

A July message from the historian:



July is nearly over now, but its reminders can be savored all year long. In July our thoughts return in *gratitude* for the pioneers in our lives, those who blazed the trail for us in some ways that bless our lives today. We are inspired as we remember their *courage* which in turn can give us *courage* when we encounter hard things. July reminds us of those bold pioneers for freedom who, in a world based upon monarchical privilege, had the vision and took the risks to establish a nation upon principles of liberty and responsible self-governance. They turn our thoughts to *gratitude* and *courage*.

So, who are the pioneers in your family to whom you look with gratitude and inspiration? Who were the pioneers that brought your family to America, and to the state and city where you now live? Who first crossed the ocean to get here? Who were the first persons in your family to graduate from high school, or to attend college? Who were the persons who made a positive economic difference in your family's circumstances? Who had struggles they overcame or health challenges that they met with calm heroism that have blessed your family to operate with greater *compassion*? Or who changed the family culture for the better when needed? Who helps you pioneer through your challenges?

Who taught your family how to garden? Who was the first in your family to learn to use the computer? Or to play a sport your family now loves or to pioneer the love of music or other talents that are part of your family culture? Who started your family business? Maybe it is you, or maybe it is someone who lived long ago.

Do you know these stories well enough to pass them to the next generations? Or have you written your own history so a future person can cling to it as inspiration to press on in time of

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need? Is your family actively looking to learn more of these stories and are you sharing them with each other? How about a family project to gather and record them in order to preserve these priceless memories? Like flags, these can last longer than July.

*Gratitude, courage* and *compassion* are bedrock virtues for a happy life that we can remember and savor longer than the watermelon, corn on the cob and the apple or raspberry pies of July.