

points of view

Family ties

Historical footnotes recounted

LAST WEEK, as little children across our land cut out or drew figures of turkeys to adorn their blackboards, teachers no doubt told them of how the first Thanksgiving came about and that the Pilgrims' bountiful corn harvest after their first dreadful winter in Massachusetts brought such rejoicing that a three-day feast was decreed.

Chances are there even was mention of John Alden and Priscilla Mullens and perhaps a reading of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem "The Courtship of Miles Standish." It is a delightful tale with a "they lived happily ever after" message for the children of our classrooms.

But I doubt whether any teacher told the little darlings the ultimate family sequel, leaving well enough alone with the story that Priscilla had two suitors in Capt. Standish and Alden, marrying the latter after her famous line, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?"

It was a couple of years after the Mayflower had arrived with these hardy souls aboard that John and Priscilla were wed. Their marriage was blessed with 11 children, among them a daughter named Mary. As you will see, Mary became a central figure in the aforementioned sequel to the Alden romance.

HISTORY books don't mention that Priscilla had had a third suitor, but my own family's genealogy does. It traces our lineage back to 1096 when France's first Lord of Lannoy was cited. But it doesn't get interesting until 1620.

At that time, 18-year-old Philippe de Lannoy, French by ancestry, Dutch by birth and English by association, sought passage on the Mayflower to be near his adored Priscilla Mullens. For whatever reason, he missed the boat.

However, a year later he was one of the 35 passengers on the second



through
bifocals
Fred
DeLano

ship to sail for America, the Fortune, which arrived in Plymouth harbor in November 1661. He had been led by young love, but lost on that score too and later married one Hester Dewbury of Duxbury, Mass., a town about 10 miles north of Plymouth.

Philippe was the first French Huguenot to land in America and, although succeeding generations altered the name, he was the first DeLano to settle on this continent. He and Hester had at least eight children, among them a son, Thomas.

In what our genealogy calls "an appropriate footnote to the sad story of Philippe's unrequited love for Priscilla," there was an eventual union of the DeLano, Mullens and Alden lines in 1667 "when Philippe's son Thomas married Priscilla's daughter Mary in one of this country's first shotgun marriages."

THEN comes a paragraph which may explain that my interest in affairs of the law and the courts, of which I write reasonably often, stems from an incident in family history which took place 320 years ago:

"Plymouth Colony court records interestingly reveal that Thomas DeLano was fined 10 pounds on Oct. 30, 1667, 'for having carnal copulation with his now wife before marriage.' The evidence, of course, was the birth of his son on his wedding day."

Meanwhile, Tom's father, Philippe, had gone off chasing Indians years before and for his gallantry was awarded 40 acres of land, which

led Philippe and Hester to become neighbors of John and Priscilla. Perhaps that's where we got the adage, "All's well that ends well."

Just because of the coincidence in dates, when Mother Goose and I observe our own 34th wedding anniversary next Oct. 30 maybe we should drink a toast to Tom and Mary in absentia. I'll bet we would have liked those folks.

A significant addition to the family tree came in 1854 with the birth of Sara DeLano, who at age 28, would marry the 54-year-old James Roosevelt. They named their only son Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and he became 32nd president of the United States of America.

This was the same America an ancestor on his mother's side had helped settle three centuries earlier, brought to these shores by the unsuccessful love of a lady named Priscilla. Of such stuff is history made.

RICK COLE hasn't retired in that job as Gov. Jim Blanchard's higher education adviser. Cole is still alive, though he's due to join the Michigan State University faculty next September, so I decided to pick his brain on a favorite parlor question of mine.

The background: One of those education task forces recommended the teaching of foreign languages — at the elementary, junior high, high school and college levels. Great idea in a global economy, eh?

The toughie: Which language? "CONSIDERING demographics, I'd say Spanish," answered the former gubernatorial press secretary, a politically astute fellow.

Makes sense. In the Southwest, Hispanics are 25 to 60 percent of the population, and in another generation they'll be 30 percent nationwide. "In terms of economic develop-

Raising cash: It doesn't always have to be taxing

THIS IS A very taxing society and many people would like to make it more so.

Public schools, for instance, are in a quandary since some spend more per student than others. The solution, most say, is not to bring down the wealthy districts but to bring up the poorer ones. That would require a new revenue source: an increase in the sales tax is most suggested.

Traffic-married roads are a nightmare. The solution? Spend more money. In Oakland County they talk about needing an additional \$74 million a year. Suggested sources: taxes on development and more taxes on gasoline.

Wayne County (surprise!) is also short of funds. The suggestion there is to tax cigarettes.

On the federal level, the man who would never raise taxes is going to have to raise taxes in order that the budget that he was going to balance won't continue to show record deficits.

Are all these taxes really necessary? Perhaps it is time to look at these creative alternatives:

• Pop and beer cans. There are kids who have raised enough money



Rich
Perlberg

to go to Harvard by picking up returnable cans that our affluent society casts by the wayside. Why not take some of those former legislators who land cushy jobs after losing elections and require them to pick up the pop and beer cans after college football games? The cumulative deposits would be given to the state coffers.

• The Silverdome subsidy. Instead of an \$800,000 grant, let's make this gift from the state a little more sporting. The Silverdome should get \$50,000 for each Lion victory. So far this year that would equal \$100,000. The Lions would then be required to make up the difference in rent payments. If the Lions don't like it, the team could always build its own stadium and pay its own way.

• Tax abatements. Although it may seem perfectly logical to give tax breaks while wringing your hands about a lack of funds, maybe it is time to look askance at this practice. Let's not just eliminate them in the future, let's disallow those already granted. Businesses used to paying only half their fair share would holler, but they've already been given a semi-free ride. Now they would have to pay their full share of property taxes — just like you and me.

• Reverse poll tax. You no longer have to pay to vote, but even though it's a free privilege, many people don't participate. City elections in Troy, Farmington and Livonia have drawn from 5 to 30 percent of registered voters. You can't make people vote. But maybe you can charge a reverse poll tax if they don't. It may seem harsh, but it seems fair enough when you consider that people in places like Haiti face murder for the right to vote.

All these proposals are presented modestly, of course, but they shouldn't be lightly discarded. Otherwise, we may be in for a taxing winter.

Teach a foreign tongue, but which one?



Tim
Richard

ment." Cole went on, "the Pacific rim is important — Japanese and Korean."

The professor-to-be wasn't done.

"If you're in the machine tool industry, the northern Italians are really dominating machine tools. The Germans, too."

"And if you're a student of Freudian psychiatry, much of that is in German."

TWO OAKLAND Community College leaders opted for the Pacific rim languages.

Jim Davis, president of the Southeast Campus System (Royal Oak and Southfield), came here from the state of Washington. He can tell you a lot of stories about the need to know Japanese.

Chancellor R. Stephen Nicholson not only came here from Mount Hood, Oregon, but at one time worked in a mission in Japan and speaks the language.

"If you want to buy," said Nicholson, "you only need to know English. But if you want to sell goods abroad, you'd better know their language."

Nicholson and Cole both made another point: When dealing with Asians, you need to know not only the language but the culture. "The culture of an Asian country plays a bigger role than in Europe," Cole said.

We agreed that if one were in New England it would help to know French because a world-class commercial city called Montreal is a few miles north.

OK, FELLOWS, it's great to know Japanese if you're on the Pacific rim and Spanish in other areas. Which language is most important here in the Midwest?

That slows down everyone. No one language is labelled "preferred." Japanese seems to be the "in" lan-

guage today. Ten years ago, one might have said Arabic; 15 years ago, German, because that was the economic hot spot. In the '60s, certainly Russian; before that, French, the diplomatic and cultural language.

Many Founding Fathers — those chaps who wrote the Constitution — had a working knowledge of French and had studied Latin and Greek in the academies. In the '60s, a handful of teachers wrote to congressmen asking federal aid for the teaching of those classical languages. They lost out.

No one mentioned Latin and Greek in my latest survey.

IT'S ONE thing for a high-powered gubernatorial study commission to recommend languages, languages, languages on every page and preach about the global economy.

But a modern Midwestern student would be justified in arching an eyebrow and asking "Which language — this year?"

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