

Church News April 29, 1985

Pres. Hinckley speaks to 7,500 at New England regional meeting

BOSTON, MASS.

In the first visit to New England of a Church president in 90 years, President Gordon B. Hinckley spoke to 7,500 members at the Boston Massachusetts Regional Conference April 23. President Hinckley, who was accompa-

nied by Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve and his wife, Colleen, is the first president of the Church to visit this area since President Joseph F. Smith dedicated the Joseph Smith Monument in Vermont in 1905.

On April 23, President Hinckley spoke at the regional conference in the Centrum

Civic Auditorium in Worcester, Mass., and to missionaries of the Massachusetts Boston Mission. A day earlier, on April 22, he spoke to nearly 600 priesthood leaders at the Boston Stake Center and was interviewed by a television reporter.

During the trip, President Hinckley squeezed in a visit to sites associated with his pilgrim forebears, and paid respect to them, including one who came to America on the *Mayflower* and another who was governor of Plymouth Colony three centuries ago.

Because Sister Maxwell, whose maiden name is Hinckley, also shares a common ancestry with President Hinckley, he wanted to show her areas where their forebears lived.

They traveled to Plymouth, where their ancestor Stephen Hopkins arrived in America on the *Mayflower*. They saw a replica of that ship that is now moored in the harbor, and briefly visited the celebrated Plymouth Rock.

President Hinckley also took the group to the site of the homestead and grave of Thomas Hinckley, a forebear who was governor of Plymouth Colony from 1681-1692, in Barnstable, Mass., a community on Cape Cod Bay.

President Hinckley shared tender feelings about his ancestor, who has been described as a man of great piety and Christian feeling. The prophet expressed gratitude for his contributions.

Sister Maxwell commented, "And wouldn't he be honored to know what one



Photos by Lowell R. Hardy
President Gordon B. Hinckley stands beneath sign honoring his ancestor, Thomas Hinckley.

of his progenitors has accomplished?"
At the regional conference, he was introduced by Robert S. Wood, regional representative, as "the first sitting president of the Church to visit New England since President Joseph F. Smith."
President Hinckley responded that he was not a "sitting" president, but a "running" one.

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Pres. Gordon B. Hinckley, center, shows grave of Thomas Hinckley to Elder Neal A. Maxwell, left, Dixie Wood, Robert S. Wood, Colleen Maxwell and James Calkins.