



MAYFLOWER 400 HISTORY

COMMEMORATING THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HISTORIC VOYAGE OF THE MAYFLOWER AND THE SIGNING OF THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT

The Pilgrims were a group of English people who came to America seeking religious freedom during the reign of King James I. After two attempts to leave England and move to Holland, a Separatist group was finally relocated to Amsterdam where they stayed for about one year. From there the group moved to the town of Leiden, Holland, where they remained for about ten years, able to worship as they wished under lenient Dutch law.

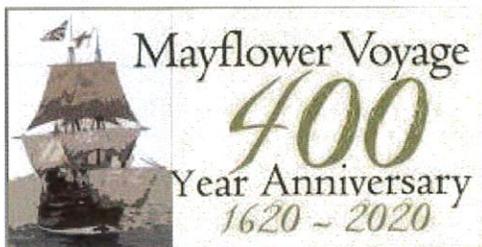
Fearing their children were losing their English heritage and religious beliefs, the resumption of war and their inability as non-citizens to find decent jobs, a small group from the Leiden church made plans to settle in Northern Virginia - as New England was known at the time. In August 1620 the group sailed for Southampton, England, where other English colonists who hoped to make a new life in America met them. The group of 102 passengers who crowded aboard *Mayflower* for the crossing was not homogenous. Many of the passengers were members of the Leiden congregation, but they were joined by a number of English families or individuals who were hoping to better their life situations, or were seeking financial gain.

They planned to make the crossing to America in two ships, the *Speedwell* and *Mayflower*. However, after taking on water the *Speedwell* was forced to return to England where the group was reorganized. In their second attempt to cross the Atlantic, they all boarded the *Mayflower* in September 1620 bound for the New World. They arrived as winter was settling in and endured significant hardships as they struggled to establish a successful colony at Plymouth.

Although the Leiden congregation had sent its strongest members with various skills for establishing the new colony, nearly half of the passengers died the first winter of the "great sickness". Only 53 passengers and half the crew survived. Women were particularly hard hit; of the 19 women who had boarded the *Mayflower*, only five survived the cold New England winter, confined to the ship.

Anyone who arrived in Plymouth on the *Mayflower* and survived the initial hardships is now considered a Pilgrim with no distinction being made on the basis of their original purposes for making the voyage.

The *Mayflower* Pilgrims were authors of the first true governing document created in a New World colony. The *Mayflower Compact* promised to create a "civil Body Politick" governed by elected officials and "just and equal laws." The *Mayflower Compact* was the first attempt at democracy and set the stage for the Constitution of the United States.



<https://www.themayflowersociety.org/>

<https://www.history.com/topics/colonial-america/mayflower>



In the name of God, Amen. The which names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James by the grace of God, of Great Brittain, France, & Ireland King, defender of the faith, &c. Having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and the honour of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly & mutually in the presence of God, and one another, covenant & combine our selves together into a civil body politick, for the better ordering & preservation & furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet & convenient for the general good of the colony: unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the 11. of November, in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James of England, France, & Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fiftie fourth, An. Dom. 1620.

THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT NOVEMBER 11, 1620

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, defender of the faith, &c. Having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and the honour of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, and one another, covenant and combine our selves together into a civil body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid: And by virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the eleventh of November, in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, Anno Dom. 1620.

1533

Beginning of the English Reformation

AUTUMN 1607

Unhappy with the English church, a group of religious Separatists plans to defy the authority of the church and escape from Boston, Lincolnshire for Holland but are caught in the attempt and held and tried at Boston Guildhall.

SPRING 1608

The Scrooby Separatists finally manage to escape from Immingham Ceek, Immingham, Linconshire

AUGUST 1608

The group arrives in Leiden, Holland where they live for 12 years

JULY 1620

After making an agreement with the Virginia Company to travel to the New World and create a new community, the Leiden Separatists set sail in the Speedwell for England to meet the Mayflower

AUGUST 1620

The Separatists who remained in England board the Mayflower in Southwark, London including Captain Christopher Jones and his crew

The Mayflower arrives in Southampton, later joined by the Speedwell

The Mayflower and Speedwell depart Southampton, planning to sail to Virginia

The Speedwell continues to take on water, so both ships turn back to Plymouth

SEP 6 1620

The Mayflower departs Plymouth alone, with up to 30 crew and 102 passengers on board after the Speedwell is deemed unfit for travel

NOV 9 1620

Pilgrims sight the tip of Cape Cod

NOV 11 1620

The Mayflower Compact is signed upon arrival in Provincetown or "Cape Harbour"

DEC 16 1620

After 66 days at sea, the Mayflower finally arrives in what is today Plymouth, Massachusetts

