

Mayflower and the birth of a nation

The voyage of the Mayflower in 1620 that brought a group of religious dissidents, later known as the Pilgrim Fathers, to the New World, played a key role in the foundation of a nation that would become the United States of America

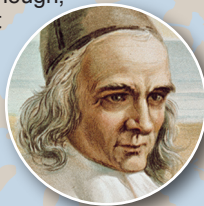
- **1534:** **King Henry VIII** of England breaks from Rome and establishes Church of England
- **1606:** **Separatists** – radical Puritans who believe Reformation did not go far enough, establish secret congregations around village of Scrooby

William Brewster, spiritual leader of Separatists

- **1608-9:** Suffering increasing religious persecution, Scrooby Separatists emigrate to Leiden, in more tolerant Holland

- **1619:** Seeking religious freedom and more prosperous life, Separatists negotiate with London's **Virginia Company** to finance pilgrimage to New World

- **Jul 31, 1620:** Leiden pilgrims sail for England in **Speedwell** to rendezvous with **Mayflower**



- **Aug:** Separatists who stayed in England board Mayflower in London. Other travellers include new colony's military leader, **Myles Standish**

- **Aug 15:** Mayflower and Speedwell depart for Virginia from Southampton

- **Aug-Sep:** Ships twice forced back to port, at Dartmouth and Plymouth, after Speedwell takes on water. She is eventually deemed unseaworthy

- **Sep 16:** Mayflower sets out alone from Plymouth with **30 crew and 102 passengers**, almost half of them Separatists

- **Nov 19:** Following stormy 66-day crossing, crew sights land at Cape Cod, north of intended destination at mouth of Hudson River – now New York

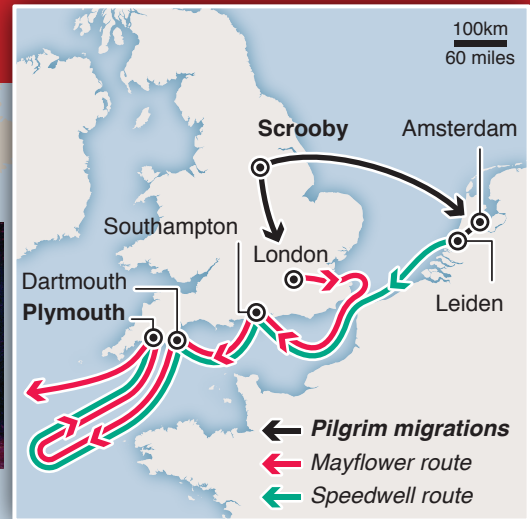
- **Nov 21:** Bad weather forces ship to drop anchor in sheltered harbour of Cape Cod hook, today Provincetown, Massachusetts

- **Nov 21:** To establish legitimate claim to land outside agreed area of settlement, Pilgrim leaders draft **Mayflower Compact** to set up laws for new colony



Signed by all 41 men on board, Compact is seen as key step in foundation of American democracy

- **Dec 21:** Pilgrims site new colony on site of deserted Native American **Wampanoag** village of Patuxet



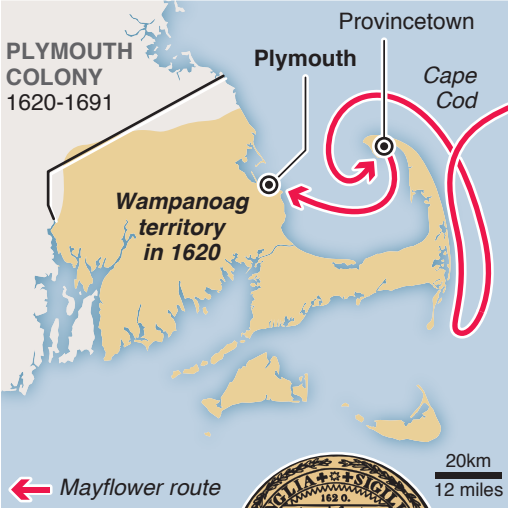
Plymouth Rock: Traditional site of disembarkation of Mayflower Pilgrims



Rock and human to scale

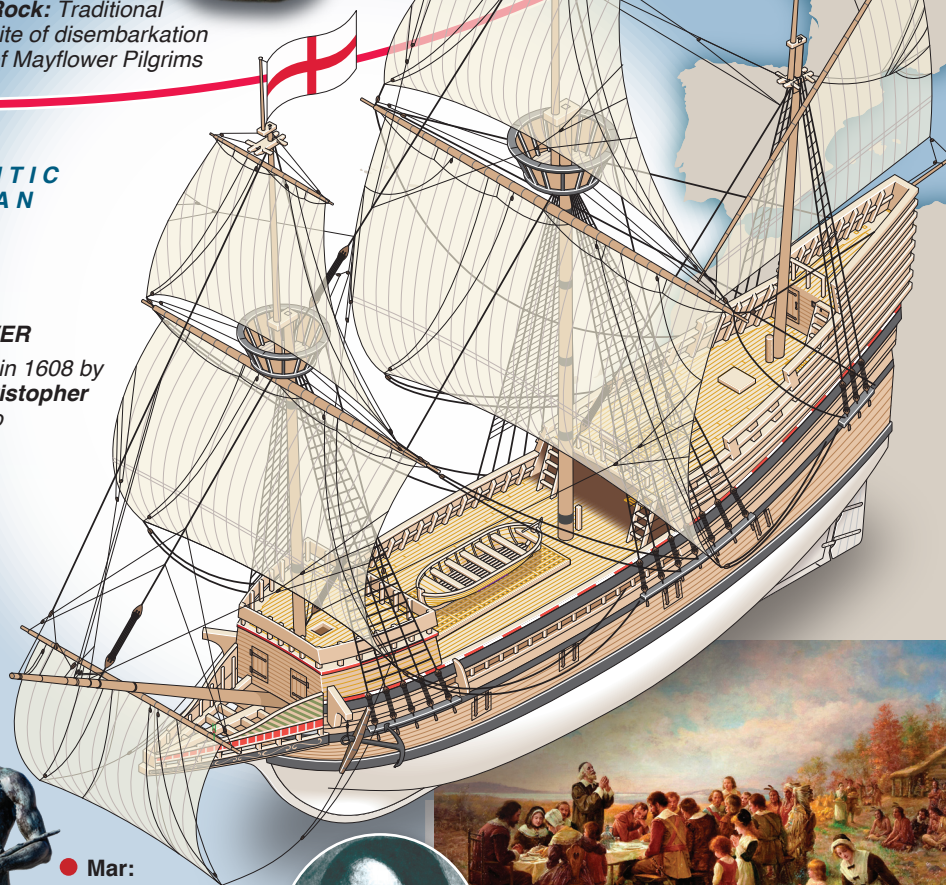
Jamestown, Virginia: First permanent English settlement, later abandoned

PLYMOUTH COLONY
1620-1691



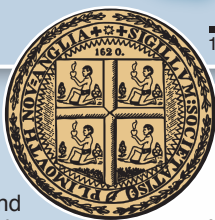
MAYFLOWER

Purchased in 1608 by Master **Christopher Jones**, who captained vessel on voyage to New World
Weight: 180 tonnes
Length: 27m



- **Jan-Feb 1621:** As settlement takes shape, more than half of colonists die from malnutrition, disease and exposure to harsh weather

- **Mar:** English-speaking Wampanoag native **Tisquantum**, or **Squanto** – who was kidnapped by earlier English colonists and sold into slavery in Spain before regaining his freedom – makes contact with colonists



Peace treaty agreed with **Massasoit**, leader of Wampanoag confederacy

Massasoit is credited with saving new colonists from starvation – and defending them from more hostile tribes



- **Mar:** **William Bradford** becomes governor of Plymouth Colony, serving intermittently for over 30 years

*Bradford's journal **Of Plimoth Plantation** is regarded as most authoritative account of Pilgrims and early years of colony*



● **Autumn:** Pilgrims celebrate first successful harvest with feast attended by Massasoit and many other Wampanoag people. Popular tradition often attributes origin of U.S. Thanksgiving holiday in November to this first feast