AND HARD*



**A COMMON TYPE OF HOME IN THIS TIME.**

*CONTROL BY THE ENGLISH SOLDIERS AND THE FIGHTING AMONG CLANS, HAVE CONVINCED US TO TAKE THE TRIP WITH **SYMON**. NOW THE QUESTIONS OF HOW TO DO IT AND RAISE THE MONEY.... HERE IS **SYMON** NOW , “WELCOME **SYMON**,“ WHAT HAVE YOU FIGURED OUT TO DO FIRST. ?*

*“I HAVE FOUND THAT A SHIP WILL BE LEAVING LONDON SOON HEADED FOR THE COLONY OF **JAMESTOWN, VIRGINIA**. THE SHIP IS A CARGO SHIP TAKING THINGS FOR THE COLONISTS, BUT WOULD HAVE SOME SPACE LEFT FOR A FEW SOULS.”*

*“ THE JOURNEY WILL TAKE ABOUT TWO MONTHS, IF WE HAVE GOOD WEATHER AND NO HIGH WINDS. WE SHOULD ARRIVE THERE IN MID 1638. STEARAGE FOR THIS PASSAGE WILL BE 150 POUNDS ENGLISH “.*

*“ BUT THE FIRST THING TO SOLVE IS HOW DO WE GET TO THE PORT IN LONDON. HERE IS A MAP THAT*



*SHOWS THE JOURNEY , WHICH IS ABOUT 421 MILES AND WILL TAKE AT LEAST 28 DAYS. I HAVE FOUND A MAN WHO IS*

*WILLING TO SELL HIS OLD HORSE AND 4  
WHEEL WAGON AT A REASONABLE PRICE .  
WE WILL HAVE TO CARRY OUR OWN  
SUPPLIES , FOOD, CLOTHING, AND WHAT  
EVER WE MAY NEED. WE WILL BE ABLE  
TO LIVE OFF THE COUNTRY IN SOME  
AREAS , BUT I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD  
COUNT ON IT “*

*“ WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS  
JOURNEY NOW JOHN ??*

*“WELL BESS AND I HAVE TALKED ABOUT IT  
A LOT AND HAVE DECIDED THAT WE ARE  
WILLING TO TAKE A CHANCE IN ORDER  
FOR US AND OUR SON ROBERT TO HAVE  
THE CHANCE AT A BETTER LIFE”*

*“ GREAT !, NOW LET'S GET STARTED AT  
PUTTING THINGS TOGETHER FOR THE  
JOURNEY “.*

*“ONCE WE REACH THE PORT IN LONDON, THIS MAP WILL SHOW WHAT OUR OCEAN VOYAGE WILL BE . WE WILL BE FOLLOWING THE SAME ROUTE AS THE MAYFLOWER TOOK”.*



***THE** NEXT MORNING, **SYMON** ARRIVED AT OUR HOUSE WITH THE WAGON AND HORSE THAT WERE TO TAKE US TO **LONDON** AND WE WILL SELL THEM TO HELP PAY FOR OUR STEARAGE TO THE NEW COUNTRY . THE WAGON AND HORSE BOTH HAD SEEN BETTER DAYS, BUT WOULD BE ADEQUATE FOR OUR TRIP, BECAUSE THE PACE WILL BE SLOW, BUT IT BESTS WALKING, WHICH WOULD BE THE ALTERNATE . ALSO WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO CARRY THE FEW THINGS THAT WE WOULD NEED.*

***THE** MEN WOULD WALK ALONGSIDE THE HORSE AND WAGON AND WOULD TAKE TURNS OF RIDING WHEN WE NEEDED TO REST. WE WOULD BE STOPPING AT TIMES TO EAT OR RELIEVE OURSELVES IN THE NATURE FILLED COUNTRYSIDE .*

***I** SEE THAT BESS HAS PUT TOGETHER THE THINGS WE WILL NEED TO KEEP OURSELVES WARM AT NIGHT, WHERE THE MEN WILL SLEEP ON THE GROUND,*



**THERE** WILL BE ENOUGH ROOM FOR OUR THINGS AND FOR **BESS** AND **ROBERT** TO SLEEP BUT I AM SURE THAT **ROBERT** WILL CHOOSE TO SPEND SOME OF THE NIGHTS OUTSIDE WITH THE BIG BOYS . IT IS A GOOD THING THAT **SYMON** IS NOT MARRIED SO HIS THINGS DID NOT TAKE UP LOTS OF THE ROOM IN THE WAGON. SO WE ARE NOW READY TO GO FIRST THING IN THE MORNING.

**LEAVING** WILL BE A LITTLE HARD BECAUSE ALTHOUGH MY PARENTS HAD ALREADY PASSED AWAY, **BESSY'S** MOTHER WAS STILL ALIVE AND LIVING WITH RELATIVES . SHE WAS FULL OF TEARS WHICH MADE IT HARDER FOR US TO SAY GOODBYE. I COULD TELL FROM THE QUIETNESS THAT HAD COME OVER **BESS** , WHO ALWAYS LOVED TO TALK WITH ANYONE WHO WOULD LISTEN, THAT SHE WAS IN A STATE OF GRIEF THAT I COULD ONLY IMAGEN.

**WELL**, MORNING FINALLY CAME AND WE WERE OFF TO OUR JOURNEY . FIRST WE HAD TO DRIVE DOWN THE ROAD TO PICK UP **SYMON**, WHO STILL LIVED WITH HIS PARENTS BECAUSE HE WAS NOT YET MARRIED. WHEN WE ARRIVED AT HIS HOUSE, HIS PARENTS BOTH CAME OUTSIDE TO SEE US GOODBYE AND WISH US GODS SPEED . **SYMON** AND I BOTH STARTED BY EACH WALKING BESIDE THE HORSE WHILE **BESS AND ROBERT** SAT UP FRONT OF THE WAGON, ALL LOOKING BACK AS HIS PARENTS WERE STILL STANDING OUTSIDE, STILL WAVING GOODBYE .

**SOON** WE REACHED THE END OF THE CITY AND ENTERED THE ROAD TO **ENGLAND**, WITH SMILES ON OUR FACES AND NOT AN IDEA OF WHAT WAS IN STORE FOR US ALL .



***WITH** THE SLOW STEADY ROCKING OF THE WAGON AS WE SLOWLY MOVED CLOSER TOWARDS OUR DESTINATION , **ROBERT** FELL ASLEEP WHILE LAYING ON A PILE OF CLOTHING. THIS ALLOWED **BESS** TO JOIN IN THE CONVERSATION THAT WE MEN WERE ENGAGED IN , WHICH WAS MOSTLY WHAT WE WERE GOING TO DO WHEN WE GOT TO THE NEW **COLONY OF JAMESTOWN** . SINCE ALL OF US WERE BORN AND RAISED IN THE TOWN OF **RENFREW**, WE DID NOT HAVE MANY OF THE SKILLS OF AGRICULTURE . BOTH **SYMON** AND I WERE BOTH USED TO BUILDING HOUSES IN **SCOTLAND** SO WE BELIEVED THAT IT WOULD BE*

*EASY TO FIND WORK IN THE BEGINNING, BUT MAY HAVE TO ADAPT TO SOMETHING ELSE ONCE THERE, BUT WE WERE STILL YOUNG AND WILLING.*



***AFTER** ABOUT 4 HOURS OF TRAVEL WE PULLED OFF THE ROAD AND HAD A BITE TO EAT AND REST OUR ANIMAL . **BESS** HAD FOUND SOME FRESH FRUIT ALONG THE WAY, WHICH GREATLY ADDED TO OUR MEAL . OUR MEALS ALONG THE WAY BETWEEN TOWNS MOSTLY WERE THINGS THAT WE KNEW WOULD LAST UNTIL WE GOT TO THE NEXT VILLAGE. POTATOES HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO **SCOTLAND** IN **1600** AND WERE PART OF EVERYONES DIET. AS YOU SHOULD KNOW, POTATOES CAN BE MADE IN 100 DIFERENT WAYS. WE ALSO HAD MANY GOAT DISHES AND THE TOWN OF **RENFREW** WAS BESIDE A RIVER SO WE ALSO HAD MANY FISH MEALS .*

**ON** OUR FIRST DAY OF TRAVEL, WE ESTIMATED THAT WE HAD MET THE 15 MILES PER DAY THAT WERE NEEDED TO MAKE THE JOURNEY TO THE **PORT OF DEPARTURE** IN 28 DAYS. WE WERE ALL HAPPY ABOUT THIS AND BELIEVED THAT WE WOULD MAKE OUR DEADLINE UNLESS WE HAD A MISHAP OF SOME KIND. WITH ALL SPIRITS HIGH WE ALL FOUND SOMETHING TO COVER WITH WHERE WE SLEPT ON THE GROUND, SOMETHING THAT WAS COMMON IN **SCOTLAND** AT THIS TIME .

**AFTER** A COLD BREAKFAST OF SOME PREPARED POTATO SLICES AND LEFT OVER FRUIT, WE LOADED OUR THINGS IN THE WAGON AND BEGAN OUR SECOND DAY ON THE ROAD. EVERYONE WAS HAPPY AND THANKFUL OF HOW OUR FIRST DAY HAD GONE , EVEN THE OLD HORSE SEEMED HAPPY AND IN GOOD SPIRITS AFTER A NIGHTS REST .

**THE** TALK WAS LESS THIS SECOND DAY AS ALL WERE CONCENTRATING ON WHAT WAS AHEAD , AND WHAT WAS LEFT BEHIND .

**I** WAS GLAD THAT WE HAD LEFT AT THE PROPER TIME OF THE YEAR BECAUSE THE WEATHER WAS JUST RIGHT FOR TRAVEL AND SLEEPING ON THE GROUND, THE OLD HORSE ALSO SEEMED TO LIKE IT . SHE PROBABLY HAD NEVER BEEN MORE THAN 10 MILES FROM HOME IN HER ENTIRE LIFE, SO SHE WAS HAPPY AS WERE WE.

**THE** COUNTRYSIDE WE WERE GOING THROUGH WAS BEAUTIFUL AS ALL OF SCOTLAND AND IT WAS A HELP FOR OUR TRIP.



**AS** WE TRAVELED SLOWLY THIS DAY, I BEGAN TO THINK HOW LUCKY WE HAD BEEN TO SET UP THIS TRIP. AFTER MY PARENTS HAD BOTH PASSED AWAY, I HAD INHERITED THE SMALL AMOUNT OF THE THINGS THAT THEY HAD PUT TOGETHER DURING THEIR LIFETIME. MY FATHER HAD WORKED MOST OF HIS LIFE AS A COBLER, AND HAD BEEN ABLE TO PUT AWAY A FEW POUNDS, ALONG WITH A SMALL AMOUNT OF HOUSEHOLD THINGS. **BESSY** AND I HAD TAKEN WHAT WE HAD NEEDED BECAUSE I WAS AN ONLY CHILD. THE REMAINDER OF THINGS WE SOLD AND PUT THOSE POUNDS ASSIDE JUST FOR DAYS LIKE THIS . WE WERE LUCKY TO HAVE BEEN LIVING CLOSE TO **SYMON**, WHO HAD A SEMI ROYAL FAMILY BACKGROUND. BY THAT I MEAN, HIS FATHER WAS **BARON JAMES S. RENFREW** WHO WAS BORN IN THE TOWN OF **RENFREW**, IN THE **COUNTY OF RENFREWSHIRE IN 1568**. HIS FATHER WAS ALSO KNOWN AS **JAMES S. RENFREW**. WHOSE GRANDFATHER WAS **KING JAMES V. OF SCOTLAND**,

BORN IN **1513**, AND HIS MOTHER WAS ONE OF THE KINGS ROYAL CONCUBINES. AT THIS TIME THE KING AND THE QUEEN DID NOT HAVE CHILDREN. BUT THE QUEEN DID LATER BEAR HIM A CHILD, BUT IT WAS A GIRL WHO THEY NAMED **MARY**. SOON AFTER THE DAUGHTERS BIRTH, THE KING DIED OF A HEART ATTACK AND AT 2 WEEKS OLD **MARY** WAS CROWNED "**MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS**", SINCE MARYS I/2 BROTHER WAS NOT ABLE TO TAKE THE THRONE.

**SINCE JAMES STEWART** WAS A SON OF THE KING, HE WAS GIVEN THE TITLE OF **BARON**, BUT HIS NAME OF **JAMES STEWART** WAS CHANGED TO **JAMES STEWART RENFREW** AND WAS GIVEN A NICE PENSION OF ENGLISH POUNDS. SO OUR FRIEND **SYMON** DID NOT HAVE A PROBLEM WITH MONEY AS WE .DID . HE WAS VERY GENEROUS WITH HELPING **BESS** AND ME WITH NEEDS AND WITHOUT HIS HELP WE MAY NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE THIS JOURNEY.



**THE** SECOND AND THIRD DAYS WENT AS WELL AS THE FIRST, AND ON THE FOURTH DAY WE REACHED THE HOME OF A COUSIN OF MINE WHERE WE WERE WARMLY WELCOMED. WE WERE GIVEN A REAL INSIDE PLACE TO REST AND SLEEP AND TO HAVE A REAL MEAL. WE VISITED INTO LATE IN THE NIGHT BUT IT WAS WORTH IT. THEN EARLY THE NEXT MORNING WE WERE FED AND GIVEN WHAT RATIONS THEY COULD AFFORD, AND WE LEFT HAPPY.

**THE** NEXT TWO DAYS WENT WELL ALSO. WE HAD BEEN MAKING OUR 15 MILE A DAY PLAN. ON THE NEXT DAY WE REACHED A SMALL VILLAGE WHERE WE WERE ABLE TO PICK UP ANY NEEDED SUPPLIES, AND CATCH UP ON ALL THE LATEST COSSIP. THE PEOPLE THERE WERE FRIENDLY AND WERE EXCITED AND MAYBE A LITTLE JEALOUS OF OUR PLANS TO GO TO THE NEW COLONIES OF **VIRGINIA**. WE ALSO FOUND A MAN WHO WAS ABLE TO GREASE THE WHEELS ON THE WAGON, WHICH HAD BEGUN TO SQUEEK FROM CONTINUOUS USE.



***SOON** WE WERE ON OUR WAY AGAIN BUT BY THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK **ROBERT** HAD GROWN BORED WITH OUR DAILY ROUTINE AND AS MUCH AS HE ENJOYED PASSING FARMS WHERE THERE WERE HORSES, THAT HE LOVES, AND A FARM THAT HAD SOME COWS, WHICH SCARED HIM, HE HAD BEGUN TO SHOW HIS PROSTRATION BY ASKING “ “**ARE WE THERE YET ?**. I DON'T THINK THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT WE WERE ONLY ABOUT HALF WAY TO **LONDON** . **BESS** HAD TO BEGIN TO FIND WAYS TO KEEP HIS MIND OCCUPIED , SO THAT HE DID NOT INTERFERE WITH THE PROGRESS THAT WE WERE HAVING.*



*I MUST SAY, SOME OF THESE COWS DIDN'T LOOK TOO FRIENDLY TO ME EITHER. BEING A BORN AND RAISED CITY BOY, I HADN'T HAD A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH COWS EITHER.*

***THE** SECOND WEEK WENT ABOUT THE SAME WITH US AS HAD THE FIRST . I MUST SAY THAT WE WERE ALL A BIT TIRED FROM THE SAME DAILY ROUTINE THAT NEVER SEEMED TO CHANGE. **ROBERT** WAS HAVING A HARD TIME. HE HAD THOUGHT THAT THIS WOULD BE ONE BIG FUN TRIP, SORRY ! **BESS** WAS DOING HER BEST TO DO ALL THE THINGS REQUIRED OF HER AND TAKE CARE OF **ROBERT** ALSO .*

**SOON** WE HAD REACHED THE LOWLANDS AND HAD THE TOWN OF **LONDON** IN SIGHT. SINCE THE SHIP WAS TO EMBARK FROM THE PORT OF "**PLYMOUTH**", WHICH WAS ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF **LONDON**, WE WENT AROUND THE EDGE OF THE CITY.

**WE** REACHED THE PORT JUST TWO DAYS BEFORE SAIL, SO WE WOULD HAVE TIME TO SELL THE OLD HORSE AND WAGON BEFORE WE HAD TO LEAVE. WE CONTACTED THE CAPTAIN OF THE SHIP THAT WE HAD ARRIVED, AND HE HAD MADE ROOM FOR OUR FAMILY AND THAT WE COULD BEGIN TO LOAD ANY TIME TO GET READY FOR THE VOYAGE.

**ALL** OF THE WOODEN SHIPS BEING MADE AT THIS TIME WERE FOR CARRYING CARGO, NOT PASSENGERS, WE WERE LUCKY THAT HE HAD A SPACE WHERE WE WERE TO STAY. WE BOARDED THE SHIP AND FOUND THAT HE HAD MADE CORNER IN THE SECOND CARGO LAYER WITH A

*SMALL SPACE WHERE WE COULD HAVE OUR PRIVATE TIMES WITHOUT BEING SEEN.*

***WE** LOADED OUR THINGS INTO OUR SPACE AND SET OUT TO FIND A BUYER FOR THE HORSE AND WAGON.*

***IT** SEEMS THAT WHAT WE THOUGHT WAS A LUCKY BREAK, WAS THAT THERE WERE MEN WHO CAME TO THE WARF EVERY DAY JUST WAITING FOR PEOPLE LIKE US TO BRING THINGS THEY WANTED TO SELL, AND WHICH THEY COULD PICK UP AT A BARGAIN PRICE AND THEN TAKE THEM BACK INSIDE **LONDON** AND RE-SALE AT A GOOD PRICE. SO WE HAD NO PROBLEM SELLING OUR THINGS , ALTHOUGH WE COULD HAVE USED A BIT MORE. WE THEN RETURNED TO THE SHIP TO TRY AND MAKE THE SPACE THAT WE HAD BEEN GRANTED, TO MAKE IT AS CLOSE TO HOME AND LIVEABLE AS POSSIBLE FOR THE NEXT TWO MONTHS OF THE VOYAGE.*

**BESS** HAD MADE A SPACE WHERE WE COULD SLEEP BESIDE EACH OTHER WITH **ROBERT** BESIDE US, BUT TURNED IN ANOTHER DIRECTION. WE HAD COVER TO SLEEP ON AND FOR WARMTH WHEN WE NEEDED IT. SHE HAD ALSO PUT SOME OF OUR THINGS BETWEEN OURSELVES TO GIVE US WHAT PRIVACY AS SHE COULD. OUR LITTLE PRIVATE SPACE WAS WHERE WE WOULD BE ABLE TO CHANGE CLOTHES AND ALSO CONTAINED A SMALL SLOP JAR WITH COVER FOR OUR USE. SHE WOULDN'T CHOOSE DRAWING STRAWS AS TO WHO WOULD BE THROWING THE PAN CONTENTS OVER THE SIDE OF THE SHIP EACH DAY. SHE SAID WITH GREAT AUTHORITY THAT THIS WAS A MANS JOB.. SO I LOST AGAIN !



***SYMON*** AND I HAD MET ON THE DECK LEVEL AND HE HAD TOLD ME THAT HE HAD BEEN GIVEN AN AREA SIMILAR TO OURS BUT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SHIP AND DOWN ONE LEVEL, HE HAD ALSO BEEN TOLD BY THE SHIP CAPTEN THAT WE WERE NOT TO GET IN THE WAY OF ANY DUTIES OF THE SHIPS CREW AND THAT THEY WERE TO BE FRIENDLY TO US BUT WE WERE NOT THERE TO VISIT . SO WE WOULD STAY INSIDE OUR AREAS UNTIL THE MORNING SUN WAS UP ENOUGH TO GIVE SUNLIGHT THAT WE WERE TO NEED EACH

*DAY. AT THIS TIME THE NIGHT CREW WOULD HAVE COMPLETED THEIR WATCH AND THE DAYTIME CREW WAS IN PLACE AND OUT OF OUR WAY. WE WERE IN NO WAY TO INTERFERE WITH THE DUTIES OF THE CREW. WE ALL AGREED TO THESE RULES !*

***THE** CAPTAIN AND CREW HAD BEEN BUSY LOADING THE SHIP WITH ALL OF THE FOODS NECESSARY FOR A VOYAGE OF 2 MONTHS WITH GREAT DETAIL . SINCE THIS WAS A WOODEN SHIP, THERE WERE NO FIRE SOURCES ALLOWED ON BOARD .WITH 2 MONTHS OF EATING WHAT HAD BEEN MADE BY A COMPANY AT THE PORT THAT DID NOTHING BUT PUT TOGETHER FOODS FOR THE VOYAGE. THE CAPTAN HAD CAREFULLY COUNTED AND RECOUNTED THE NUMBER OF SOULS ON BOARD THE VESSEL, GIVEN AN ALLOWANCE FOR EACH, WITH A RATION FOR EACH AND A PERCENTAGE OF EXTRA FOODS TO LAST US THROUGH ANY UNFORSEEN PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT OCCUR.*



**THE** STANDARD FOODS THAT WERE TO MAKE UP OUR DIET FOR THE COMING MONTHS WERE, SALTED BEEF, SALTED PORK , SALTED FISH , CHEESE , PEAS , BUTTER , SALT , SHIP BISCUITS , SPICES , AND DRYED MEATS . SINCE IT HAD BEEN DETERMINED BY THE ROYAL NAVY THAT WATER WOULD BECOME CONTAMINATED WITHIN TWO WEEKS, AND COULD CAUSE THE ENTIRE CREW TO BECOME SICK ,THERE WAS NO WATER ABOARD. THIS WAS WHY EACH SHIP CARRIED RUM, BEER AND OTHER ALCOHOLIC DRINKS INSTEAD. THE SHIP ALSO CARRIED LEMON JUICE TO PREVENT SCURVEY. THE CAPTAIN WOULD ALSO BUY ANY DRYED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE .

**THESE** ITEMS WERE PUT IN LARGE WOODEN BARRELS WITH TIGHT LIDS.ONCE THE CARGO AND FOODWAS LOADED WE SET SAIL.





## **OUR SHIP - THE FREEDOM**

***WE** WERE FINALLY ON OUR WAY TO THE ADVENTURES OF A LIFETIME !!*

***THE** SHIP WAS CARRYING FARM EQUIPMENT, SEEDS FOR PLANTING VEGETABLES AND KITCHEN GOODS NEEDED BY THE COLONISTS TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE FOR THEMSELVES. ON THE RETURN JOURNEY THEY WOULD BRING BACK CORN, WHICH THE INDIANS HAD TAUGHT THEM TO GROW, AND TOBACCO.*

**AS** OUR SHIP LEFT THE DOCK, ALL OF US AND THE CREW WERE TOPSIDE TO VIEW THE DEPARTURE WHEN I SAW **SYMON** AND WAVED AT HIM TO COME OVER AND TALK TO US. **ROBERT** WAS REALLY EXCITED TO SEE HIM BECAUSE THEY HAD BECOME GOOD FRIENDS ON OUR JOURNEY FROM **SCOTLAND TO LONDON.**

“ HI **SYMON**, ITS GREAT TO SEE YOU, WE HAVE BEEN REALLY BUSY GETTING OUR THINGS LINED UP FOR THE JOURNEY”

“ HELLO **JOHN**, I HAVENT BEEN ABLE TO TALK TO YOU LATELY BECAUSE THE CAPTAIN HAD ME MOVED FROM A PLACE LIKE YOURS, TO A BUNK IN THE CREW QUARTERS BECAUSE SINCE I WAS ALONE, HE MADE A DEAL THAT IF I WOULD HELP BY KEEPING CHECK ON THINGS , IT WOULD FREE UP THE

*SAILORS TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE  
IN THEIR DAILY DUTIES “. I DON'T  
KNOW IF HE HAS ALREADY SPOKEN  
TO **BESS** ABOUT HELPING THE COOK  
IN PUTTING TOGETHER A MORE HOME  
TYPE MEAL, THAT WE COULD ALL ENJOY.”*

*“ NO, HE HASN'T SPOKEN TO HER BUT  
I KNOW THAT SHE WOULD BE GLAD TO  
HELP OUT, AND SHE IS A GOOD COOK “.*

*“ THAT WOULD LEAVE **ROBERT** ALONE  
MORE, BUT HE HAS MADE FRIENDS  
WITH MOST OF THE CREW AND I AM SURE  
THEY WILL KEEP A WATCH ON HIM. HE  
HAS ALSO MADE A NEW FRIEND WITH THE  
CAT THAT THE CAPTAIN BROUGHT ABOARD  
TO MAKE SURE THAT IF THERE WERE  
ANY RATS THAT HAD SNUCK ABOARD AT  
NIGHT FOR THE GRAIN THAT WE ARE*

*CARRYING, THAT HE WOULD TAKE CARE OF THEM QUICKLY. **ROBERT** ENJOYS PLAYING WITH THE CAT, WHICH HE HAS NAMED “SWIFTY”.*



*“ THAT JUST LEAVES ME, SO I HAVE TO KEEP WATCH ON ALL OF THE CARGO, TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL ARE SECURE AND NOT ABLE TO MOVE WITH THE SWAYING OF THE SHIP, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE WATERS GET ROUGH OR WE ENCOUNTER HIGH WINDS. YOU KNOW THAT ALL OF THE METAL FARMING THINGS WE ARE CARRING ARE STRAPPED DOWN*

*IN THE CENTER OF THE LOWEST DECK .  
IF THEY SHOULD BECOME LOSE AND MOVE  
TO THE SIDE, IT WOULD CAUSE THE SHIP  
TO LIST TO THAT SIDE AND MAYBE EVEN  
SINK WITHOUT ANYTHING WE COULD DO”.*

*“ THAT IS A SCARY THOUGHT FOR  
THE SHIP ONLY CARRIES ENOUGH  
LIFE JACKETS FOR THE CREW. DO  
BE CAREFUL NOT TO MENTION THIS  
IN FRONT OF **BESS** AND THE BOY, OK”.*

*“I WILL BE CAREFUL NOT TO, **JOHN** “.*

***THE** THIRD DAY WE AWAKENED TO WHAT LOOKED  
LIKE COULD BE A DAY LONG RAIN, THIS WAS A  
GOOD CHANCE TO ALL PUT ON OUR RAIN GEAR  
AND GET SOME TRAINING IN WORKING IN BAD  
WEATHER, BECAUSE WE KNEW THAT THERE WOULD  
BE MANY MORE DAYS LIKE THIS. **BESS** WAS SAFE*

*IN THE KITCHEN, ME IN THE HOLDS AND **ROBERT** INSIDE PLAYING WITH THE CAT. THIS ONLY LEFT*

***SYMON** WHO WAS OUTSIDE WORKING WITH THE CREW.*

***THE** DAYS OF RAIN WAS NOT TO BE THE WORST WEATHER THAT WE FACED. IT WAS THE STORMS AND HIGH WINDS THAT WE FEARED THE MOST. HIGH WINDS MADE STEERING THE BOAT AND KEEPING IT ON COURSE BAD BECAUSE IT MADE THE WAVES SEVERAL TIMES HIGHER THAN USUAL WHICH MADE THE SHIP ROCK FROM SIDE TO SIDE, AND IF THE WIND WAS A HEADWIND THE CAPTAIN HAD TO CONTINUALLY TURN THE BOAT LEFT AND RIGHT TO BE ABLE TO STAY ON COURSE. A HEADWIND ALSO WOULD SLOW OUR TRAVEL TIME GREATLY ACCORDING TO THE WIND, BUT IT MEANT THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO TRY AND MAKE UP TIME AFTER THE WIND SLOWED. THE CREW WOULD CONSTANTLY BE CHANGING SAILS TO EITHER SLOW*



*OR SPEED UP TRAVEL OF THE BOAT. NOT HAVING BEEN A SAILER, I FOUND A GREATER RESPECT FOR SAILORS. THE WURST WEATHER THAT THE SHIP*

*COULD FACE WAS A CALM SEA WITHOUT ANY WIND AT ALL. THIS MEANS THAT WE WERE DEAD IN THE WATER UNTIL THE WIND PICKED UP AGAIN AND THIS COULD BE DAYS. BUT WE WERE AT THE MERCY OF THE WIND AND SEAS.*

***THE** FOOD BECAME BETTER AFTER **BESSY** JOINED UP WITH THE COOK AND **ROBERT** HAD FOUND SOMETHING NEW. HE HAD DISCOVERED THE BOX OF APPLES THAT HAD BEEN BROUGHT ALONG TO PREVENT ANYONE FROM GETTING THE SCURVEY. BUT TO HIS DISMAY, EVERYONE WAS ONLY ALLOWED ONE A DAY, WHICH WAS PASSED OUT BY THE CAPTAIN. WE ALSO DRUG A FISHING LINE AND WE OCACCIONALLY WOULD HAVE A FISH DINNER WHICH WAS A BREAK FROM OUR DAILY FOOD.*



*FRESH FISH CAUGHT ON THE VOYAGE WERE CLEANED AND THEN SALTED FOR KEEPING. I AM SURE THAT THERE WERE SOME SAILERS WHO WERE HUNGRY ENOUGH FOR SOME FRESH FOOD THAT THEY ATE SOME OF THE FISH RAW !*

*SEVERIAL DAYS INTO THE VOYAGE WE HAD AWAKENED TO FIND A COLD WIND BLOWING AND WE THREE WERE A LITTLE COLD. WE NOTICED THAT THE CREW HAD ON THEIR HEAVY CLOTHING SO WE ASKED WHAT WAS GOING ON. WE WERE TOLD THAT THE SHIP BEING WOODEN, AND COVERED WITH COATS AND COATS OF PAINT BOTH*

*INSIDE AND OUTSIDE, WAS COLD BECAUSE WE HAD NO FIRE WITHIN THE SHIP. THE ONLY WAY TO KEEP WARM, WAS TO PUT ON LOTS OF CLOTHES AND STAY OUT OF THE WIND AS BEST WE COULD . SOON THE WIND SUBSIDED AND THINGS GOT MUCH BETTER . WE HAD ALSO LEARNED ANOTHER LESSON.*

***WE** ALSO HAD WONDERED WHY THE CREW CALLED THE COOK A COOK WHEN THERE WAS NO WAY ON THE SHIP TO COOK A MEAL, EVERYTHING WAS PREPARED BUT THE COOK HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PUTING TOGETHER EACH MEAL IN THE PROPER RATIONED AMOUNTS IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE VOYAGE WITHOUT RUNNING OUT OF FOOD. THIS WAS WHY THE CAPTAIN WANTED **BESS** TO HELP HIM OUT BY NOT ONLY INSURING THAT EACH ONE ONLY HAD THEIR SHARE AND THEN TO HELP WITH THE CLEANING.*

***I** ALSO GUESS THAT WAS THE REASON THAT THE CAPTAIN WANTED ME TO KEEP AN EYE ON THE CARGOS AND THE BARRELS OF FOOD THAT HAD TO LAST FOR THE ENTIRE JOURNEY.*

***AFTER** THE FIRST WEEK WE ALL HAD GOTTEN OUR ROUTINES DOWN AS GOOD AS POSSIBLE AND HAD BEGUN TO ENJOY THE TRIP. THE ONLY THING THAT CHANGED WAS WHAT WAS REQUIRED BY THE WIND AND CURRENTS. WE LEARNED THAT WAVES HAD A FREQUANCY ALL THEIR OWN AND THAT THE SPACE BETWEEN WAVES WERE THE SAME FOR EACH ONE, AND THAT ONLY CHANGED WITH THE WIND. WE ALSO LEARNED THAT HOW SMOOTH A BOAT RODE IN THE SEA WAS THE LENGTH OF THE SHIP . WHEN THE SHIP LENGTH MATCHED THE LENGTH OF THE WAVES THE SHIP ROAD SMOTHER THAN WHEN THE WIND CHANGED THE WAVE LENGTHS. WE HAD LEFT PORT AT THE RIGHT TIME OF YEAR TO HAVE GOOD SALING.*

**IT** WAS QUITE A STORY FOR US WHO HAD NEVER BEEN TO SEA BEFORE, TO SEE HOW MUCH THE SAILORS HAD TO RUN UP OR LET DOWN THE SAILS TO BE ABLE FOR THE SHIP TO RUN ON COURSE AND AT AS HIGH A SPEED AS POSSIBLE. WERY FEW TIMES DID WE SEE A SAILOR HAVE TO RUN UP THE HIGHEST SAIL TO WHAT WAS CALLED THE CROWS NEST TO LOOK FOR BOATS OR LAND CLOSE BY. WE KNEW BEFORE OUR VOYAGE THAT THERE WAS A SMALL CHANCE OF SEEING EITHER OF THESE . IF THERE HAD BEEN A SMALL INHABITED ISLAND ON OUR ROUTE WE COULD POSSIBLY ANCHOR CLOSE BY AND SEND A CREW IN TO TRADE FOR FRESH FOOD, BUT TO OUR KNOWLEDGE THERE WAS NONE CLOSE TO OUR ROUTE, SO WHAT FOOD WE HAD ABOARD HAD TO LAST THE ENTIRE JOURNEY.

**WE** HAD LEARNED TO EAT OUR SALTED FOODS WITHOUT GRIPING, BUT THE NO WATER GAVE US TROUBLE AT FIRST, SINCE **ROBERT** HAD TO DRINK RUM OR WINE.

**THE** VOYAGE WENT WELL ONCE WE ALL HAD GOTTEN TO KNOW EACH OTHER AND OUR DUTIES HAD BECOME ROUTINE. THE CAPTAIN KEPT A LOG BOOK AND A CALENDAR AND ON THE DAYS THAT HE DECIDED WERE A SUNDAY, WE WERE ALL GATHERED IN FRONT OF THE PLACE OF HIS ROOM AND THE STEARAGE EQUIPMENT WAS AND WE ALL HELD A CHURCH TYPE SERVICE, ASKING GOD FOR A SAFE VOYAGE AND PROTECTION FOR ALL, THEN ENDING WITH A GENERAL PRAYER . THESE TIMES WERE SPECIAL BECAUSE IT NOT ONLY PUT US CLOSER TO GOD BUT IT MADE US ALL REALIZE THAT WE WERE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER AND WERE IN A SENSE, RESPONSIBLE FOR EACH OTHERS WELL BEING.

**ALTHOUGH** WE ALL WERE KEPT BUSY, THE DAYS AND NIGHTS SEEMED TO GROW LONGER AND LONGER WITH **ROBERT** CONTINUING TO ASK **“ARE WE THERE YEY??**

**SOON** THE CAPTAIN CALLED US TOGETHER AND TOLD US THAT WE WOULD SOON BE REACHING OUR DESTINATION OF **JAMESTOWN, VIRGINIA** , AND WAS WHAT WE HAD BEEN LISTENING FOR, SO A BIG SHOUT WENT UP AMONG THE CREW. THIS MEANT THAT THERE WOULD NOW HAVE TO BE A DAILY LOOKOUT IN THE CROW'S NEST . WHEN THE CAPTAIN ASKED FOR VOLUNTEERS, THERE WERE FEW FINGERS THAT WENT UP, AND THESE NOT VERY HIGH.

**ROBERT** GOT A GREAT KICK OUT OF WATCHING THE SAILORS CLIMB UP THE TALLEST SAIL MAST TO THE VERY TOP WHERE HE WOULD HANG ON FOR DEAR LIFE. ONE OF THE SAILORS HAD ASKED HIM IF HE WOULD LIKE TO CLIMB UP WITH HIM, ONLY TO HEAR A LOUD “I DON'T THINK SO “.

SOON WE HEARD THE LOOKOUT CALL DOWN **“LAND HO”**. WHAT A WONDEFULL SOUND !

***WE** SOON ENTERED **“CAPE COD”** THEN WE WOULD HAVE TO PASS OVER THE CAPE TO GET TO THE COLONY OF **“JAMES TOWN”** AND OUR NEW HOME .*





**WE** ARRIVED AT **JAMESTOWN, VIRGINIA** ABOUT **MAY OF 1638**. I REMEMBER THE DATE BECAUSE OUR FRIEND **SYMON RENFREW** HAD JUST TURNED **25 YEARS OLD**. WE FOUND THE COLONY WAS ABOUT WHAT WE HAD BEEN TOLD TO EXPECT. HOWEVER WE HAD ALMOST THE SAME CIRCUMSTANCES AS WE HAD JUST LEFT IN **SCOTLAND**. WE QUICKLY UNLOADED OUR THINGS AND BEGAN A LOOK FOR A PLACE TO STAY WHILE WE LOOKED FOR A PLACE TO BEGIN BUILDING OUR OWN HOUSE.



**ONE** OF THE FAMILIES THERE QUICKLY ASKED US TO STAY WITH THEM , AND ASKED **SYMON** ALSO.





***ALL** OF THE FAMILIES THERE WERE KIND AND HELPFUL IN OUR SEARCH. ONCE WE HAD CHOSEN A LOCATION, ALL JOINED IN TO HELP US BUILD OUR NEW HOME. WE ALSO WOULD MAKE IT LARGE ENOUGH FOR **SYMON** TOO. THE MEN ALL WENT OUTSIDE THE COMPOUNDS OF THE COLONY AND CUT DOWN TREES, THEN SPLIT THEM INTO BOARDS FOR THE HOUSE.. THE DESIGN WAS SIMPLE AND THE LABORERS WERE PLENTY, SO IN ALMOST 2 WEEKS WE HAD A PLACE FOR OURSELVES AND **SYMON**. THIS WAS A NEW COLONY, SO THE MEN SPENT MOST OF THE DAY OUTSIDE REMOVING BRUSH AND SMALL TREES TO MAKE FIT FOR PLANTING THE SEEDS THAT WE HAD BROUGHT WITH US ON THE SHIP . SINCE BOTH **JOHN** AND **SYMON** HAD BEEN RAISED IN TOWN, IT TOOK THEM A WHILE TO GET USED TO FARM WORK, BUT BOTH WERE WILLING AND WORKED HARD. **ROBERT** STAYED INSIDE THE COMPOUND EACH DAY WITH THE WOMEN AND GIRLS, WHO SPENT THE DAY*

*DOING WOMENS WORK, LIKE SEEING THAT THE HARD WORKING MEN HAD SOMETHING TO EAT, THAT THEIR CLOTHING GOT WASHED AND MENDED WHEN NECESSARY. ALL OF THE WOMEN WERE MOST PART FRIENDLY BUT ALWAYS SEEMED AFRAID OF THE NEARBY INDIANS, WHO HAD SO FAR ONLY BEEN HELPFUL TO THE STRANGE LOOKING AND TALKING PEOPLE WHO HAD INVADED THEIR TERRITORY. THE WOMEN WERE ALWAYS AFRAID OF THE MEN WHO WERE WORKING OUTSIDE THE WALLED FENCE AROUND THE COMPOUND. MAYBE WITH GOOD REASON .*

***THE*** *DAYS WERE HARD ON EACH OF US BUT WE NEVER FORGOT WHAT WE WERE WORKING FOR. AS THE CROPS GREW AND THE MEN WERE ABLE TO BRING IN FRESH MEAT AND WILD FRUIT AND A NEW VEGETABLE THAT THE INDIANS BROUGHT US AND SHOWED US HOW TO GROW WHAT THEY CALLED CORN. WE GOT ALONG FAIRLY WELL .*

**AFTER** A WHILE MY WIFE AND I NOTED THAT **SYMON** SEEMED TO HAVE A LOT TO DO OUTSIDE THE HOUSE AT NIGHT, RATHER REGULARLY. WE BEGAN TO THINK THAT HE MIGHT HAVE FOUND ONE OF THE OTHER SETTLERS YOUNG GIRLS TO HIS LIKING AND WAS GOING THERE . WHEN CONFRONTED HE ADMITTED THAT WHAT WE HAD GUESSED WAS TRUE AND THAT THEY WANTED TO BECOME MARRIED. THIS WAS GREAT NEWS FOR US BUT WHO WOULD WED THEM . ONE OF THE MEN WHO TAUGHT AT CHURCH EACH SUNDAY WAS NOT AN ORDAINED MINISTER, BUT SAID THAT IF BOTH AGREED HE WOULD PREFORM THE SERIMONY, AND OF COURSE THEY BOTH AGREED AS DID HER PARENTS. HER NAME WAS **ANN KEITH**.

**THEY** WERE TO BE MARRIED AS SOON AS HE HAD BUILT THEM THEIR OWN HOUSE . WITH THIS IN MIND, THE WHOLE COMMUNITY JOINED IN AND IN ONE WEEK THEY HAD A PLACE TO LIVE.

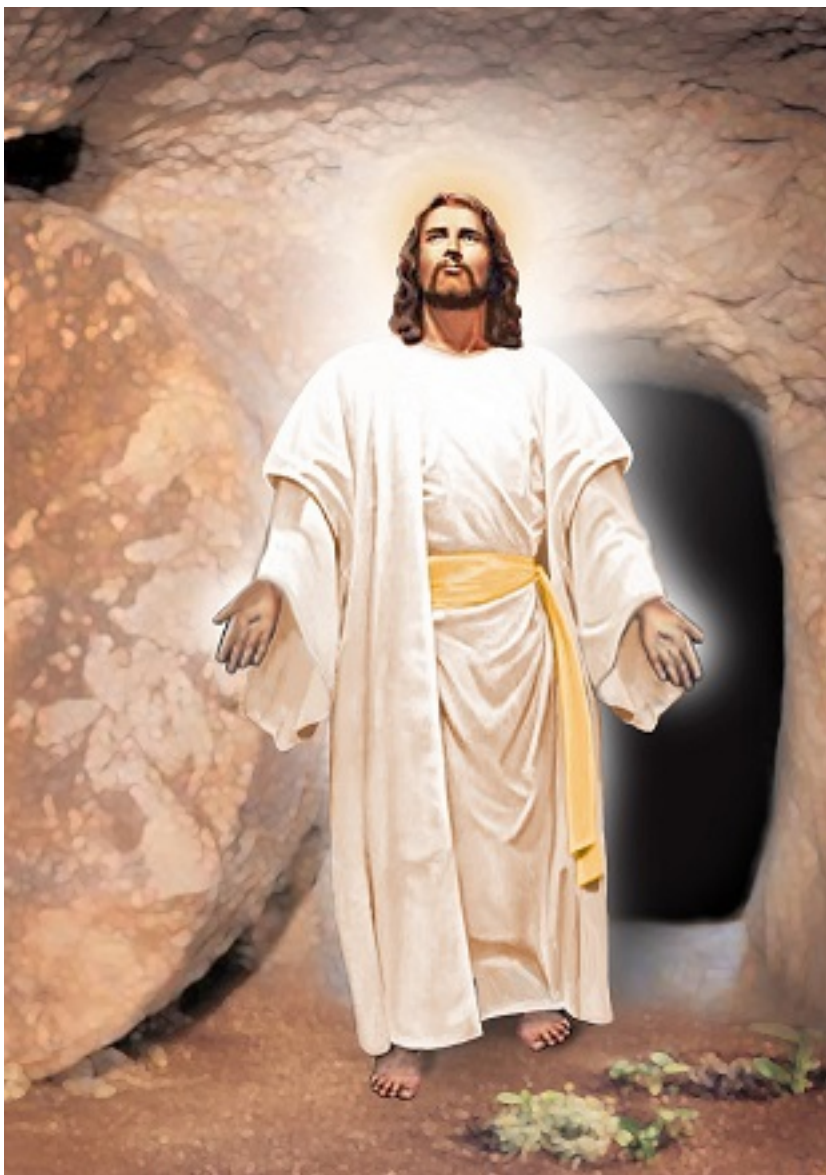
**THE** MARRIAGE WAS THE BIGGEST EVENT TO TAKE PLACE IN OUR LITTLE WORLD SINCE WE HAD BEEN THERE. SINCE **SYMON** WAS OUR BEST FRIEND, WE WERE JUST AS HAPPY AS THEY WERE.

**SYMON** AND ANN HAD TWO SONS : **ROBERT R. RENFREW 1639** AND **SIMON RENFREW - 1651** , ONE DAUGHTER : **HESTOR RENFREW - 16512 ..**

**MY** WIFE **BESSY** AND I NEVER HAD ANY MORE CHILDREN, ONLY **ROBERT**, WHO GREW TO MANHOOD MUCH TOO FAST FOR US, BUT WE REMAINED CLOSE TO **SYMON AND ANN** AND LOVED THEIR CHILDREN AS IF THEY WERE OUR OWNAS TIME WENT ON AND THE MEN GREW OLDER THEY WERE UNABLE TO KEEP UP WITH THE LONG HOURS AND HARSHNESS OF WORKING THE FIELDS, THEY HAD TO CHANGE RULES. SINCE **JOHNS** FATHER HAD BEEN A COBBLER ALL HIS LIFE, **JOHN** WAS TO USE WHAT HE HAD LEARNED WATCHING HIS FATHER, HE BECAME THE COBLER

OF OUR LITTLE AREA OF LIFE. **SYMONS** FAMILY HAD LEFT HIM WITH ENGLISH CROWNS SO HE DIDN'T REALLY NEED TO WORK THAT HARD, BUT HE DID WHAT HE COULD. **SYMON** SUDDENLY **DIED IN 1690 AT THE AGE OF 77**. HAVING ARRIVED AT **JAMESTOWN IN 1638** AND LIVED THERE UNTIL HIS DEATH IN **1690**. HIS WIFE **ANNA** HAD PASSED AWAY THE YEAR BEFORE AND WE THINK THAT HE HAD NEVER GOTTEN OVER HER LOSS. THE THREE CHILDREN WERE ALL GROWN AT THIS TIME AND HAD MOVED TO LARGER AREAS, EVEN OTHER STATES. ONE OF **SYMONS GRANDCHILDREN**, **WILLIAM RENFRO** WAS **BORN IN VIRGINIA** AND **DIED IN CULLEOKA, TENNESSEE IN 1830**, LEAVING A LONG LINE OF DESCENDANTS WHICH ENDED UP IN **NAVARRO COUNTY, TEXAS** AND ARE STILL CARRYING ON THE NAME OF **RENFRO**. AND WHO ARE PART OF MY OWN FAMILY TREE, WHERE THE BLOOD OF SYMON STILL FLOWS THROUGH THEIR VEINS.





**HE IS ALIVE !!**



**IN LOVING MEMORY**

**WILMA L. ( BABE ) RENFRO**

*1932 - 2018*



***DEC. 2022***