

WILLIAM BRADFORD

1590 – 1657

One of the famous group of settlers who came to Cape Cod on the *Mayflower*, William Bradford was a Puritan Separatist, writer, and politician who served for decades as the governor of Plymouth, one of the earliest European settlements in New England. His historical account of the journey and the first thirty years of settlement—*Of Plymouth Plantation* (1630–51)—helped shape the mythology of early American history. Bradford himself soon became mythologized as the “father of American history”; Cotton Mather described him in 1702 as an Adam figure, “the father of them all,” and also as a Moses, “the leader of a people in a wilderness.” While the Puritans’ colonialist belief in their divine right to settle America has been soundly criticized, Bradford’s journal is still widely considered foundational to the American story, and an early example of the Puritan consciousness that shaped New England history for generations.

Bradford was born in 1590 in Austerfield, Yorkshire, to a family with considerable farmland. Orphaned as a child, he was brought up by two of his uncles. He loved to read and began to study the Geneva Bible at an early age; at seventeen, he joined a Separatist Puritan congregation. Unlike most Puritans, who sought to reform the Anglican Church from within, the Separatists took their beliefs far enough to break with the established church—a move that was considered treasonous, putting them at odds not only with the powerful clergy but also with the government.

Persecution of Separatists under King James I led Bradford’s community (known as the Scrooby congregation) to move to Holland, a country that allowed them religious freedom. They went first to Amsterdam in 1607, and then to Leiden, where Bradford became a weaver. He struggled financially until he inherited his family’s estate in 1611, and two years later he married Dorothy May, an Englishwoman living in Amsterdam. Most members of the Scrooby congregation, however, continued to find it difficult to earn a living in Leiden, and they worried that their children might be assimilated into Dutch culture and lose their English Separatist identity. Bradford was among a group of community members who decided to leave Leiden and establish a new colony in what is now New York State, in part of a region the English then referred to as Virginia. These “Pilgrims” departed in 1620, having obtained a grant of land from the English government and secured financing through a profit-sharing agreement with the Merchant Adventurers, a London trading company.

Instead of Virginia, however, the *Mayflower* touched down at Cape Cod. Prevented by the weather from sailing further south, the leaders of the community decided to settle in a place they called Plymouth, known to the local Indigenous people as Patuxet. Many historians think that the settlement might have encountered more resistance from Indigenous people had not an epidemic killed ninety per cent of the Patuxet (the local Wampanoag band) between 1617 and 1619, leaving the area sparsely populated when the Pilgrims arrived. Instead, relationships with Indigenous people would prove crucial for the colony’s survival, as Indigenous supporters taught the colonists how to fish, how to cultivate the land, and other essential skills. This help was sorely needed: in the first year after arrival, more than half of the hundred settlers died of scurvy and other illnesses. Bradford survived a serious illness, but his wife drowned in November 1620 when she fell off the deck of the *Mayflower*, which was moored in Plymouth harbor.

Following the death of John Carver, the first governor of Plymouth, Bradford was elected to take up the role; he would serve as governor for thirty of the first thirty-five years of the colony’s existence. The governor, along with his elected assistants, made crucial decisions on the colony’s behalf, including political and economic decisions, but also practical everyday ones about land allocation and farming practices; the governor also presided as a judge over criminal and civil disagreements. Bradford proved to be an effective leader, making careful decisions to ensure the colony’s survival; he was also, however, capable of ruthlessness—of sentencing a community member to death for bestiality, for example. His dealings with the neighboring Indigenous peoples, while he intended them to be fair and measured,

were nonetheless affected by his racial and religious prejudices. The Plymouth community grew over the course of Bradford's lifetime from the 101 *Mayflower* passengers in 1620 to 1,360 members in 1657. By the end of his life, however, he was distressed by the number of new settlements unconnected to the Separatist church; Baptists and Quakers, for example, had begun to form their own congregations. This splintering of the original intimate church community was, for him, a source of sorrow and regret.

In 1630, Bradford began writing *Of Plymouth Plantation*, which tells the story of the settlers' journey from Holland and of the first thirty years of colonization. The narrative resolutely keeps its focus on the colony's economic prosperity and moral status, revealing little about Bradford's own personal life. He speaks of himself in the third person, barely mentioning his wife's death, and there is no mention at all of his remarriage to Alice Southworth or of the births of his three children (he and his first wife had left their first son in Holland, but he eventually followed Bradford to America). *Of Plymouth Plantation* records, in Bradford's "plain style" of writing, detailed and vivid accounts of the voyage, contact with Indigenous peoples, the work of settlement, and various iconic incidents, some of which made their way into American mythology.

Of Plymouth Plantation is composed of two books, the first detailing the Pilgrims' journey and early days of settlement, and the second providing a year-by-year account of the principal concerns of the colony. Book One is written confidently in the genre of providential histories not uncommon among Puritans at the time, in which the hand of God is at times clearly, and at other times mysteriously, guiding events. The histories recorded in the Bible are the most important precursors of this kind of writing; the story in Exodus, for example, of the people of Israel escaping captivity in Egypt, was for Bradford and other American Puritans a prefiguration of their own journey across the sea to find religious freedom. In taking up the genre, Bradford was influenced by earlier providential histories such as John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1563), a popular work that told the stories of Protestant martyrs in sixteenth-century England. Book Two of *Plymouth Plantation*, however, shifts away from a providential tone and style, coming to resemble an economic history, as Bradford finds himself detailing the complex financial and political negotiations of Plymouth with its various trade partners: Indigenous communities, nearby settlements, and the Merchant Adventurers in England. Book Two also becomes more elegiac in tone, as Bradford struggles to square the gradual dissolution of the community with his faith in Plymouth's God-given destiny.

The manuscript of *Of Plymouth Plantation* was passed down in Bradford's family for several generations. The family made it available to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century historians such as Nathaniel Morton, Cotton Mather, and Thomas Prince, and it remained a central source for information about the early years of New England history (along with Edward Winslow's 1622 publication *A Relation or Journal of the Beginning and Proceedings of the English Plantation Settled at Plymouth in New England*, to which Bradford also contributed). The manuscript made its way to a Boston library, from which it is thought to have been stolen by a British soldier during the Boston occupation of 1775–76. New England scholars had a copy of the first portion of the text but considered the rest lost until 1855, when they noticed that British scholars were citing it. Thus began a 42-year-long legal battle to return the text to America. This conflict was finally decided in favor of the United States in 1897, when the manuscript was returned and placed in the Massachusetts State House, where it remains.

Because the manuscript was outside America for so many decades, *Of Plymouth Plantation* was not printed in its entirety until 1856. Once published, it was received with enthusiasm both as a literary work and as a valuable history of early New England. Its readership increased further with the publication of an accessible scholarly edition of Bradford's history by Worthington C. Ford in 1912, and by the 1960s the book was on most course syllabi dealing with American studies. In the twentieth century, Bradford came to be more appreciated as a literary writer, with greater attention being paid to his style and influences. Scholars have also argued that Bradford's narrative has influenced writers of immigration such as Willa Cather, as well as writers of "frontier" fiction such as Catherine Maria Sedgwick and James Fenimore Cooper. As a document of colonialism, the bias inherent in Bradford's work has come into focus, and *Of Plymouth Plantation* has been compared to other colonial narratives outside of New England, such as Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's *La relación y comentarios* (1542). Indigenous responses to the text have also enriched the critical dialogue; Cherokee writer Betty Booth Donahue argues in *Bradford's Indian Book* (2011), for example, that the structure of the text is profoundly influenced by Indigenous forms of storytelling.

In 1647, Bradford stopped adding entries to *Of Plymouth Plantation*, but he continued to write, composing dialogues and poems on theological topics. While not generally considered exceptional in literary terms, these works are often read for further insight into the colonial period and into Bradford's roles—as historiographer, politician, and writer—in shaping our perceptions of early American history. Bradford died in Plymouth in 1657, where a stone monument on Burial Hill commemorates his contributions to the community. In his last poem, “Epitaphium Meum” (“My Epitaph”), he describes himself as “a man of sorrows,” waiting for his “happy change.” Despite the disappointment he felt at the dispersal of the Plymouth community, he passed down his history in the hope that the Pilgrims' story would be an example to future generations: “As one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled hath shone unto many, yea in some sort to our whole nation.” Bradford's text remains a rich resource for readers seeking to understand the complex cultural, economic, political, and religious histories of early America.

NOTE ON THE TEXT: Several editions of Bradford's *Of Plymouth Plantation* have been consulted in the preparation of the text reprinted here, including Worthington Chauncey Ford's 1912 edition and Samuel Eliot Morison's 1952 edition. Spelling and punctuation have been lightly modernized in accordance with the practices of this anthology.



from *Of Plymouth Plantation*

And first of the occasion and inducements thereunto; the which that I may truly unfold, I must begin at the very root and rise of the same. The which I shall endeavour to manifest in a plain style, with singular regard unto the simple truth in all things; at least as near as my slender judgment can attain the same.

from THE FIRST BOOK

from CHAPTER I

[THE SEPARATIST INTERPRETATION OF THE
REFORMATION IN ENGLAND, 1550–1607]

It is well known unto the godly and judicious, how since the first breaking out of the light of the gospel¹ in our honourable nation of England (which was the first of nations whom the Lord adorned therewith, after the gross darkness of popery which had covered and overspread the Christian world), what wars, and oppositions ever since, Satan hath raised, maintained, and

¹ *first breaking out . . . gospel* Dawn of Protestantism. The Church of England, a Protestant church, was founded in the 1530s, though Protestant ideology had taken hold in some quarters in England in the preceding decades.

continued against the Saints,² from time to time, in one sort or other. Sometimes by bloody death and cruel torments; other whiles imprisonments, banishments, and other hard usages; as being loath his kingdom should go down, the truth prevail and the churches of God revert to their ancient purity and recover their primitive order, liberty, and beauty. . . .

Mr. Foxe³ recordeth how that besides those worthy martyrs and confessors which were burned in Queen Mary's days⁴ and otherwise tormented, “Many (both students and others) fled out of the land to the number of 800, and became several congregations, at Wesel, Frankfurt, Basel, Emden, Markpurge, Strasburg and Geneva, etc.” Amongst whom (but especially those

² *Saints* Term used by some Puritan sects to describe their members; Bradford is using it here more generally to refer to Protestants. The implication is that members are themselves saints and do not need priests to act as intermediaries between them and God.

³ [Bradford's note] Acts and Mon[uments]: pag. 1587 edition 2. [This book is commonly known as *The Book of Martyrs* (first published in 1563), an account of Christian martyrs in Western history; it was written by John Foxe, an English historian and member of the clergy.]

⁴ *burned in Queen Mary's days* Mary I (1516–58) was a Roman Catholic, and in her attempt to reverse the Reformation set in motion by her father, Henry VIII, she burned almost 300 Protestant dissenters at the stake. Upon Queen Mary's death, her half-sister Elizabeth became Queen, and England became Protestant again.

at Frankfurt) began that bitter war of contention and persecution about the ceremonies and service book,¹ and other popish and antichristian stuff, the plague of England to this day, which are like the high places in Israel which the prophets cried out against, and were their ruin.² ...

And this contention died not with Queen Mary, nor was left beyond the seas. But at her death these people³ returning into England under gracious Queen Elizabeth, many of them being preferred to bishoprics and other promotions according to their aims and desires, that inveterate hatred against the holy discipline of Christ in His church⁴ hath continued to this day. Insomuch that for fear it should prevail, all plots and devices have been used to keep it out, incensing the Queen and State against it as dangerous for the commonwealth; and that it was most needful that the fundamental points of religion should be preached in those ignorant and superstitious times. And to win the weak and ignorant they might retain diverse harmless ceremonies; and though it were to be wished that diverse things were reformed, yet this was not a season for it. And many the like, to stop the mouths of the more godly, to bring them on to yield to one ceremony after another, and one corruption after another; by these wiles beguiling some and corrupting others till at length they began to persecute all the zealous professors⁵ in the land (though they knew little what this discipline meant) both by word and deed, if they would not submit to their ceremonies and become slaves to them and their popish trash, which have no ground

in the Word of God, but are relics of that man of sin.⁶ And the more the light of the gospel grew, the more they urged their subscriptions to⁷ these corruptions. So as (notwithstanding all their former pretenses and fair colors) they whose eyes God had not justly blinded might easily see whereto these things tended. And to cast contempt the more upon the sincere servants of God, they opprobriously⁸ and most injuriously gave unto and imposed upon them that name of Puritans, which is said the Novatians⁹ out of pride did assume and take unto themselves. And lamentable it is to see the effects which have followed. Religion hath been disgraced, the godly grieved, afflicted, persecuted and many exiled; sundry¹⁰ have lost their lives in prisons and other ways. On the other hand, sin hath been countenanced; ignorance, profaneness, and atheism¹¹ increased, and the papists encouraged to hope again for a day. ...

So many, therefore, of these professors as saw the evil of these things in these parts, and whose hearts the Lord had touched with heavenly zeal for His truth, they shook off this yoke of antichristian bondage, and as the Lord's free people joined themselves (by a covenant of the Lord) into a church estate, in the fellowship of the gospel, to walk in all His ways made known, or to be made known unto them, according to their best endeavours, whatsoever it should cost them, the Lord assisting them. And that it cost them something this ensuing history will declare. ...

Yet seeing themselves thus molested, and that there was no hope of their continuance there, by a joint consent they resolved to go into the Low Countries, where they heard was freedom of religion for all men; as also

¹ *contention ... service book* Puritans such as Bradford objected to many practices of the Church of England, including its rituals, Book of Common Prayer, and hierarchical clergy; they considered such things to be distractions reminiscent of Catholicism.

² *high places in Israel ... ruin* See 1 Kings 13.1–3. These passages describe the coming of a “man of God” who speaks against the altars in “high places” in Bethel, where idolatrous worship and sacrifice took place; the man of God predicts the coming of a prophet, Josiah, who will destroy these idols and their worshippers.

³ *these people* Anglican Protestants who had fled England to avoid persecution under Queen Mary.

⁴ *holy discipline ... His church* I.e., the discipline and practices of Puritan congregations.

⁵ *professors* Those who openly claim to believe in Christianity.

⁶ *Word of God* I.e., the Gospels; *that man of sin* Following Martin Luther's lead, Puritans viewed the Pope, and the church he leads, as the “man of sin,” the antichrist—a figure opposed to Christ that seeks to supplant him at the Second Coming. See 2 Thessalonians 2.3–4.

⁷ *subscriptions to* Approvals of.

⁸ *opprobriously* Scornfully.

⁹ *Novatians* Followers of Novatian (200–58), a Greek theologian whose sect did not allow lapsed Christians to be accepted back into the rites of communion.

¹⁰ *sundry* Many.

¹¹ *atheism* In the seventeenth century, the term was used to refer not only to a disbelief in God, but more broadly to godlessness, wickedness, or corruption.

how sundry from London and other parts of the land had been exiled and persecuted for the same cause, and were gone thither, and lived at Amsterdam and in other places of the land. So after they had continued together about a year, and kept their meetings every Sabbath in one place or other, exercising the worship of God amongst themselves, notwithstanding all the diligence and malice of their adversaries, they seeing they could no longer continue in that condition, they resolved to get over into Holland as they could. Which was in the year 1607 and 1608; of which more at large in the next chapter.

from CHAPTER 4
SHOWING THE REASONS AND
CAUSES OF THEIR REMOVAL

After they had lived in this city¹ about some eleven or twelve years (which is the more observable being the whole time of that famous truce between that state and the Spaniards)² and sundry of them were taken away by death and many others began to be well stricken in years (the grave mistress of Experience having taught them many things), those prudent governors with sundry of the sagest members began both deeply to apprehend their present dangers and wisely to foresee the future and think of timely remedy. In the agitation of their thoughts, and much discourse of things hereabout, at length they began to incline to this conclusion: of removal to some other place. Not out of any newfangledness or other such like giddy humor by which men are oftentimes transported to their great hurt and danger, but for sundry weighty and solid reasons, some of the chief of which I will here briefly touch.

And first, they saw and found by experience the hardness of the place and country to be such as few in comparison would come to them, and fewer that would bide it out and continue with them. For many that came to them, and many more that desired to be with them, could not endure that great labour and hard fare, with other inconveniences which they

underwent and were contented with. ... For many, though they desired to enjoy the ordinances of God in their purity and the liberty of the gospel with them, yet (alas) they admitted of bondage with danger of conscience, rather than to endure these hardships. Yea, some preferred and chose the prisons in England rather than this liberty in Holland with these afflictions. But it was thought that if a better and easier place of living could be had, it would draw many and take away these discouragements. Yea, their pastor would often say that many of those who both wrote and preached now against them, if they were in a place where they might have liberty and live comfortably, they would then practice as they did.

Secondly. They saw that though the people generally bore all these difficulties very cheerfully and with a resolute courage, being in the best and strength of their years; yet old age began to steal on many of them; and their great and continual labours, with other crosses and sorrows, hastened it before the time. So as it was not only probably thought, but apparently seen, that within a few years more they would be in danger to scatter, by necessities pressing them, or sink under their burdens, or both. And therefore according to the divine proverb, that a wise man seeth the plague when it cometh, and hideth himself, Proverbs 22.3, so they like skillful and beaten soldiers were fearful either to be entrapped or surrounded by their enemies so as they should neither be able to fight nor fly. And therefore thought it better to dislodge betimes³ to some place of better advantage and less danger, if any such could be found.

Thirdly. As necessity was a taskmaster over them so they were forced to be such, not only to their servants but in a sort to their dearest children, the which as it did not a little wound the tender hearts of many a loving father and mother, so it produced likewise sundry sad and sorrowful effects. For many of their children that were of best dispositions and gracious inclinations, having learned to bear the yoke in their youth⁴ and willing to bear part of their parents' burden, were oftentimes so oppressed with their heavy labours that though their minds were free and willing, yet their bodies bowed under the weight of the same,

¹ *this city* Leiden, Holland.

² *truce between ... Spaniards* The Twelve Years' Truce (1609–21), a break in the hostilities of the Eighty Years' War between Spain and the Southern Netherlands.

³ *betimes* Quickly, before it was too late.

⁴ *bear the yoke in their youth* See Lamentations 3.27.

and became decrepit in their early youth, the vigour of nature being consumed in the very bud as it were. But that which was more lamentable, and of all sorrows most heavy to be borne, was that many of their children, by these occasions and the great licentiousness of youth in that country,¹ and the manifold temptations of the place, were drawn away by evil examples into extravagant and dangerous courses, getting the reins off their necks and departing from their parents. Some became soldiers, others took upon them far voyages by sea, and others some worse courses tending to dissoluteness and the danger of their souls, to the great grief of their parents and dishonour of God. So that they saw their posterity would be in danger to degenerate and be corrupted.

Lastly (and which was not least), a great hope and inward zeal they had of laying some good foundation, or at least to make some way thereunto, for the propagating and advancing the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of the world; yea, though they should be but even as stepping-stones unto others for the performing of so great a work.

These and some other like reasons moved them to undertake this resolution of their removal; the which they afterward prosecuted with so great difficulties, as by the sequel will appear. ...

CHAPTER 9

OF THEIR VOYAGE, AND HOW THEY PASSED THE SEA; AND OF THEIR SAFE ARRIVAL AT CAPE COD

September 6. These troubles² being blown over, and now all being compact together in one ship,

¹ *great licentiousness ... country* The English Puritans objected to many aspects of Dutch life, particularly their habit of socializing after church on Sundays, which the Puritans felt ought to be kept holy and spent in contemplation. There was also concern among the Puritan leaders that if they remained in the Netherlands their children would eventually become Dutch and not English, which they wanted to prevent.

² *These troubles* In Book 1, Chapters 7–8 (omitted here) the Pilgrims set sail in two ships. The smaller one, the *Speedwell*, leaks, and they return to Dartmouth, England, to have it repaired. A second sailing produces the same result, and the ships return to Plymouth, England, where the *Speedwell* is deemed unseaworthy. Some of its passengers decide not to take the journey after all, but some board the larger ship (the *Mayflower*), which then becomes rather crowded with passengers, crew, and supplies.

they put to sea again with a prosperous wind, which continued diverse days together, which was some encouragement unto them; yet, according to the usual manner, many were afflicted with seasickness. And I may not omit here a special work of God's providence. There was a proud and very profane young man, one of the seamen, of a lusty,³ able body, which made him the more haughty; he would always be contemning the poor people in their sickness and cursing them daily with grievous execrations; and did not let to tell them that he hoped to help to cast half of them overboard before they came to their journey's end, and to make merry with what they had; and if he were by any gently reprov'd, he would curse and swear most bitterly. But it pleased God before they came half seas over, to smite this young man with a grievous disease, of which he died in a desperate manner, and so was himself the first that was thrown overboard. Thus his curses light on his own head, and it was an astonishment to all his fellows for they noted it to be the just hand of God upon him. ...

But to omit other things (that I may be brief) after long beating at sea they fell with that land which is called Cape Cod; the which being made and certainly known to be it, they were not a little joyful. After some deliberation had amongst themselves and with the master of the ship, they tacked about and resolved to stand for the southward (the wind and weather being fair) to find some place about Hudson's River⁴ for their habitation. But after they had sailed that course about half the day, they fell amongst dangerous shoals and roaring breakers, and they were so far entangled therewith as they conceived themselves in great danger; and the wind shrinking upon them withal, they resolved to bear up again for the Cape and thought themselves happy to get out of those dangers before night overtook them, as by God's providence they did. And the next day they got into the Cape Harbor⁵ where they rid in safety.

³ *lusty* Strong and healthy.

⁴ *Hudson's River* Prominent waterway in New York state and the *Mayflower's* original destination.

⁵ *Cape Harbor* Today called Provincetown Harbor.

A word or two by the way of this cape. It was thus first named by Captain Gosnold and his company,¹ Anno² 1602, and after by Captain Smith³ was called Cape James; but it retains the former name amongst seamen. Also, that point which first showed those dangerous shoals unto them they called Point Care, and Tucker's Terror; but the French and Dutch to this day call it Malabar⁴ by reason of those perilous shoals and the losses they have suffered there.

Being thus arrived in a good harbor, and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of Heaven⁵ who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof, again to set their feet on the firm and stable earth, their proper element. And no marvel if they were thus joyful, seeing wise Seneca⁶ was so affected with sailing a few miles on the coast of his own Italy, as he affirmed, that he had rather remain twenty years on his way by land than pass by sea to any place in a short time, so tedious and dreadful was the same unto him.⁷

But here I cannot but stay and make a pause, and stand half amazed at this poor people's present condition; and so I think will the reader, too, when he well considers the same. Being thus passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation (as may be remembered by that which went before), they had now no friends to welcome them nor inns to entertain or refresh their weatherbeaten bodies no houses or much less towns to repair to, to seek for succor. It is

recorded in Scripture⁸ as a mercy to the Apostle⁹ and his shipwrecked company, that the barbarians showed them no small kindness in refreshing them, but these savage barbarians, when they met with them (as after will appear) were readier to fill their sides full of arrows than otherwise. And for the season it was winter, and they that know the winters of that country know them to be sharp and violent, and subject to cruel and fierce storms, dangerous to travel to known places, much more to search an unknown coast. Besides, what could they see but a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men—and what multitudes there might be of them they knew not. Neither could they, as it were, go up to the top of Pisgah¹⁰ to view from this wilderness a more goodly country to feed their hopes; for which way soever they turned their eyes (save upward to the heavens) they could have little solace or content in respect of any outward objects. For summer being done, all things stand upon them with a weatherbeaten face, and the whole country, full of woods and thickets, represented a wild and savage hue. If they looked behind them, there was the mighty ocean which they had passed and was now as a main bar and gulf to separate them from all the civil parts of the world. If it be said they had a ship to succor them, it is true; but what heard they daily from the master and company? But that with speed they should look out a place (with their shallop¹¹) where they would be, at some near distance; for the season was such as he would not stir from thence till a safe harbor was discovered by them, where they would be, and he might go without danger; and that victuals¹² consumed apace but he must and would keep sufficient for themselves and their return. Yea, it was muttered by some that if they got not a place in time, they would turn them and their goods ashore and leave them. Let it also be considered what weak hopes of supply and succor they left behind them, that might

¹ [Bradford's note] Because they took much of that fish there. [I.e., they caught a great deal of codfish there.]

² *Anno* Latin: Year.

³ *Captain Gosnold* Bartholomew Gosnold (1571–1607), English explorer and lawyer, led the first recorded European expedition to Cape Cod; *Captain Smith* John Smith (c. 1580–1631), English explorer, author, and cartographer.

⁴ *Point Care ... Malabar* These names probably refer to Nauset Harbor, Cape Cod.

⁵ *blessed the God of Heaven* See Daniel 2.19.

⁶ *Seneca* Seneca the Younger (c. 4 BCE–65 CE), a Roman stoic philosopher.

⁷ [Bradford's note] Epistle 53. [Bradford is paraphrasing from Seneca's "Epistle 53" from *The Moral Epistles to Lucius* (c. 65 CE).]

⁸ [Bradford's note] Acts 28[.2].

⁹ *the Apostle* Paul the Apostle (c. 5–c. 64 or 67), also known as Saint Paul, an early Christian missionary who is traditionally considered the author of thirteen books of the New Testament.

¹⁰ *Pisgah* Mount Pisgah. On its peak, God shows Moses the Promised Land. See Deuteronomy 34.1–4.

¹¹ *shallop* Open row-boat used in shallow waters to move between a larger boat and land.

¹² *victuals* Food or provisions.

bear up their minds in this sad condition and trial they were under; and they could not but be very small. It is true, indeed, the affections and love of their brethren at Leiden was cordial and entire towards them, but they had little power to help them or themselves; and how the case stood between them and the merchants at their coming away hath already been declared.¹

What could now sustain them but the Spirit of God and His grace? May not and ought not the children of these fathers rightly say: “Our fathers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness; but they cried unto the Lord, and He heard their voice and looked on their adversity,”² etc. “Let them therefore praise the Lord, because He is good: and His mercies endure forever.”³ “Yea, let them which have been redeemed of the Lord, show how He hath delivered them from the hand of the oppressor. When they wandered in the desert wilderness out of the way, and found no city to dwell in, both hungry and thirsty, their soul was overwhelmed in them. Let them confess before the Lord His loving kindness and His wonderful works before the sons of men.”⁴

from CHAPTER 10

SHOWING HOW THEY SOUGHT OUT A PLACE OF
HABITATION; AND WHAT BEFELL THEM THEREABOUT

Being thus arrived at Cape Cod the 11th of November, and necessity calling them to look out a place for habitation (as well as the master’s and mariners’ importunity); they having brought a large shallop with them out of

¹ *how the case stood ... been declared* The relationship between the Pilgrims and the Merchant Adventurers—the group of capitalists led by Thomas Weston (c. 1584–c. 1647) who helped fund Plymouth Plantation—had fallen out over several conditions of their agreement. Most contentiously, the Adventurers changed the original agreement that would grant the Pilgrims ownership of their houses and lands (and the profits made from them) after seven years; an amendment to that original agreement stated that such property would be *divided* between the Pilgrims and the Adventurers after seven years. The disagreement between the parties delayed the *Mayflower’s* departure and did not end amicably, with Weston refusing any further financial aid.

² [Bradford’s note] Deuteronomy 26.5,7.

³ *Let them therefore praise ... endure forever* See Psalm 106.1.

⁴ [Bradford’s note] Psalm 107.1–5, 8.

England, stowed in quarters in the ship, they now got her out and set their carpenters to work to trim her up; but being much bruised and shattered in the ship with foul weather, they saw she would be long in mending. Whereupon a few of them tendered themselves to go by land and discover those nearest places, whilst the shallop was in mending; and the rather because as they went into that harbor there seemed to be an opening some two or three leagues off, which the master judged to be a river.⁵ It was conceived there might be some danger in the attempt, yet seeing them resolute, they were permitted to go, being sixteen of them well armed under the conduct of Captain Standish,⁶ having such instructions given them as was thought meet.⁷

They⁸ set forth the 15th of November; and when they had marched about the space of a mile by the sea side, they espied five or six persons with a dog coming towards them, who were savages; but they fled from them and ran up into the woods, and the English followed them, partly to see if they could speak with them, and partly to discover if there might not be more of them lying in ambush. But the Indians seeing themselves thus followed, they again forsook the woods and ran away on the sands as hard as they could, so as they could not come near them but followed them by the tracks of their feet sundry miles and saw that they had come the same way. So, night coming on, they made their rendezvous and set out their sentinels, and rested in quiet that night; and the next morning followed their tracks till they had headed a great creek⁹ and so left the sands, and turned another way into the woods. But they still followed them by guess, hoping to find their dwellings; but they soon lost both them and themselves, falling into such thickets as were ready to tear their clothes and armor in pieces; but were most distressed for want of drink. But at length they found

⁵ *river* From where the Pilgrims were, the land near Plymouth looks like an island in certain conditions, hence the assumption a river divides the land from the sea.

⁶ *Captain Standish* Myles Standish (c. 1584–1656), English ex-soldier hired by the Merchant Adventurers as a military advisor to the Pilgrims. He became a good friend and supporter to the Pilgrims.

⁷ *meet* Suitable.

⁸ *They* Bradford was included in this group.

⁹ *headed a great creek* Went around the source of the creek, in this case East-Harbor Creek.

water and refreshed themselves, being the first New England water they drunk of, and was now in great thirst as pleasant unto them as wine or beer had been in foretimes.

Afterwards they directed their course to come to the other shore, for they knew it was a neck of land they were to cross over, and so at length got to the seaside and marched to this supposed river, and by the way found a pond of clear, fresh water, and shortly after a good quantity of clear ground where the Indians had formerly set corn, and some of their graves. And proceeding further they saw new stubble where corn had been set the same year, also they found where lately a house had been, where some planks and a great kettle was remaining, and heaps of sand newly paddled¹ with their hands. Which, they digging up, found in them diverse fair Indian baskets filled with corn, and some in ears, fair and good, of diverse colors, which seemed to them a very goodly sight (having never seen any such before). This was near the place of that supposed river they came to seek, unto which they went and found it to open itself into two arms with a high cliff of sand in the entrance but more like to be creeks of salt water than any fresh, for aught they saw; and that there was good harborage for their shallop, leaving it further to be discovered by their shallop, when she was ready. So, their time limited them being expired, they returned to the ship lest they should be in fear of their safety; and took with them part of the corn and buried up the rest. And so, like the men from Eshcol, carried with them of the fruits of the land and showed their brethren;² of which, and their return, they were marvelously glad and their hearts encouraged.

After this, the shallop being got ready, they set out again for the better discovery of this place,³ and the

master of the ship desired to go himself. So there went some thirty men but found it to be no harbor for ships but only for boats. There was also found two of their houses covered with mats, and sundry of their implements in them, but the people were run away and could not be seen.⁴ Also there was found more of their corn and of their beans of various colors; the corn and beans they brought away, purposing to give them full satisfaction⁵ when they should meet with any of them as, about some six months afterward they did, to their good content.

And here is to be noted a special providence of God, and a great mercy to this poor people, that here they got seed to plant them corn the next year, or else they might have starved, for they had none nor any likelihood to get any till the season had been past, as the sequel did manifest. Neither is it likely they had had this, if the first voyage had not been made, for the ground was now all covered with snow and hard frozen; but the Lord is never wanting unto His in their greatest needs; let His holy name have all the praise.

The month of November being spent in these affairs, and much foul weather falling in, the 6th of December they sent out their shallop again with ten of their principal men⁶ and some seamen, upon further discovery, intending to circulate that deep bay of Cape Cod. The weather was very cold and it froze so hard as the spray of the sea lighting on their coats, they were as if they had been glazed. Yet that night betimes they got down into the bottom of the bay, and as they drew near the shore they saw some ten or twelve Indians very busy about something. They landed about a league or two from them, and had much ado to put ashore anywhere—it lay so full of flats. Being landed, it grew late and they

¹ *paddled* Flattened down. In Champlain's *Voyages* (1632), the author notes that Indigenous peoples of this area would dig large sand trenches, put their corn in grass sacks, and cover it with several feet of sand, thereby preserving it very effectively.

² *Eshcol ... brethren* In Numbers 13, God tells Moses to send men to explore the land of Canaan, which God gives to the Israelites. The leaders of the various tribes set out and explore the wilderness, bringing back grapes, pomegranates, and figs to prove to their people the fertility of the land they found. See Numbers 13.23–26.

³ *this place* This second expedition explored the areas around the Pamet and Little Pamet Rivers, returning to Cape Cod Harbor on 30 November.

⁴ *their houses ... could not be seen* This area was inhabited by Nauset people, who spoke the Massachusetts language; their round wigwams were constructed with bent boughs stuck into the ground on each side, interwoven with smaller boughs and covered with mats of woven bark. The implements mentioned were likely for farming and fishing.

⁵ *satisfaction* Payment.

⁶ *ten of their principal men* According to *Mourt's Relation* (1622), a first-hand account of the colony's beginnings, these were Standish, Carver, Bradford, Edward Winslow, John Tilley, Edward Tilley, John Howland, Richard Warren, Steven Hopkins, Edward Doten, John Alderton, Thomas English, Clarke, Copin, and four more unnamed sailors.

made themselves a barricado with logs and boughs as well as they could in the time, and set out their sentinel and betook them to rest, and saw the smoke of the fire the savages made that night. When morning was come they divided their company, some to coast along the shore in the boat, and the rest marched through the woods to see the land, if any fit place might be for their dwelling. They came also to the place where they saw the Indians the night before, and found they had been cutting up a great fish like a grampus,¹ being some two inches thick of fat like a hog, some pieces where of they had left by the way. And the shallop found two more of these fishes dead on the sands, a thing usual after storms in that place, by reason of the great flats of sand that lie off.

So they ranged up and down all that day, but found no people, nor any place they liked. When the sun grew low, they hasted out of the woods to meet with their shallop, to whom they made signs to come to them into a creek hard by,² the which they did at high water; of which they were very glad, for they had not seen each other all that day since the morning. So they made them a barricado as usually they did every night, with logs, stakes and thick pine boughs, the height of a man, leaving it open to leeward, partly to shelter them from the cold and wind (making their fire in the middle and lying round about it) and partly to defend them from any sudden assaults of the savages, if they should surround them; so being very weary, they betook them to rest. But about midnight, they heard a hideous and great cry, and their sentinel called "Arm! arm!" So they bestirred them and stood to their arms and shot off a couple of muskets, and then the noise ceased. They concluded it was a company of wolves or such like wild beasts, for one of the seamen told them he had often heard such a noise in Newfoundland.

So they rested till about five of the clock in the morning; for the tide, and their purpose to go from thence, made them be stirring betimes. So after prayer they prepared for breakfast, and it being day dawning it was thought best to be carrying things down to the boat. But some said it was not best to carry the arms down, others said they would be the readier, for they

had lapped them up in their coats from the dew; but some three or four would not carry theirs till they went themselves. Yet as it fell out, the water being not high enough, they laid them down on the bank side and came up to breakfast.

But presently, all on the sudden, they heard a great and strange cry, which they knew to be the same voices they heard in the night, though they varied their notes; and one of their company being abroad came running in and cried, "Men, Indians! Indians!" And withal, their arrows came flying amongst them. Their men ran with all speed to recover their arms, as by the good providence of God they did. In the meantime, of those that were there ready, two muskets were discharged at them, and two more stood ready in the entrance of their rendezvous but were commanded not to shoot till they could take full aim at them. And the other two charged again with all speed, for there were only four had arms there, and defended the barricado, which was first assaulted. The cry of the Indians was dreadful, especially when they saw their men run out of the rendezvous towards the shallop to recover their arms, the Indians wheeling about upon them. But some running out with coats of mail on, and cutlasses in their hands, they soon got their arms and let fly amongst them and quickly stopped their violence. Yet there was a lusty man, and no less valiant, stood behind a tree within half a musket shot, and let his arrows fly at them; he was seen [to] shoot three arrows, which were all avoided. He stood three shots of a musket, till one taking full aim at him and made the bark or splinters of the tree fly about his ears, after which he gave an extraordinary shriek and away they went, all of them. They³ left some to keep the shallop and followed them about a quarter of a mile and shouted once or twice, and shot of two or three pieces, and so returned. This they did that they might conceive that they were not afraid of them or any way discouraged.

Thus it pleased God to vanquish their enemies and give them deliverance; and by His special providence so to dispose that not any one of them were either hurt or hit, though their arrows came close by them and on every side [of] them; and sundry of their coats, which hung up in the barricado, were shot through and through. Afterwards they gave God solemn thanks and

¹ *grampus* Name applied to several species of whale and dolphin.

² *creek* Herring River, also called Great Meadow Creek; *hard by* Nearby.

³ *They* The English.

praise for their deliverance, and gathered up a bundle of their arrows and sent them into England afterward by the master of the ship, and called that place the First Encounter. ...

from THE SECOND BOOK

The rest of this History (if God give me life and opportunity) I shall, for brevity's sake, handle by way of annals,¹ noting only the heads of principal things, and passages as they fell in order of time, and may seem to be profitable to know or to make use of. And this may be as the Second Book.

from CHAPTER II
THE REMAINDER OF ANNO 1620
[THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT]²

I shall a little return back, and begin with a combination made by them before they came ashore; being the first foundation of their government in this place. Occasioned partly by the discontented and mutinous speeches that some of the strangers³ amongst them had let fall from them in the ship: That when they came ashore they would use their own liberty, for none had power to command them, the patent they had being for Virginia and not for New England, which belonged to another Government, with which the Virginia Company had nothing to do.⁴ And partly that such an act by them done, this their condition considered,⁵ might be as firm as any patent, and in some respects more sure.

¹ *annals* A narrative of events organized according to year.

² *MAYFLOWER COMPACT* Written agreement created by the male passengers of *The Mayflower*, declaring that, once disembarked, they intended to live together within a common political body governed by laws and a constitution.

³ *strangers* Those who traveled on *The Mayflower* but were not members of the Separatist congregation.

⁴ *patent ... nothing to do* The Pilgrims had brought a patent—a land grant from the King—for “the Northern parts of Virginia,” but weather forced a landing further north, outside the jurisdiction specified in the patent. In this state of legal uncertainty, some of the ship’s passengers threatened to abandon the group once they reached land. The Mayflower Compact averted this threat of mutiny.

⁵ *this ... considered* Considering their circumstances.

The form was as followeth:

IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN.

We whose names are underwritten, the loyall subjects of our dread⁶ soveraigne Lord, King James, by the grace of God of Great Britain, France and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etc.

Having undertaken, for the glorie of God and advancemente of the Christian faith and honour of our king and countrie, a voyage to plant the first colonie in the Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents⁷ solemnly and mutuallly in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine our selves together into a civill body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by vertue hereof to enacte, constitute, and frame such just and equall lawes, ordinances, acts, constitutions and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for the generall good of the Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape-Codd, the 11 of November, in the year of the raigne of our soveraigne lord, King James, of England, France and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. Anno Dom. 1620.

After this they chose, or rather confirmed, Mr. John Carver (a man godly and well approved amongst them) their Governor for that year. And after they had provided a place for their goods, or common store (which were long in unlading for want of boats, foulness of winter weather and sickness of diverse) and begun some small cottages for their habitation; as time would admit, they met and consulted of laws and orders, both for their civil and military government as the necessity of their condition did require, still adding thereunto as urgent occasion in several times, and as cases did require.

In these hard and difficult beginnings they found some discontents and murmurings arise amongst some, and mutinous speeches and carriage⁸ in other; but they were soon quelled and overcome by the

⁶ *dread* Revered.

⁷ *by these presents* In these statements.

⁸ *carriages* Ways of behaving.

wisdom, patience and just and equal¹ carriage of things by the Governor and better part, which clave² faithfully together in the main.

[THE STARVING TIME]

But that which was most sad and lamentable was, that in two or three months' time half of their company died, especially in January and February, being the depth of winter, and wanting houses and other comforts; being infected with the scurvy and other diseases which this long voyage and their inaccomodate condition had brought upon them. So as there died sometimes two or three of a day in the foresaid time, that of 100 and odd persons, scarce fifty remained. And of these, in the time of most distress, there was but six or seven sound persons who to their great commendations be it spoken, spared no pains night nor day, but with abundance of toil and hazard of their own health, fetched them wood, made them fires, dressed them meat, made their beds, washed their loathsome clothes, clothed and unclothed them. In a word, did all the homely and necessary offices for them which dainty and queasy stomachs cannot endure to hear named; and all this willingly and cheerfully, without any grudging in the least, showing herein their true love unto their friends and brethren; a rare example and worthy to be remembered. Two of these seven were Mr. William Brewster, their reverend Elder, and Myles Standish, their Captain and military commander, unto whom myself and many others were much beholden in our low and sick condition. And yet the Lord so upheld these persons as in this general calamity they were not at all infected either with sickness or lameness. And what I have said of these I may say of many others who died in this general visitation, and others yet living; that whilst they had health, yea, or any strength continuing, they were not wanting to any that had need of them. And I doubt not but their recompense is with the Lord. ...

¹ *equal* Impartial.

² *clave* Cleaved, stuck.

[INDIAN RELATIONS]

All this while the Indians came skulking about them, and would sometimes show themselves aloof off, but when any approached near them, they would run away; and once they stole away their tools where they had been at work and were gone to dinner. But about the 16th of March, a certain Indian came boldly amongst them and spoke to them in broken English, which they could well understand but marveled at it. At length they understood by discourse with him, that he was not of these parts, but belonged to the eastern parts where some English ships came to fish, with whom he was acquainted and could name sundry of them by their names, amongst whom he had got his language. He became profitable to them in acquainting them with many things concerning the state of the country in the east parts where he lived, which was afterwards profitable unto them; as also of the people here, of their names, number and strength, of their situation and distance from this place, and who was chief amongst them. His name was Samoset.³ He told them also of another Indian whose name was Squanto,⁴ a native of this place, who had been in England and could speak better English than himself.

Being, after some time of entertainment and gifts dismissed, a while after he came again, and five more with him, and they brought again all the tools that were stolen away before, and made way for the coming of their great Sachem, called Massasoit.⁵ Who, about four or five days after, came with the chief of his friends and other attendance, with the aforesaid Squanto. With whom, after friendly entertainment and some gifts given him, they made a peace with him (which hath now continued this 24 years) in these terms:

³ *Samoset* Sagamore—a type of chief—of the Pemaquid Abenaki people (c. 1590–1653). Samoset's people lived in what is now Maine.

⁴ *Squanto* Tisquantum (1585–1622), a member of the Patuxet tribe that lived in the area around Plymouth. Squanto was kidnapped by English sailors in 1617 and returned to New England in 1619 to find his village empty as the result of an epidemic.

⁵ *Sachem* High chief; *Massasoit* Sachem of the Wampanoag (c. 1581–1661).

1. That neither he nor any of his should injure or do hurt to any of their people.
2. That if any of his did any hurt to any of theirs, he should send the offender, that they might punish him.
3. That if anything were taken away from any of theirs, he should cause it to be restored; and they should do the like to his.
4. If any did unjustly war against him, they would aid him; if any did war against them, he should aid them.
5. He should send to his neighbors confederates to certify them of this, that they might not wrong them, but might be likewise comprised in the conditions of peace.
6. That when their men came to them, they should leave their bows and arrows behind them.

After these things he returned to his place called Sowams,¹ some 40 miles from this place, but Squanto continued with them and was their interpreter and was a special instrument sent of God for their good beyond their expectation. He directed them how to set their corn, where to take fish, and to procure other commodities, and was also their pilot to bring them to unknown places for their profit, and never left them till he died. ...

from CHAPTER 12
ANNO DOMINI 1621

[MAYFLOWER DEPARTS AND CORN PLANTED]

They now began to dispatch the ship away which brought them over, which lay till about this time, or the beginning of April.² The reason on their parts why she stayed so long, was the necessity and danger that lay upon them; for it was well towards the end of December before she could land anything here, or they able to receive anything ashore. Afterwards, the 14th of January, the house which they had made for a general rendezvous by casualty fell afire, and some were fain to retire aboard for shelter; then the sickness began to fall sore amongst them, and the weather so bad as they

¹ *Sowams* This village is now named Warren, Rhode Island.

² *the ship ... April* The *Mayflower* sailed from New Plymouth on 5 April and reached England on 6 May.

could not make much sooner any dispatch. Again, the Governor and chief of them, seeing so many die and fall down sick daily, thought it no wisdom to send away the ship, their condition considered and the danger they stood in from the Indians, till they could procure some shelter; and therefore thought it better to draw some more charge³ upon themselves and friends than hazard all. The master and seamen likewise, though before they hasted⁴ the passengers ashore to be gone, now many of their men being dead, and of the ablest of them (as is before noted), and of the rest many lay sick and weak; the master durst not put to sea till he saw his men begin to recover, and the heart of winter over.

Afterwards they (as many as were able) began to plant their corn, in which service Squanto stood them in great stead, showing them both the manner how to set it, and after how to dress and tend it. Also he told them, except they got fish and set with it in these old grounds it would come to nothing,⁵ And he showed them that in the middle of April they should have store enough come up the brook by which they began to build, and taught them how to take it,⁶ and where to get other provisions necessary for them. All which they found true by trial and experience. Some English seed they sowed, as wheat and peas, but it came not to good, either by the badness of the seed or lateness of the season or both, or some other defect. ...

[INDIAN DIPLOMACY]

Having in some sort ordered their business at home, it was thought meet to send some abroad to see their new friend Massasoit, and to bestow upon him some gratuity⁷ to bind him the faster unto them; as also that hereby they might view the country and see in what

³ *charge* Expense.

⁴ *hasted* Hurried.

⁵ *fish ... come to nothing* Squanto taught them to use fish as fertilizer for the crops. In Captain John Smith's *Advertisements for the Unexperienced*, he wrote that in New England they "stick at every plant of corn, a herring or two; which cometh in that season in such abundance, they may take more than they know what to do with." It was a very effective method to gain high yields of corn.

⁶ *he showed them ... how to take it* Squanto taught the settlers how to set up a fishing weir across the brook to catch large quantities of migrating herring in the spring.

⁷ *gratuity* Gift.

manner he lived, what strength he had about him, and how the ways were to his place, if at any time they should have occasion. So the second of July they sent Mr. Edward Winslow and Mr. Hopkins,¹ with the foresaid Squanto for their guide; who gave him a suit of clothes and a horseman's coat, with some other small things, which were kindly accepted; but they found but short commons² and came both weary and hungry home. For the Indians used then to have nothing so much corn as they have since the English have stored³ them with their hoes, and seen their industry in breaking up new grounds therewith.⁴

They found his place to be forty miles from hence, the soil good and the people not many, being dead and abundantly wasted in the late great mortality, which fell in all these parts about three years before the coming of the English, wherein thousands of them died. They not being able to bury one another, their skulls and bones were found in many places lying still above ground where their houses and dwellings had been, a very sad spectacle to behold. But they brought word that the Narragansetts⁵ lived but on the other side of that great bay, and were a strong people, and many in number, living compact together, and had not been at all touched with this wasting plague.

About the later end of this month, one John Billington lost himself in the woods, and wandered up and down some five days, living on berries and what he could find. At length he light on an Indian plantation twenty miles south of this place, called Manomet; they conveyed him further off, to Nauset among those people that had before set upon the English when they were coasting whilst the ship lay at the Cape, as is before noted. But the Governor caused him to be inquired for among the Indians, and at length Massasoit sent word

¹ *Mr. Hopkins* Stephen Hopkins (1581–1644), an English tanner and merchant recruited to join the Pilgrims by the Company of Merchant Adventurers.

² *short commons* Scarce rations, little food.

³ *stored* Supplied.

⁴ *industry . . . therewith* The Indigenous peoples in this area used clamshells to till the earth for their corn; the English supplied them with hoes, which dig up more earth more quickly. There are records, however, suggesting that cultivation by clamshell was superior than that which resulted from European tools.

⁵ *Narragansetts* Algonquian tribe living in what is now Rhode Island.

where he was, and the Governor sent a shallop for him and had him delivered. Those people⁶ also came and made their peace; and they gave full satisfaction to those whose corn they had found and taken when they were at Cape Cod.

Thus their peace and acquaintance was pretty well established with the natives about them. . . .

[FIRST THANKSGIVING⁷]

They began now to gather in the small harvest they had, and to fit up their houses and dwellings against winter, being all well recovered in health and strength and had all things in good plenty. For as some were thus employed in affairs abroad, others were exercised in fishing, about cod and bass and other fish, of which they took good store, of which every family had their portion. All the summer there was no want; and now began to come in store of fowl, as winter approached, of which this place did abound when they came first (but afterward decreased by degrees). And besides waterfowl there was great store of wild turkeys, of which they took many, besides venison, etc. Besides they had about a peck⁸ a meal a week to a person, or now since harvest, Indian corn to that proportion. Which made many afterwards write so largely of their plenty here to their friends in England, which were not feigned but true reports.

⁶ *Those people* I.e., the Nauset.

⁷ *FIRST THANKSGIVING* The feast described here is not explicitly identified as a “thanksgiving” in Bradford’s account, but it was a practice of Puritan congregations to declare days of thanksgiving—special days set aside for prayer, to thank God for favorable events such as a good harvest. The modern holiday is based on this tradition. See also “The Myth of Thanksgiving,” included in the “Civilizations in Contact” section of this volume.

⁸ *peck* Unit of measurement for dry goods, equivalent to about eight dry quarts.

from CHAPTER 14
ANNO DOMINI 1623

[END OF THE “COMMON COURSE AND CONDITION”¹]

All this while no supply was heard of, neither knew they when they might expect any. So they began to think how they might raise as much corn as they could, and obtain a better crop than they had done, that they might not still thus languish in misery. At length, after much debate of things, the Governor (with the advice of the chiefest amongst them) gave way that they should set corn every man for his own particular,² and in that regard trust to themselves; in all other things to go on in the general way as before. And so assigned to every family a parcel of land, according to the proportion of their number, for that end, only for present use (but made no division for inheritance) and ranged all boys and youth under some family. This had very good success, for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more corn was planted than otherwise would have been by any means the Governor or any other could use, and saved him a great deal of trouble, and gave far better content. The women now went willingly into the field, and took their little ones with them to set corn; which before would allege weakness and inability; whom to have compelled would have been thought great tyranny and oppression.

The experience that was had in this common course and condition, tried sundry years and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanity of that conceit of Plato’s and other ancients, applauded by some of later times; that the taking away of property and bringing in community into a commonwealth would make them happy and flourishing; as if they were wiser than God.³ For this community (so

far as it was) was found to breed much confusion and discontent and retard much employment that would have been to their benefit and comfort. For the young men, that were most able and fit for labor and service, did repine that they should spend their time and strength to work for other men’s wives and children without any recompense. The strong, or man of parts, had no more in division of victuals and clothes than he that was weak and not able to do a quarter the other could; this was thought injustice. The aged and graver men to be ranked and equalized in labors and victuals, clothes, etc., with the meaner and younger sort, thought it some indignity and disrespect unto them. And for men’s wives to be commanded to do service for other men, as dressing their meat, washing their clothes, etc., they deemed it a kind of slavery, neither could many husbands well brook⁴ it. Upon the point all being to have alike, and all to do alike, they thought themselves in the like condition, and one as good as another; and so, if it did not cut off those relations that God hath set amongst men, yet it did at least much diminish and take of the mutual respects that should be preserved amongst them. And would have been worse if they had been men of another condition. Let none object this is men’s corruption, and nothing to the course itself. I answer, seeing all men have this corruption in them, God in His wisdom saw another course fitter for them. ...

¹ *COMMON COURSE AND CONDITION* The economic system at Plymouth was from the beginning one in which all members labored for the common stock—each person worked and contributed, and everyone was fed and clothed and housed. This began to cause some tension in the colony among those who felt that not all members were contributing equally (and that harder work was not rewarded with more gain).

² *every man for his own particular* Each man for himself, i.e., all members would harvest—and keep—their own crops.

³ *conceit of Plato’s . . . wiser than God* In Jean Bodin’s *Les Six livres de la République* (1576), a translated copy of which Bradford owned, Bodin writes: “But he [Plato] understood not that by making all

things thus common, a Commonwealth must needs perish: for nothing can be public, where nothing is private.” In *Republic*, Plato argues that the ruling classes should give up private property to ensure their transcendence of personal interest, and that their needs would be taken care of by the state.

⁴ *brook* Tolerate.

from CHAPTER 19
ANNO DOMINI 1628
[A VISIT FROM THE DUTCH¹]

This year the Dutch sent again unto them from their Plantation both kind letters, and also diverse commodities, as sugar, linen cloth, holland, finer and coarser stuffs,² etc. They came up with their bark to Manomet, to their house there,³ in which came their Secretary, Rasier, who was accompanied with a noise of trumpeters and some other attendants, and desired that they would send a boat for him, for he could not travel so far overland. So they sent a boat to Scusset⁴ and brought him to the Plantation with the chief of his company. And after some few days' entertainment he returned to his bark, and some of them went with him and bought sundry of his goods. After which beginning thus made, they sent oftentimes to the same place and had intercourse together for diverse years. And amongst other commodities they vended much tobacco for linen cloth, stuffs, etc., which was a good benefit to the people, till the Virginians found out their Plantation.⁵

But that which turned most to their profit, in time, was an entrance into the trade of wampumpeag.⁶

¹ *THE DUTCH* The Netherlands had begun explorations in North America around the same time as the English, in the early years of the seventeenth century. The Dutch established their first settlement in 1615 on Castle Island, near what is now Albany, New York. By 1623 they had claimed a province, New Netherland, which spanned the East Coast from eastern Virginia to southwest Cape Cod. In 1626, the Dutch bought Manhattan from the Lenape people and created a new port that they named New Amsterdam, expanding to the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Long Island.

² *holland* Type of linen manufactured in the Netherlands; *stuffs* Fabrics.

³ *their house there* Dutch trading post at Cushenoc, now called Augusta, Maine.

⁴ *Scusset* Creek that ends in Cape Cod Bay, and that was used by canoes to move between Cape Cod Bay and Buzzards Bay.

⁵ *Virginians ... Plantation* I.e., until the Virginians—who supplied Plymouth with tobacco—began to trade directly with the Dutch at their Plantation in Manhattan.

⁶ [Bradford's note] Peag. [Wampumpeag, now commonly called wampum, are shell-beads strung together, used in seventeenth-century America by Indigenous peoples and settlers as currency. Wampum also has a long history among many Indigenous peoples as a means of record-keeping, story-telling, naming, and other decorative and ceremonial purposes.]

For they now bought about £50 worth of it of them, and they told them how vendible it was at their fort Orania, and did persuade them they would find it so at Kennebec.⁷ And so it came to pass in time, though at first it stuck,⁸ and it was two years before they could put off this small quantity, till the inland people⁹ knew of it; and afterwards they could scarce ever get enough for them, for many years together. And so this with their other provisions cut off their trade quite from the fishermen, and in great part from other of the straggling planters. And strange it was to see the great alteration it made in a few years among the Indians themselves; for all the Indians of these parts and the Massachusetts had none or very little of it, but the sachems and some special persons that wore a little of it for ornament. Only it was made and kept among the Narragansetts and Pequots, which grew rich and potent by it, and these people were poor and beggarly and had no use of it. Neither did the English of this Plantation or any other in the land, till now that they had knowledge of it from the Dutch, so much as know what it was, much less that it was a commodity of that worth and value. But after it grew thus to be a commodity in these parts, these Indians fell into it also, and to learn how to make it; for the Narragansetts do gather the shells of which they make it from their shores. And it hath now continued a current commodity about this 20 years, and it may prove a drug¹⁰ in time.

In the meantime, it makes the Indians of these parts rich and powerful and also proud thereby, and fills them with pieces,¹¹ powder and shot, which no laws can restrain, by reason of the baseness of sundry unworthy persons, both English, Dutch and French, which may turn to the ruin of many. Hitherto the Indians of these parts had no pieces nor other arms but their bows

⁷ *Orania* Dutch Fort Orange, present day Albany; *Kennebec* The Plymouth Plantation had just secured a patent to set up a trading post on the Kennebec River, near Augusta, Maine.

⁸ *it stuck* I.e., the wampum did not "move," was not used in trade.

⁹ *inland people* Wampum was made primarily by the coastal peoples, particularly the Narragansett, Pequot, Montaukett, and Shinnecock. At the time of Bradford's writing, it had only recently been introduced to the inland tribes.

¹⁰ *drug* Product that has lost its trade value.

¹¹ *pieces* Guns.

and arrows, nor of many years after; neither durst they scarce handle a gun, so much were they afraid of them. And the very sight of one (though out of kilter¹) was a terror unto them. But those Indians to the east parts, which had commerce with the French, got pieces of them, and they in the end made a common trade of it. And in time our English fishermen, led with the like covetousness, followed their example for their own gain. But upon complaint against them, it pleased the King's Majesty to prohibit the same by a strict proclamation, commanding that no sort of arms or munition should by any of his subjects be traded with them.

[THOMAS MORTON OF MERRYMOUNT]

About some three or four years before this time, there came over one Captain Wollaston (a man of pretty parts²) and with him three or four more of some eminency, who brought with them a great many servants, with provisions and other implements for to begin a plantation. And pitched themselves in a place within the Massachusetts which they called after their Captain's name, Mount Wollaston. Amongst whom was one Mr. Morton,³ who it should seem had some small adventure of his own or other men's amongst them, but had little respect amongst them, and was slighted by the meanest servants. Having continued there some time, and not finding things to answer their expectations nor profit to arise as they looked for, Captain Wollaston takes a great part of the servants and transports them to Virginia, where he puts them off at good rates, selling their time to other men; and writes back to one Mr. Rasdall (one of his chief partners and accounted their merchant) to bring another part of them to Virginia likewise, intending to put them off there as he had done the rest. And he, with the consent of the said Rasdall, appointed one Fitcher to be his Lieutenant and govern the remains

¹ *out of kilter* Not in working order.

² *pretty parts* Many talents.

³ *Mr. Morton* Thomas Morton (1579–1647) was a lawyer and author of *The New English Canaan* (1637). His religion—traditional Anglican—his libertinism, and his interest in integrating his community with the Indigenous population, placed him at odds with the Puritans from Plymouth. For Morton's account of these events, see the excerpts from *The New English Canaan* included in this anthology.

of the Plantation till he or Rasdall returned to take further order thereabout. But this Morton abovesaid, having more craft than honesty (who had been a kind of pettifogger of Furnival's Inn⁴) in the others' absence watches an opportunity (commons being but hard⁵ amongst them) and got some strong drink and other junkets⁶ and made them a feast; and after they were merry, he began to tell them he would give them good counsel. "You see," saith he, "that many of your fellows are carried to Virginia, and if you stay till this Rasdall return, you will also be carried away and sold for slaves⁷ with the rest. Therefore I would advise you to thrust out this Lieutenant Fitcher, and I, having a part in the Plantation, will receive you as my partners and consociates; so may you be free from service, and we will converse, plant, trade, and live together as equals and support and protect one another," or to like effect. This counsel was easily received, so they took opportunity and thrust Lieutenant Fitcher out o'doors, and would suffer him to come no more amongst them, but forced him to seek bread to eat and other relief from his neighbours till he could get passage for England.

After this they fell to great licentiousness and led a dissolute life, pouring out themselves into all profaneness. And Morton became Lord of Misrule,⁸ and maintained (as it were) a School of Atheism. And after they had got some goods into their hands, and got much by trading with the Indians, they spent it as vainly in quaffing and drinking, both wine and strong waters⁹

⁴ *pettifogger of Furnival's Inn* A "pettifogger" is a derogatory name for a lawyer, suggesting one that deals in trivial cases using dubious practices; Furnival's Inn was a place where lawyers studied and boarded in London. Morton actually studied at Clifford's Inn, where he befriended the playwright Ben Jonson (1572–1637) and became part of the hedonistic culture that surrounded the Inns of Court at that time.

⁵ *commons ... hard* Provisions being meager.

⁶ *junkets* Sweet dishes.

⁷ *slaves* I.e., indentured servants. The tobacco crop in Jamestown, Virginia, required a substantial labor force to plant and harvest, and in Bradford's era that labor was provided by indentured servants from Britain as well as by enslaved Africans and Native Americans.

⁸ *Lord of Misrule* Person appointed to rule over the Feast of Fools, a feast day widely celebrated across Europe, which involved feasting, partying, and a great deal of drinking. The festival was banned by Henry VIII, restored by Mary I, and banned again by Queen Elizabeth I.

⁹ *strong waters* Hard liquors.

in great excess (and, as some reported) £10 worth in a morning. They also set up a maypole,¹ drinking and dancing about it many days together, inviting the Indian women for their consorts, dancing and frisking together like so many fairies, or furies, rather; and worse practices. As if they had anew revived and celebrated the feasts of the Roman goddess Flora, or the beastly practices of the mad Bacchanalians.² Morton likewise, to show his poetry composed sundry rhymes and verses, some tending to lasciviousness, and others to the detraction and scandal of some persons, which he affixed to this idle or idol maypole. They changed also the name of their place, and instead of calling it Mount Wollaston they call it Merry-mount, as if this jollity would have lasted ever. But this continued not long, for after Morton was sent for England (as follows to be declared) shortly after came over that worthy gentleman Mr. John Endecott, who brought over a patent under the broad seal for the government of the Massachusetts. Who, visiting those parts, caused that maypole to be cut down and rebuked them for their profaneness and admonished them to look there should be better walking. So they or others now changed the name of their place again and called it Mount Dagon.³

Now to maintain this riotous prodigality and profuse excess, Morton, thinking himself lawless, and hearing what gain the French and fishermen made by trading of pieces, powder and shot to the Indians, he as the head of this consortship began the practice of the same in these parts. And first he taught them how to use them, to charge and discharge, and what proportion of powder to give the piece, according to the size

¹ *maypole* Wooden pole erected throughout Europe as a sign of spring renewal. The symbol derived from pagan traditions and was thus regarded as idolatrous by Puritans. In seventeenth-century England, the maypole was at the center of a dispute between royalist cultural conservatives, who viewed the maypole as an English tradition that reinforced the authority of the English crown, and religious cultural reformers, who believed that the maypole was a pagan practice in need of eradication.

² *Flora* Roman goddess of spring and fertility; *Bacchanalians* Revelers attending Bacchanalia, festivals of the Roman god Bacchus, who was associated with ecstasy and wine. These ancient initiatory rites involved ecstatic experiences, drunkenness, and sexual freedom.

³ *Mount Dagon* Dagon is an ancient fertility god, described in the Bible as the god of the Philistines, antagonists of the biblical Israelites. See Judges 16.23.

or bigness of the same; and what shot to use for fowl and what for deer. And having thus instructed them, he employed some of them to hunt and fowl for him, so as they became far more active in that employment than any of the English, by reason of their swiftness of foot and nimbleness of body, being also quick-sighted and by continual exercise well knowing the haunts of all sorts of game. So as when they saw the execution that a piece would do, and the benefit that might come by the same, they became mad (as it were) after them and would not stick to give any price they could attain to for them; accounting their bows and arrows but baubles in comparison of them.

And here I may take occasion to bewail the mischief that this wicked man began in these parts, and which since, base covetousness prevailing in men that should know better, has now at length got the upper hand and made this thing common, notwithstanding any laws to the contrary. So as the Indians are full of pieces all over, both fowling pieces, muskets, pistols, etc. They have also their moulds to make shot of all sorts, as musket bullets, pistol bullets, swan and goose shot, and of smaller sorts. Yea some have seen them have their screw-plates⁴ to make screw-pins themselves when they want them, with sundry other implements, wherewith they are ordinarily better fitted and furnished than the English themselves. Yea, it is well known that they will have powder and shot when the English want it nor cannot get it; and that in a time of war or danger, as experience hath manifested, that when lead hath been scarce and men for their own defense would gladly have given a groat⁵ a pound, which is dear enough, yet hath it been bought up and sent to other places and sold to such as trade it with the Indians at 12d⁶ the pound. And it is like they give 3s or 4s⁷ the pound, for they will have it at any rate. And these things have been done in the same times when some of their neighbours and friends are daily killed by the Indians, or are in danger thereof and live but at the Indians' mercy. . . .

⁴ *screw-plates* Steel plates with differently sized threaded holes used to make screws (here, for fastening the parts of a gun together).

⁵ *groat* Equal to four pence; in a London pub at the time, this could buy you a meal and a pint of beer.

⁶ *12d* Twelve pence.

⁷ *3s or 4s* Three or four shillings (each shilling contains twelve pence).

So sundry of the chief of the straggling plantations, meeting together, agreed by mutual consent to solicit those of Plymouth (who were then of more strength than them all) to join with them to prevent the further growth of this mischief, and suppress Morton and his consorts before they grew to further head and strength. Those that joined in this action, and after contributed to the charge of sending him for England, were from Piscataqua, Naumkeag, Winnisimmet, Wessagusset, Nantasket¹ and other places where any English were seated. Those of Plymouth being thus sought to by their messengers and letters, and weighing both their reasons and the common danger, were willing to afford them their help though themselves had least cause of fear or hurt. So, to be short, they first resolved jointly to write to him, and in a friendly and neighbourly way to admonish him to forbear those courses, and sent a messenger with their letters to bring his answer.

But he was so high as he scorned all advice, and asked who had to do with him, he had and would trade pieces with the Indians, in despite of all, with many other scurrilous terms full of disdain. They sent to him a second time and bade him be better advised and more temperate in his terms, for the country could not bear the injury he did. It was against their common safety and against the King's proclamation. He answered in high terms as before; and that the King's proclamation was no law, demanding what penalty was upon it. It was answered, more than he could bear—His Majesty's displeasure. But insolently he persisted and said the King was dead² and his displeasure with him, and many the like things. And threatened withal that if any came to molest him, let them look to themselves for he would prepare for them.

Upon which they saw there was no way but to take him by force; and having so far proceeded, now to give over would make him far more haughty and insolent. So they mutually resolved to proceed, and obtained of the Governor of Plymouth to send Captain Standish and some other aid with him, to take Morton by force. The which accordingly was done. But they found him to stand stiffly in his defense, having made fast his doors, armed his consorts, set diverse dishes of powder and bullets ready on the table; and if they had not been

over-armed with drink, more hurt might have been done. They summoned him to yield, but he kept his house and they could get nothing but scoffs and scorns from him. But at length, fearing they would do some violence to the house, he and some of his crew came out, but not to yield but to shoot; but they were so steeled with drink as their pieces were too heavy for them. Himself with a carbine,³ overcharged and almost half filled with powder and shot, as was after found, had thought to have shot Captain Standish; but he stepped to him and put by his piece and took him. Neither was there any hurt done to any of either side, save that one was so drunk that he ran his own nose upon the point of a sword that one held before him, as he entered the house; but he lost but a little of his hot blood.

Morton they brought away to Plymouth, where he was kept till a ship went from the Isle of Shoals for England, with which he was sent to the Council of New England, and letters written to give them information of his course and carriage. And also one was sent at their common charge to inform their Honours more particularly and to prosecute against him. But he fooled of the messenger, after he was gone from hence, and though he went for England yet nothing was done to him, not so much as rebuked, for aught was heard, but returned the next year. Some of the worst of the company were dispersed and some of the more modest kept the house till he should be heard from. But I have been too long about so unworthy a person, and bad a cause.

from CHAPTER 25

ANNO DOMINI 1634

[CAPTAIN STONE, THE DUTCH, AND THE
CONNECTICUT INDIANS]

... I am now to relate some strange and remarkable passages. There was a company of people lived in the country up above in the River of Connecticut a great way from their trading house there, and were enemies to those Indians which lived about them, and of whom they stood in some fear, being a stout people. About a thousand of them had enclosed themselves in a fort

¹ *Piscataqua ... Nantasket* Places on the coast of New England.

² *King was dead* James I had died in 1625.

³ *carbine* Medium-sized gun (mid-way between a pistol and a larger musket).

which they had strongly palisadoed¹ about. Three or four Dutchmen went up in the beginning of winter to live with them, to get their trade and prevent them for bringing it to the English or to fall into amity with them; but at spring to bring all down to their place. But their enterprise failed. For it pleased God to visit these Indians with a great sickness and such a mortality that of a thousand, above nine and a half hundred of them died, and many of them did rot above ground for want of burial. And the Dutchmen almost starved before they could get away, for ice and snow; but about February they got with much difficulty to their trading house; whom they kindly relieved, being almost spent with hunger and cold. Being thus refreshed by them diverse days, they got to their own place and the Dutch were very thankful for this kindness.

This spring also, those Indians that lived about their trading house there,² fell sick of the small pox and died most miserably; for a sorer disease cannot befall them, they fear it more than the plague. For usually they that have this disease have them in abundance, and for want of bedding and linen and other helps they fall into a lamentable condition as they lie on their hard mats, the pox breaking and mattering³ and running one into another, their skin cleaving by reason thereof to the mats they lie on. When they turn them, a whole side will flay off at once as it were, and they will be all of a gore blood, most fearful to behold. And then being very sore, what with cold and other distempers, they die like rotten sheep. The condition of this people was so lamentable and they fell down so generally of this disease as they were in the end not able to help one another, no not to make a fire nor to fetch a little water to drink, nor any to bury the dead. But would strive as long as they could, and when they could procure no other means to make fire, they would burn the wooden trays and dishes they ate their meat in, and their very bows and arrows. And some would crawl out on all fours to get a little water, and sometimes die by the way and not be able to get in again. But of those of the English house, though at first they were afraid of the infection, yet seeing their woeful and sad condition and hearing their pitiful cries and lamentations, they

¹ *palisadoed* Fortified.

² *their trading house there* Plymouth trading house, at Windsor.

³ *mattering* Oozing pus.

had compassion of them, and daily fetched them wood and water and made them fires, got them victuals whilst they lived; and buried them when they died. For very few of them escaped, notwithstanding they did what they could for them to the hazard of themselves. The chief sachem himself now died and almost all his friends and kindred. But by the marvelous goodness and providence of God, not one of the English was so much as sick or in the least measure tainted with this disease, though they daily did these offices for them for many weeks together. And this mercy which they showed them was kindly taken and thankfully acknowledged of all the Indians that knew or heard of the same. And their masters here did much commend and reward them for the same.

from CHAPTER 28
ANNO DOMINI 1637
[THE PEQUOT WAR]

In the fore part of this year, the Pequots⁴ fell openly upon the English at Connecticut, in the lower parts of the river, and slew sundry of them as they were at work in the fields, both men and women, to the great terror of the rest; and went away in great pride and triumph, with many high threats. They also assaulted a fort at the river's mouth, though strong and well defended; and though they did not there prevail, yet it struck them with much fear and astonishment to see their bold attempts in the face of danger. Which made them in all places to stand upon their guard and to prepare for resistance, and earnestly to solicit their friends and confederates in the Bay of Massachusetts to send them speedy aid, for they looked for more forcible assaults. Mr. Vane, being then Governor, writ from their General Court to them here to join with them in this war. To which they were cordially willing, but took opportunity to write to them about some former things, as well as present, considerable hereabout. ...

In the meantime, the Pequots, especially in the winter before, sought to make peace with the Narragansetts, and used very pernicious arguments to move them thereunto: as that the English were strangers and began to overspeed their country, and would

⁴ *Pequots* Indigenous people living in what is now southeastern Connecticut.

deprive them thereof in time, if they were suffered to grow and increase. And if the Narragansetts did assist the English to subdue them, they did but make way for their own overthrow, for if they were rooted out, the English would soon take occasion to subjugate them. And if they would hearken to them they should not need to fear the strength of the English, for they would not come to open battle with them but fire their houses, kill their cattle and lie in ambush for them as they went abroad upon their occasions; and all this they might easily do without any or little danger to themselves. The which course being held, they well saw the English could not long subsist but they would either be starved with hunger or be forced to forsake the country. With many the like things; insomuch that the Narragansetts were once wavering and were half minded to have made peace with them, and joined against the English. But again, when they considered how much wrong they had received from the Pequots, and what an opportunity they now had by the help of the English to right themselves; revenge was so sweet unto them as it prevailed above all the rest, so as they resolved to join with the English against them, and did.

The Court here agreed forthwith to send fifty men at their own charge; and with as much speed as possibly they could, got them armed and had made them ready under sufficient leaders, and provided a bark to carry them provisions and tend upon them for all occasions. But when they were ready to march, with a supply from the Bay, they had word to stay; for the enemy was as good as vanquished and there would be no need.

I shall not take upon me exactly to describe their proceedings in these things, because I expect it will be fully done by themselves who best know the carriage and circumstances of things. I shall therefore but touch them in general. From Connecticut, who were most sensible of the hurt sustained and the present danger, they set out a party of men, and another party met them from the Bay, at the Narragansetts', who were to join with them. The Narragansetts were earnest to be gone before the English were well rested and refreshed, especially some of them which came last. It should seem their desire was to come upon the enemy suddenly and undiscovered. There was a bark of this place, newly put in there, which was come from Connecticut, who did encourage them to lay hold of the Indians' forwardness,

and to show as great forwardness as they, for it would encourage them, and expedition might prove to their great advantage. So they went on, and so ordered their march as the Indians brought them to a fort¹ of the enemy's (in which most of their chief men were) before day. They approached the same with great silence and surrounded it both with English and Indians, that they might not break out; and so assaulted them with great courage, shooting amongst them, and entered the fort with all speed. And those that first entered found sharp resistance from the enemy, who both shot at and grappled with them; others ran into their houses and brought out fire and set them on fire, which soon took in their mat; and standing close together, with the wind all was quickly on a flame, and thereby more were burnt to death than was otherwise slain. It burnt their bowstrings and made them unserviceable; those that escaped the fire were slain with the sword; some hewed to pieces, others run through with their rapiers, so as they were quickly dispatched and very few escaped. It was conceived they thus destroyed about 400 at this time. It was a fearful sight to see them thus frying in the fire and the streams of blood quenching the same, and horrible was the stink and scent thereof; but the victory seemed a sweet sacrifice,² and they gave the praise thereof to God, who had wrought so wonderfully for them, thus to enclose their enemies in their hands and give them so speedy a victory over so proud and insulting an enemy. ...

That I may make an end of this matter, this Sassacus (the Pequots' chief sachem) being fled to the Mohawks, they cut off his head, with some other of the chief of them, whether to satisfy the English or rather the Narragansetts (who, as I have since heard, hired them to do it) or for their own advantage, I well know not; but thus this war took end. The rest of the Pequots were wholly driven from their place, and some of them submitted themselves to the Narragansetts and lived under them. Others of them betook themselves to the Mohegans under Uncas, their sachem, with the approbation of the English of Connecticut, under whose protection Uncas lived; and he and his men had been faithful to them in this war and done them very good service. But this did so vex the Narragansetts,

¹ *fort* This was Fort Mystic, on the bank of the Mystic River.

² *sweet sacrifice* See Leviticus 2.2.

that they had not the whole sway over them, as they have never ceased plotting and contriving how to bring them under; and because they cannot attain their ends, because of the English who have protected them, they have sought to raise a general conspiracy against the English, as will appear in another place. ...

from CHAPTER 32
ANNO DOMINI 1642
[WICKEDNESS BREAKS FORTH]

Marvelous it may be to see and consider how some kind of wickedness did grow and break forth here, in a land where the same was so much witnessed against and so narrowly looked unto, and severely punished when it was known, as in no place more, or so much, that I have known or heard of; insomuch as they have been somewhat censured even by moderate and good men for their severity in punishments. And yet all this could not suppress the breaking out of sundry notorious sins (as this year, besides other, gives us too many sad precedents and instances), especially drunkenness and uncleanness.¹ Not only incontinency² between persons unmarried, for which many both men and women have been punished sharply enough, but some married persons also. But that which is worse, even sodomy and buggery³ (things fearful to name) have broke forth in this land oftener than once.

I say it may justly be marveled at and cause us to fear and tremble at the consideration of our corrupt natures, which are so hardly bridled, subdued and mortified; nay, cannot by any other means but the powerful work and grace of God's Spirit. But (besides this) one reason may be that the Devil may carry a greater spite against the churches of Christ and the gospel here, by how much the more they endeavour to preserve holiness and purity amongst them and strictly punisheth the contrary when it ariseth either in church or commonwealth; that he might cast a blemish and stain upon them in the eyes of [the] world, who use to be rash in judgment. I would rather think thus, than that Satan hath more power in these heathen lands, as

¹ *uncleanness* Sexual impurity.

² *incontinency* Lack of self-restraint.

³ *buggery* Anal intercourse, as well as any intercourse with an animal.

some have thought, than in more Christian nations, especially over God's servants in them.

2. Another reason may be, that it may be in this case as it is with waters when their streams are stopped or dammed up. When they get passage they flow with more violence and make more noise and disturbance than when they are suffered to run quietly in their own channels; so wickedness being here more stopped by strict laws, and the same more nearly looked unto so as it cannot run in a common road of liberty as it would and is inclined, it searches everywhere and at last breaks out where it gets vent.

3. A third reason may be, here (as I am verily persuaded) is not more evils in this kind, nor nothing near so many by proportion as in other places; but they are here more discovered and seen and made public by due search, inquisition and due punishment; for the churches look narrowly to their members, and the magistrates over all, more strictly than in other places. Besides, here the people are but few in comparison of other places which are full and populous and lie hid, as it were, in a wood or thicket and many horrible evils by that means are never seen nor known; whereas here, they are, as it were, brought into the light and set in the plain field, or rather on a hill, made conspicuous to the view of all. ...

[A HORRIBLE CASE OF BESTIALITY]

And after the time of the writing of these things befell a very sad accident of the like foul nature in this government, this very year, which I shall now relate. There was a youth whose name was Thomas Granger. He was servant to an honest man of Duxbury, being about 16 or 17 years of age. (His father and mother lived at the same time at Scituate.) He was this year detected of buggery, and indicted for the same, with a mare, a cow, two goats, five sheep, two calves and a turkey. Horrible it is to mention, but the truth of the history requires it. He was first discovered by one that accidentally saw his lewd practice towards the mare. (I forbear particulars.) Being upon it examined and committed, in the end he not only confessed the fact with that beast at that time, but sundry times before and at several times with all the rest of the forenamed in his indictment. And this his free confession was not only in private to the

magistrates (though at first he strived to deny it) but to sundry, both ministers and others; and afterwards, upon his indictment, to the whole court and jury; and confirmed it at his execution. And whereas some of the sheep could not so well be known by his description of them, others with them were brought before him and he declared which were they and which were not. And accordingly he was cast by the jury and condemned, and after executed about the 8th of September, 1642. A very sad spectacle it was. For first the mare, and then the cow, and the rest of the lesser cattle were killed before his face, according to the law, Leviticus 20.15; and then he himself was executed. The cattle were all cast into a great and large pit that was digged of purpose for them, and no use made of any part of them.

Upon the examination of this person and also of a former that had made some sodomitical attempts upon another, it being demanded of them how they came first to the knowledge and practice of such wickedness, the one confessed he had long used it in old England; and this youth last spoken of said he was taught it by another that had heard of such things from some in England when he was there, and they kept cattle together. By which it appears how one wicked person may infect many, and what care all ought to have what servants they bring into their families.

But it may be demanded how came it to pass that so many wicked persons and profane people should so quickly come over into this land and mix themselves amongst them? Seeing it was religious men that began the work and they came for religion's sake? I confess this may be marveled at, at least in time to come, when the reasons thereof should not be known; and the more because here was so many hardships and wants met withal. I shall therefore endeavour to give some answer hereunto.

1. And first, according to that in the gospel, it is ever to be remembered that where the Lord begins to sow good seed, there the envious man will endeavour to sow tares.¹

2. Men being to come over into a wilderness, in which much labor and service was to be done about building and planting, etc., such as wanted help in that respect, when they could not have such as they

would, were glad to take such as they could; and so, many untoward servants, sundry of them proved, that were thus brought over, both men and womenkind who, when their times were expired, became families of themselves, which gave increase hereunto.

3. Another and a main reason hereof was that men, finding so many godly disposed persons willing to come into these parts, some began to make a trade of it, to transport passengers and their goods, and hired ships for that end. And then, to make up their freight and advance their profit, cared not who the persons were, so they had money to pay them. And by this means the country became pestered with many unworthy persons who, being come over, crept into one place or other.

4. Again, the Lord's blessing usually following His people as well in outward as spiritual things (though afflictions be mixed withal) do make many to adhere to the People of God, as many followed Christ for the loaves' sake (John 6.26)² and a "mixed multitude" came into the wilderness with the People of God out of Egypt of old (Exodus 12.38).³ So also there were sent by their friends, some under hope that they would be made better; others that they might be eased of such burdens, and they kept from shame at home, that would necessarily follow their dissolute courses. And thus, by one means or other, in 20 years' time, it is a question whether the greater part be not grown the worse? ...

from CHAPTER 34
ANNO DOMINI 1644
[PROPOSAL TO REMOVE TO NAUSET]

Mr. Edward Winslow was chosen Governor this year.

Many having left this place (as is before noted) by reason of the straitness and barrenness of the same and their finding of better accommodations elsewhere more suitable to their ends and minds; and sundry others

¹ *tares* Weeds that resemble wheat when first growing. See Matthew 13.24–30.

² *John 6.26* "Jesus answered them, and said, Verily verily I say unto you, Ye seek me not, because ye saw the miracles, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled."

³ *Exodus 12.38* "And a great multitude of sundry sorts of people went out with them, and sheep, and beeves [oxen], and cattle in great abundance."

still upon every occasion desiring their dismissions, the church began seriously to think whether it were not better jointly to remove to some other place than to be thus weakened and as it were insensibly dissolved.¹ Many meetings and much consultation was held hereabout, and diverse were men's minds and opinions. Some were still for staying together in this place, alleging men might here live if they would be content with their condition, and that it was not for want or necessity so much that they removed as for the enriching of themselves. Others were resolute upon removal and so signified that here they could not stay; but if the church did not remove, they must. Insomuch as many were swayed rather than there should be a dissolution, to condescend to a removal if a fit place could be found that might more conveniently and comfortably receive the whole, with such accession of others as might come to them for their better strength and subsistence; and some such-like cautions and limitations.

So as, with the aforesaid provisos, the greater part consented to a removal to a place called Nauset, which had been superficially viewed and the good will of the purchasers to whom it belonged obtained, with some addition thereto from the Court. But now they began

to see their error, that they had given away already the best and most commodious places to others, and now wanted themselves. For this place was about 50 miles from hence, and at an outside of the country remote from all society; also that it would prove so strait as it would not be competent to receive the whole body, much less be capable of any addition or increase; so as, at least in a short time, they should be worse there than they are now here. The which with sundry other like considerations and inconveniences made them change their resolutions. But such as were before resolved upon removal took advantage of this agreement and went on, notwithstanding; neither could the rest hinder them, they having made some beginning.²

And thus was this poor church left, like an ancient mother grown old and forsaken of her children, though not in their affections yet in regard of their bodily presence and personal helpfulness; her ancient members being most of them worn away by death, and these of later time being like children translated into other families, and she like a widow left only to trust in God. Thus, she that had made many rich became herself poor.

—1856 (WRITTEN 1630–51)

¹ *Many having left ... insensibly dissolved* The leaders of Plymouth encouraged newcomers to establish new towns, but they had wanted the original church and community to remain cohesive. The land near Plymouth, however, was not conducive to expansion, and the wharfs and harbor at Boston were better for commerce—leading to the gradual diminishment of both population and trade at Plymouth.

² *made some beginning* Those who left for Nauset (now called Eastham) purchased the rights for the land from Mattaquason, sachem of Monamoyick. The church at Nauset was the third church to branch away from the original Plymouth church; the first two were Duxbury and Marshfield.

 IN CONTEXT

Mourt's Relation

This journal, written between November 1620 and November 1621, describes the landing of the *Mayflower* and the early days of Plymouth Plantation. While scholars generally believe that William Bradford (1590–1657) contributed to the journal, particularly to the earlier sections, the primary author is Edward Winslow (1595–1655), a *Mayflower* passenger who was also heavily involved in the government of the new colony. The *Relation* was published anonymously in England in 1622, and at that time it was attributed to George Morton (1585–1624)—also known as Mourt—who had signed the prefatory “Letter to the Reader” at the beginning of the volume. This led to the journal becoming popularly known as *Mourt's Relation*. Highly valued as a literary and historical document in its own right, the book is also of interest when read in conjunction with Bradford's later description of the same events in *Of Plymouth Plantation* (1651).

from Edward Winslow and William Bradford, *A Relation or Journal of the Proceedings of the Plantation Settled at Plymouth in New England [Mourt's Relation]*¹ (1622)

Wednesday, the sixth of September, the winds coming east-north-east, a fine small gale, we loosed from Plymouth,² having been kindly entertained and courteously used by diverse³ friends there dwelling, and after many difficulties in boisterous storms, at length, by God's providence, upon the ninth of November following, by break of the day we espied land which we deemed to be Cape Cod, and so afterward it proved. And the appearance of it much comforted us, especially seeing so goodly a land, and wooded to the brink of the sea. It caused us to rejoice together, and praise God that had given us once again to see land. And thus we made our course south-south-west, purposing to go to a river ten leagues to the south of the Cape,⁴ but at night the wind being contrary, we put round again for the bay of Cape Cod: and upon the 11th of November we came to an anchor in the bay, which is a good harbor and pleasant bay, circled round, except in the entrance which is about four miles over from land to land, compassed about to the very sea with oaks, pines, juniper, sassafras, and other sweet wood; it is a harbor wherein a thousand sail of ships may safely ride. There we relieved ourselves with wood and water, and refreshed our people, which our shallop⁵ was fitted to coast the bay, to search for a habitation; there was the greatest store of fowl that ever we saw.

And every day we saw whales playing hard by⁶ us, of which in that place, if we had instruments and means to take them, we might have made a very rich return, which to our great grief we wanted.⁷ Our master and his mate, and others experienced in fishing, professed we might have made three or four

¹ Several editions of *Mourt's Relation* have been consulted in the preparation of the text reprinted here, including Dwight Heath's 1963 edition and Henry Martyn Dexter's 1865 edition.

² *Plymouth* Referring here to the harbor city of Plymouth, England.

³ *diverse* Various.

⁴ *river ... south of the Cape* In *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Bradford suggests they were looking for the Hudson River. The distance from Cape Cod to that river, however, is much greater than ten miles.

⁵ *shallop* Open row-boat used in shallow waters to move between a larger boat and land.

⁶ *hard by* Near.

⁷ *wanted* Lacked.

thousand pounds' worth of oil; they preferred it before Greenland whale-fishing, and purpose the next winter to fish for whale here. For cod we assayed,¹ but found none; there is good store, no doubt, in their season. Neither got we any fish all the time we lay there, but some few little ones on the shore. We found great mussels, and very fat and full of sea-pearl, but we could not eat them, for they made us all sick that did eat, as well sailors as passengers; they caused to cast and scour,² but they were soon well again. . . .

Wednesday, the 15th of November, they³ were set ashore, and when they had ordered themselves in the order of a single file and marched about the space of a mile, by the sea they espied five or six people with a dog, coming towards them, who were savages, who when they saw them, ran into the wood and whistled the dog after them, etc. First they supposed them to be Master Jones,⁴ the master, and some of his men, for they were ashore and knew of their coming, but after they knew them to be Indians they marched after them into the woods, lest other of the Indians should lie in ambush; but when the Indians saw our men following them, they ran away with might and main and our men turned out of the wood after them, for it was the way they intended to go, but they could not come near them. They followed them that night about ten miles by the trace of their footings, and saw how they had come the same way they went, and at a turning perceived how they ran up a hill, to see whether they followed them. At length night came upon them, and they were constrained to take up their lodging, so they set forth three sentinels, and the rest, some kindled a fire, and others fetched wood, and there held our rendezvous that night.

In the morning so soon as we could see the trace,⁵ we proceeded on our journey, and had the track until we had compassed the head of a long creek, and there they took into another wood, and we after them, supposing to find some of their dwellings, but we marched through boughs and bushes, and under hills and valleys, which tore our very armor in pieces, and yet could meet with none of them, nor their houses, nor find any fresh water, which we greatly desired, and stood in need of, for we brought neither beer nor water with us, and our victuals was only biscuit and Holland cheese, and a little bottle of aquavita,⁶ so as we were sore athirst. About ten o'clock we came into a deep valley, full of brush, wood-gaile,⁷ and long grass, through which we found little paths or tracks, and there we saw a deer, and found springs of fresh water, of which we were heartily glad, and sat us down and drunk our first New England water with as much delight as ever we drunk drink in all our lives.

When we had refreshed ourselves, we directed our course full south, that we might come to the shore, which within a short while after we did, and there made a fire, that they in the ship might see where we were (as we had direction⁸) and so marched on towards this supposed river. And as we went in another valley we found a fine clear pond of fresh water, being about a musket shot broad and twice as long. There grew also many fine vines, and fowl and deer haunted there; there grew much sassafras. From thence we went on, and found much plain ground, about fifty acres, fit for plow, and some signs where the Indians had formerly planted their corn. After this, some thought it best, for nearness of the river, to go down and travel on the sea sands, by which means some of our men were tired, and lagged behind. So we stayed and gathered them up, and struck into the land again, where we found a little path to certain heaps of sand, one whereof was covered with old mats, and had a wooden thing like a mortar whelmed⁹ on the top of it,

¹ *assayed* Tried.

² *cast and scour* Vomit and suffer from diarrhea.

³ *they* Sixteen men, under Captain Myles Standish (c. 1584–1656), a military advisor to the Pilgrims, were sent out to explore the land to see if it was fit for habitation. William Bradford was among them.

⁴ *Master Jones* Christopher Jones (1570–1622), captain of the *Mayflower*.

⁵ *trace* Tracks.

⁶ *aquavita* Strong alcohol, such as whiskey or brandy.

⁷ *wood-gaile* Likely bayberry, a shrub in the same family as sweet gale.

⁸ *as we had direction* As we had been instructed to do.

⁹ *whelmed* Upside-down.

and an earthen pot laid in a little hole at the end thereof. We, musing what it might be, digged and found a bow, and, as we thought, arrows, but they were rotten. We supposed there were many other things, but because we deemed them graves, we put in the bow again and made it up as it was, and left the rest untouched, because we thought it would be odious unto them to ransack their sepulchres.

We went on further and found new stubble, of which they had gotten corn this year, and many walnut trees full of nuts, and great store of strawberries, and some vines. Passing thus a field or two, which were not great, we came to another which had also been new gotten, and there we found where a house had been, and four or five old planks laid together; also we found a great kettle¹ which had been some ship's kettle and brought out of Europe. There was also a heap of sand, made like the former—but it was newly done, we might see how they had paddled it with their hands—which we digged up, and in it we found a little old basket full of fair Indian corn, and digged further and found a fine great new basket full of very fair corn of this year, with some thirty-six goodly ears of corn, some yellow, some red, and others mixed with blue, which was a very goodly sight. The basket was round, and narrow at the top; it held about three or four bushels, which was as much as two of us could lift up from the ground, and was very handsomely and cunningly made. But whilst we were busy about these things, we set our men sentinel in a round ring, all but two or three which digged up the corn. We were in suspense what to do with it and the kettle, and at length, after much consultation, we concluded to take the kettle and as much of the corn as we could carry away with us; and when our shallop came, if we could find any of the people, and come to parley² with them, we would give them the kettle again, and satisfy them for their corn. So we took all the ears, and put a good deal of the loose corn in the kettle for two men to bring away on a staff; besides, they that could put any into their pockets filled the same. The rest we buried again, for we were so laden with armor that we could carry no more. . . .

In the morning we took our kettle and sunk it in the pond, and trimmed our muskets, for few of them would go off because of the wet, and so coasted³ the wood again to come home, in which we were shrewdly puzzled, and lost our way. As we wandered we came to a tree, where a young sprit⁴ was bowed down over a bow, and some acorns strewed underneath. Stephen Hopkins⁵ said it had been to catch some deer. So as we were looking at it, William Bradford being in the rear, when he came looked also upon it, and as he went about, it gave a sudden jerk up, and he was immediately caught by the leg. It was a very pretty device, made with a rope of their own making and having a noose as artificially⁶ made as any roper in England can make, and as like ours as can be, which we brought away with us. In the end we got out of the wood, and were fallen about a mile too high above the creek, where we saw three bucks, but we had rather have had one of them. We also did spring⁷ three couple of partridges, and as we came along by the creek we saw great flocks of wild geese and ducks, but they were very fearful of us. So we marched some while in the woods, some while on the sands, and other while in the water up to the knees, till at length we came near the ship, and then we shot off our pieces, and the long boat came to fetch us. Master Jones and Master Carver⁸ being on the shore, with many of our people, came to meet us. And thus we came both weary and welcome home, and delivered in our corn into the store, to be kept for seed, for we knew not how to come by any, and therefore were very glad, purposing, so soon as we could meet with any inhabitants of that place, to make them large satisfaction. . . .

¹ *kettle* Cauldron or pot.

² *parley* Talk; negotiate.

³ *coasted* Walked along the edge of.

⁴ *sprit* Young, flexible tree.

⁵ *Stephen Hopkins* Passenger on the *Mayflower* who had previous experience as a settler, having lived for four years in Virginia from 1610–14.

⁶ *artificially* Skillfully.

⁷ *spring* Flush from cover.

⁸ *Master Carver* John Carver (1584–1621) was the first governor of Plymouth.

... [W]e marched to the place where we had the corn formerly, which place we called Cornhill, and digged and found the rest, of which we were very glad. We also digged in a place a little further off, and found a bottle of oil. We went to another place which we had seen before, and digged, and found more corn, viz.¹ two or three baskets full of Indian wheat,² and a bag of beans, with a good many of fair wheat ears. Whilst some of us were digging up this, some others found another heap of corn, which they digged up also, so as we had in all about ten bushels, which will serve us sufficiently for seed. And sure it was God's good providence that we found this corn, for else we know not how we should have done, for we knew not how we should find or meet with any Indians, except it be to do us a mischief. Also, we had never in all likelihood seen a grain of it if we had not made our first journey, for the ground was now covered with snow, and so hard frozen that we were fain with our cutlasses³ and short swords to hew and carve the ground a foot deep, and then wrest it up with levers, for we had forgot to bring other tools. Whilst we were in this employment, foul weather being towards, Master Jones was earnest to go aboard, but sundry⁴ of us desired to make further discovery and to find out the Indians' habitations. So we sent home with him our weakest people, and some that were sick, and all the corn, and eighteen of us stayed still, and lodged there that night, and desired that the shallop might return to us next day and bring us some mattocks⁵ and spades with them.

The next morning we followed certain beaten paths and tracks of the Indians into the woods, supposing they would have led us into some town, or houses. After we had gone a while, we light⁶ upon a very broad beaten path, well nigh two feet broad. Then we lighted all our matches and prepared ourselves, concluding that we were near their dwellings, but in the end we found it to be only a path made to drive deer in, when the Indians hunt, as we supposed.

When we had marched five or six miles into the woods and could find no signs of any people, we returned again another way, and as we came into the plain ground we found a place like a grave, but it was much bigger and longer than any we had yet seen. It was also covered with boards, so as we mused what it should be, and resolved to dig it up, where we found, first a mat, and under that a fair bow, and there another mat, and under that a board about three quarters⁷ long, finely carved and painted, with three tines, or broaches,⁸ on the top, like a crown. Also between the mats we found bowls, trays, dishes, and such like trinkets. At length we came to a fair new mat, and under that two bundles, the one bigger, the other less. We opened the greater and found in it a great quantity of fine and perfect red powder, and in it the bones and skull of a man. The skull had fine yellow hair still on it, and some of the flesh unconsumed; there was bound up with it a knife, a packneedle,⁹ and two or three old iron things. It was bound up in a sailor's canvas cassock,¹⁰ and a pair of cloth breeches. The red powder was a kind of embalment, and yielded a strong, but not offensive smell; it was as fine as any flour. We opened the less bundle likewise, and found of the same powder in it, and the bones and head of a little child. About the legs and other parts of it was bound strings and bracelets of fine white beads; there was also by it a little bow, about three quarters long, and some other odd knacks. We brought sundry of the prettiest things away with us, and covered the corpse up again. After this, we digged in sundry like places, but found no more corn, nor any thing else but graves.

¹ *viz.* Abbreviation of the Latin *videlicet*, meaning "namely" or "that is to say."

² *Indian wheat* Corn.

³ *cutlasses* Short, slightly curved swords.

⁴ *sundry* Various.

⁵ *mattocks* Sturdy pick-like tools used to loosen up tough ground.

⁶ *light* Happened.

⁷ *three quarters* I.e., three quarters of a yard.

⁸ *tines, or broaches* Sharp points.

⁹ *packneedle* Large, strong needle that could be used to sew tough cloth.

¹⁰ *cassock* Cloak.

There was variety of opinions amongst us about the embalmed person. Some thought it was an Indian lord and king. Others said the Indians have all black hair, and never any was seen with brown or yellow hair. Some thought it was a Christian of some special note, which had died amongst them, and they thus buried him to honor him. Others thought they had killed him, and did it in triumph over him.

Whilst we were thus ranging and searching, two of the sailors, which were newly come on the shore, by chance espied two houses which had been lately dwelt in, but the people were gone. They, having their pieces and hearing nobody, entered the house and took out some things, and durst not stay but came again and told us. So some seven or eight of us went with them, and found how we had gone within a flight shot¹ of them before. The houses were made with long young sapling trees, bended and both ends stuck into the ground. They were made round, like unto an arbor, and covered down to the ground with thick and well-wrought mats, and the door was not over a yard high, made of a mat to open. The chimney was a wide open hole in the top, for which they had a mat to cover it close when they pleased. One might stand and go upright in them. In the midst of them were four little trunches² knocked into the ground, and small sticks laid over, on which they hung their pots, and what they had to seethe.³ Round about the fire they lay on mats, which are their beds. The houses were double matted, for as they were matted without, so were they within, with newer and fairer mats. In the houses we found wooden bowls, trays and dishes, earthen pots, handbaskets made of crabshells wrought together, also an English pail or bucket; it wanted a bail,⁴ but it had two iron ears. There was also baskets of sundry sorts, bigger and some lesser, finer and some coarser; some were curiously wrought with black and white in pretty works, and sundry other of their household stuff. We found also two or three deer's heads, one whereof had been newly killed, for it was still fresh. There was also a company of deer's feet stuck up in the houses, harts' horns,⁵ and eagles' claws, and sundry such like things there was, also two or three baskets full of parched acorns, pieces of fish, and a piece of a broiled herring. We found also a little silk grass, and a little tobacco seed, with some other seeds which we knew not. Without was sundry bundles of flags,⁶ and sedge, bulrushes, and other stuff to make mats. There was thrust into a hollow tree two or three pieces of venison, but we thought it fitter for the dogs than for us. Some of the best things we took away with us, and left the houses standing still as they were.

So it growing towards night, and the tide almost spent, we hasted with our things down to the shallop, and got aboard that night, intending to have brought some beads and other things to have left in the houses, in sign of peace and that we meant to truck⁷ with them, but it was not done, by means of our hasty coming away from Cape Cod. But so soon as we can meet conveniently with them, we will give them full satisfaction. Thus much of our second discovery. . . .

About five o'clock in the morning we began to be stirring, and two or three which doubted whether their pieces would go off or no made trial of them, and shot them off, but thought nothing at all. After prayer we prepared ourselves for breakfast and for a journey, and it being now the twilight in the morning, it was thought meet⁸ to carry the things down to the shallop. Some said it was not best to carry the armor down; others said they would be readier; two or three said they would not carry theirs till they went themselves, but mistrusting nothing at all. As it fell out, the water not being high enough, they laid the things down upon the shore and came up to breakfast. Anon, all upon a sudden, we heard a great and

¹ *flight shot* Distance a shot would fly.

² *trunches* Stakes.

³ *seethe* Boil.

⁴ *bail* Handle.

⁵ *harts' horns* Antlers from male deer.

⁶ *flags* Reeds.

⁷ *truck* Trade.

⁸ *meet* Appropriate.

strange cry, which we knew to be the same voices,¹ though they varied their notes. One of our company, being abroad, came running in and cried, "They are men! Indians! Indians!" and withal, their arrows came flying amongst us. Our men ran out with all speed to recover their arms, as by the good providence of God they did. In the meantime, Captain Miles Standish, having a snaphance² ready, made a shot, and after him another. After they two had shot, other two of us were ready, but he wished us not to shoot till we could take aim, for we knew not what need we should have, and there were four only of us which had their arms there ready, and stood before the open side of our barricade, which was first assaulted. They thought it best to defend it, lest the enemy should take it and our stuff, and so have the more vantage against us. Our care was no less for the shallop, but we hoped all the rest would defend it; we called unto them to know how it was with them, and they answered, "Well! Well!" every one and, "Be of good courage!" We heard three of their pieces go off, and the rest called for a firebrand to light their matches. One took a log out of the fire on his shoulder and went and carried it unto them, which was thought did not a little discourage our enemies. The cry of our enemies was dreadful, especially when our men ran out to recover their arms; their note was after this manner, "Woach woach ha ha hach woach." Our men were no sooner come to their arms, but the enemy was ready to assault them.

There was a lusty man and no whit less valiant, who was thought to be their captain, stood behind a tree within half a musket shot of us, and there let his arrows fly at us. He was seen to shoot three arrows, which were all avoided, for he at whom the first arrow was aimed, saw it, and stooped down and it flew over him; the rest were avoided also. He stood three shots of a musket. At length one took, as he said, full aim at him, and after which he gave extraordinary cry and away they went all. We followed them about a quarter of a mile, but we left six to keep our shallop, for we were careful about our business. Then we shouted all together two several times, and shot off a couple of muskets and so returned; this we did that they might see we were not afraid of them nor discouraged.

Thus it pleased God to vanquish our enemies and give us deliverance. By their noise we could not guess that they were less than thirty or forty, though some thought that they were many more. Yet in the dark of the morning we could not so well discern them among the trees, as they could see us by our fireside. We took up eighteen of their arrows which we have sent to England by Master Jones, some whereof were headed with brass, others with harts' horn, and others with eagles' claws. Many more no doubt were shot, for these we found were almost covered with leaves; yet, by the especial providence of God, none of them either hit or hurt us though many came close by us and on every side of us, and some coats which hung up in our barricade were shot through and through.

So after we had given God thanks for our deliverance, we took our shallop and went on our journey, and called this place, The First Encounter. . .

The 11th of June we set forth,³ the weather being very fair: but ere we had been long at sea, there arose a storm of wind and rain, with much lightning and thunder, insomuch that a spout⁴ arose not far from us: but, God be praised, it dured⁵ not long, and we put in that night for harbor at a place called Cummaquid,⁶ where we had some hope to find the boy. Two savages were in the boat with us, the one was Tisquantum, our interpreter, the other Tokamahamon,⁷ a special friend. It being night before we came in, we anchored in the midst of the bay, where we were dry at low water. In the morning we espied

¹ *same voices* The night before the group had been woken by "a great and hideous cry."

² *snaphance* Gun with a flint-lock.

³ *we set forth* Ten of the company goes to "the kingdom of Nauset, to seek a boy that had lost himself in the woods." The boy was John Billington, who was being held in a Nauset community in what is now Cape Cod.

⁴ *spout* Waterspout.

⁵ *dured* Endured, lasted.

⁶ *Cummaquid* Later renamed Barnstable, Massachusetts, by settlers.

⁷ *Tisquantum* Also known as Squanto (1585–1622), a member of the Patuxet tribe that lived in the area around Plymouth. Squanto was kidnapped by English sailors in 1617 and returned to New England in 1619; *Tokamahamon* Wampanoag guide chosen by the sachem Massasoit to give aid to the Plymouth settlers.

savages seeking lobsters, and sent our two interpreters to speak with them, the channel being between them; where they told them what we were, and for what we were come, willing them not at all to fear us, for we would not hurt them. Their answer was, that the boy was well, but he was at Nauset; yet since we were there they desired us to come ashore and eat with them; which, as soon as our boat floated, we did, and went six ashore, having four pledges for them in the boat. They brought us to their sachem or governor, whom they call Iyanough,¹ a man not exceeding twenty-six years of age, but very personable, gentle, courteous, and fair conditioned, indeed not like the savage, save for his attire; his entertainment was answerable to his parts, and his cheer² plentiful and various.

One thing was very grievous unto us at this place; there was an old woman, whom we judged to be no less than a hundred years old, which came to see us because she never saw English, yet could not behold us without breaking forth into great passion, weeping and crying excessively. We demanding the reason of it, they told us she had three sons who, when Master Hunt³ was in these parts, went aboard his ship to trade with him, and he carried them captives into Spain (for Tisquantum at this time was carried away also) by which means she was deprived of the comfort of her children in her old age. We told them we were sorry that any Englishman should give them that offense, that Hunt was a bad man, and that all the English that heard of it condemned him for the same: but for us, we would not offer them any such injury though it would gain us all the skins⁴ in the country. So we gave her some small trifles, which somewhat appeased her. . . .

from Robert Cushman, *Reasons and Considerations Touching the Lawfulness of Removing out of England into the Parts of America*⁵ (1622)

This tract was appended to printed versions of *Mourt's Relation* and attributed to the author "R.C." Most scholars identify this author as Robert Cushman (1579–1625), the business agent for the colony, who brought the manuscript of the *Relation* with him when he returned to England in 1622. Cushman's tract has long been placed in the genre of "promotional" literature outlining the benefits of immigration from England to the colonies. Critic Andrew Delbanco, however, argues that the tract belongs to the genre of "cases of conscience," literature that debates the morality of a given question or action, in this case whether it is moral or not to leave one's homeland in search of a better life. The tract is organized as a sermon, using scripture to support the claims made in favor of emigration. It contains an early expression of the "empty domicile" theory—the idea that Indigenous lands were empty wildernesses that could rightfully be taken by Europeans without payment or permission.

For as much as many exceptions are daily made against the going into and inhabiting of foreign desert⁶ places, to the hindrances of plantations abroad, and the increase of distractions at home, it is not

¹ *Iyanough* Iyanough (c. 1598–1623) was sachem to the Mattachiest tribe, a Wampanoag people who lived near Cummaquid.

² *cheer* Food and drink.

³ *Master Hunt* Thomas Hunt, a shipmaster, who took twenty-seven Indigenous people and sold them as slaves in Spain.

⁴ *skins* Beaver skins.

⁵ Several editions of *Mourt's Relation* have been consulted in the preparation of the text reprinted here, including Dwight Heath's 1963 edition and Henry Martyn Dexter's 1865 edition. While Cushman's biblical annotation has been retained in footnotes, some of his marginal notes have been omitted from this text.

⁶ *desert* Wild, uninhabited.

amiss that some which have been ear-witnesses of the exceptions made, and are either agents or abettors of such removals and plantations, do seek to give content to the world, in all things that possibly they can.

And although the most of the opposites¹ are such as either dream of raising their fortunes here, to that than which there is nothing more unlike, or such as affecting their home-born country so vehemently, as that they had rather with all their friends beg, yea, starve in it, than undergo a little difficulty in seeking abroad; yet are there some who, out of doubt in tenderness of conscience, and fear to offend God by running before they be called, are straitened² and do straiten others from going to foreign plantations. . . .

And being studious for brevity, we must first consider that whereas God of old did call and summon our fathers by predictions, dreams, visions, and certain illuminations to go from their countries, places, and habitations, to reside and dwell here or there, and to wander up and down from city to city, and land to land, according to his will and pleasure, now there is no such calling to be expected for any matter whatsoever, neither must any so much as imagine that there will now be any such thing.³ God did once so train up his people, but now he doth not, but speaks in another manner, and so we must apply ourselves to God's present dealing, and not to his wonted⁴ dealing; and as the miracle of giving manna ceased when the fruits of the land became plenty, so God, having such a plentiful storehouse of directions in his holy word, there must not now any extraordinary revelations be expected.⁵ But now the ordinary examples and precepts of the Scriptures, reasonably and rightly understood and applied, must be the voice and word that must call us, press us, and direct us in every action.

Neither is there any land or possession now, like unto the possession which the Jews had in Canaan,⁶ being legally holy and appropriated unto a holy people, the seed of Abraham, in which they dwelt securely and had their days prolonged, it being by an immediate voice said, that he (the Lord) gave it them as a land of rest after their weary travels, and a type of eternal rest in heaven but now there is no land of that sanctimony, no land so appropriated, none typical, much less any that can be said to be given of God to any nation as was Canaan, which they and their seed must dwell in, till God sendeth upon them sword or captivity. But now we are all in all places strangers and pilgrims, travellers and sojourners, most properly, having no dwelling but in this earthen tabernacle; our dwelling is but a wandering, and our abiding but as a fleeting, and in a word our home is nowhere, but in the heavens, in that house not made with hands, whose maker and builder is God, and to which all ascend that love the coming of our Lord Jesus.⁷

¹ *the opposites* Those opposed to emigration.

² *straitened* Restricted.

³ [Cushman's note] Genesis 12.1–2 and 35.1; Matthew 2.19; Psalm 105.13. [Genesis 12.1–2: "For the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto the land that I will show thee. / And I will make of thee a great nation, and will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing." In Genesis 35.1, God tells the patriarch Jacob to "go up to Bethel and dwell there, and make there an altar unto God." In Matthew 2.19–21, an angel appears to Joseph and tells him to flee Egypt and travel to Israel with his family. Psalm 105.13 describes the people of Israel walking "about from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people." Unless otherwise indicated, all biblical passages quoted in the footnotes to this selection are from the Geneva Bible.]

⁴ *wonted* Customary; i.e., past.

⁵ [Cushman's note] Hebrew 1.1–2; Joshua 5.12. [Hebrews 1.1: "At sundry times and in diverse manners God spake in the old time to our fathers by the Prophets: in these last days he hath spoken unto us by his Son." "Manna" refers to a food God provides to sustain the Israelites as they wander the wilderness; in Joshua 5.12, God ceases to bestow manna once the Israelites are able to feed themselves.]

⁶ [Cushman's note] Genesis 17.8. [In this passage God says to the patriarch Abraham, "And I will give thee and thy seed after thee the land, wherein thou art a stranger, even all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."]

⁷ [Cushman's note] 2 Corinthians 5.1–3. ["For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be destroyed, we have a building given of God, that is, an house not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens. For therefore we sigh, desiring to be clothed with our house, which is from heaven. Because that if we be clothed, we shall not be found naked."]

Though then there may be reasons to persuade a man to live in this or that land, yet there cannot be the same reasons which the Jews had, but now as natural, civil and religious bands tie men, so they must be bound, and as good reasons for things terrene¹ and heavenly appear, so they must be led. And so here falleth in our question, how a man that is here born and bred, and hath lived some years, may remove himself into another country.

I answer, a man must not respect only to live, and do good to himself, but he should see where he can live to do most good to others; for, as one saith, “He whose living is but for himself, it is time he were dead.” Some men there are who of necessity must here live, as being tied to duties, either to church, commonwealth, household, kindred, etc. But others, and that many, who do no good in none of those, nor can do none, as being not able, or not in favor, or as wanting opportunity, and live as outcasts, nobodies, eye-sores, eating but for themselves, teaching but themselves, and doing good to none, either in soul or body, and so pass over days, years, and months, yea, so live and so die. Now such should lift up their eyes and see whether there be not some other place and country to which they may go to do good and have use towards others of that knowledge, wisdom, humanity, reason, strength, skill, faculty, etc., which God hath given them for the service of others and his own glory. . . .

But some will say, what right have I to go live in the heathens’ country?

Letting pass the ancient discoveries, contracts and agreements which our Englishmen have long since made in those parts, together with the acknowledgment of the histories and chronicles of other nations, who profess the land of America from the Cape de Florida unto the Bay of Canada (which is south and north three hundred leagues and upwards, and east and west further than yet hath been discovered) is proper to the King of England—yet letting that pass, lest I be thought to meddle further than it concerns me, or further than I have discerning, I will mention such things as are within my reach, knowledge, sight and practise, since I have travailed in these affairs.

And first, seeing we daily pray for the conversion of the heathens, we must consider whether there be not some ordinary means and course for us to take to convert them, or whether prayer for them be only referred to God’s extraordinary work from heaven. Now it seemeth unto me that we ought also to endeavor and use the means to convert them, and the means cannot be used unless we go to them or they come to us; to us they cannot come, our land is full; to them we may go, their land is empty.

This then is a sufficient reason to prove our going thither to live lawful: their land is spacious and void, and there are few and do but run over the grass, as do also the foxes and wild beasts. They are not industrious, neither have art, science, skill or faculty to use either the land or the commodities of it, but all spoils, rots, and is marred for want of manuring, gathering, ordering, etc. As the ancient patriarchs therefore removed from straiter places into more roomy, where the land lay idle and waste, and none used it, though there dwelt inhabitants by them (as Genesis 13.6,11,12, and 34.21, and 41.20), so is it lawful now to take a land which none useth, and make use of it.

And as it is a common land or unused, and undressed² country, so we have it by common consent, composition and agreement, which agreement is double. First, the imperial governor Massasoit,³ whose circuits⁴ in likelihood are larger than England and Scotland, hath acknowledged the King’s Majesty of England to be his master and commander, and that once in my hearing, yea, and in writing, under his hand to Captain Standish,⁵ both he and many other kings which are under him, as Paomet, Nauset, Cummaquid, Narraganset, Nemasket,⁶ etc., with diverse others that dwell about the bays of

¹ *terrene* Earthly.

² *undressed* I.e., uncultivated.

³ *Massasoit* Sachem of the Wampanoag (c. 1581–1661). He allied with the Pilgrims at Plymouth, forging a peace that lasted until his death in 1661. His advice and support were crucial to the colony’s survival.

⁴ *circuits* Circumference of lands.

⁵ *Captain Standish* Myles Standish (c. 1584–1656), English ex-soldier hired as a military advisor to the Pilgrims.

⁶ *Paomet, Nauset, . . . Nemasket* Names of local Indigenous peoples, some of whom were part of the Wampanoag Confederacy.

Patuxet¹ and Massachusetts. Neither hath this been accomplished by threats and blows, or shaking of sword and sound of trumpet, for as our faculty that way is small, and our strength less, so our warring with them is after another manner, namely by friendly usage, love, peace, honest and just carriages,² good counsel, etc., that so we and they may not only live in peace in that land, and they yield subjection to an earthly prince, but that as voluntaries³ they may be persuaded at length to embrace the Prince of Peace, Christ Jesus, and rest in peace with him forever.⁴

Secondly, this composition⁵ is also more particular and applicatory, as touching ourselves there inhabiting: the emperor,⁶ by a joint consent, hath promised and appointed us to live at peace where we will in all his dominions, taking what place we will, and as much land as we will, and bringing as many people as we will, and that for these two causes. First, because we are the servants of James, King of England, whose the land (as he confesseth) is; second, because he hath found us just, honest, kind and peaceable, and so loves our company; yea, and that in these things there is no dissimulation on his part, nor fear of breach (except our security engender in them some unthought of treachery, or our uncivility provoke them to anger) is most plain in other relations, which show that the things they did were more out of love than out of fear.

It being then, first, a vast and empty chaos; secondly, acknowledged the right of our sovereign king; thirdly, by a peaceable composition in part possessed of diverse of his loving subjects, I see not who can doubt or call in question the lawfulness of inhabiting or dwelling there, but that it may be as lawful for such as are not tied upon some special occasion here, to live there as well as here. Yea, and as the enterprise is weighty and difficult, so the honor is more worthy, to plant a rude⁷ wilderness, to enlarge the honor and fame of our dread⁸ sovereign, but chiefly to display the efficacy and power of the Gospel, both in zealous preaching, professing, and wise walking under it, before the faces of these poor blind infidels.

As for such as object the tediousness of the voyage thither, the danger of pirates' robbery, of the savages' treachery, etc., these are but lions in the way,⁹ and it were well for such men if they were in heaven, for who can show them a place in this world where iniquity shall not compass them at the heels,¹⁰ and where they shall have a day without grief,¹¹ or a lease of life for a moment; and who can tell, but God, what dangers may lie at our doors, even in our native country, or what plots may be abroad, or when God will cause our sun to go down at noon-days,¹² and in the midst of our peace and security, lay upon us some lasting scourge for our so long neglect and contempt of his most glorious Gospel?

But we have here great peace, plenty of the Gospel, and many sweet delights, and variety of comforts. ...

¹ *Patuxet* The Plymouth colony was established on the territory of the Patuxet, a Wampanoag people.

² *carriages* Behaviors.

³ *voluntaries* Willing participants.

⁴ [Cushman's note] Psalms 110.3 and 48.3. [Psalm 110.3: "Thy people shall come willingly at the time of assembling thine army in holy beauty: the youth of thy womb shall be as the morning dew"; Psalm 48.3: "In the palaces thereof God is known for a refuge."]

⁵ *composition* Agreement, peaceful arrangement.

⁶ *the emperor* I.e., Massasoit.

⁷ *rude* Uncivilized.

⁸ *dread* Revered.

⁹ [Cushman's note] Proverbs 22.13. ["The slothful man saith, A lion is without, I shall be slain in the street."]

¹⁰ [Cushman's note] Psalm 49.5. ["Wherefore should I fear in the evil days, when iniquity shall compass me about, as at mine heels?"]

¹¹ [Cushman's note] Matthew 6.34. ["Care not then for the morrow, for the morrow shall care for itself: the day hath enough with his own grief."]

¹² [Cushman's note] Amos 8.9. ["And in that day, saith the Lord God, I will even cause the Sun to go down at noon: I will darken the earth in the clear day."]

True indeed, and far be it from us to deny and diminish the least of these mercies, but have we rendered unto God thankful obedience for this long peace, whilst other peoples have been at wars?¹ Have we not rather murmured, repined, and fallen at jars amongst ourselves, whilst our peace hath lasted with foreign power? Was there ever more suits in law, more envy, contempt and reproach than nowadays? Abraham and Lot departed asunder when there fell a breach betwixt them,² which was occasioned by the straitness of the land; and surely, I am persuaded that howsoever the frailties of men are principal in all contentions, yet the straitness of the place is such as each man is fain³ to pluck his means, as it were, out of his neighbor's throat; there is such pressing and oppressing in town and country, about farms, trades, traffic, etc., so as a man can hardly any where set up a trade but he shall pull down two of his neighbors.

To conclude, without all partiality, the present consumption⁴ which groweth upon us here, whilst the land groaneth under so many close-fisted and unmerciful men, being compared with the easiness, plainness and plentifulness in living in those remote places, may quickly persuade any man to a liking of this course, and to practise a removal, which being done by honest, godly and industrious men, they shall there be right heartily welcome, but for other of dissolute and profane life, their rooms are better than their companies.⁵ For if here,⁶ where the Gospel hath been so long and plentifully taught, they are yet frequent in such vices as the heathen would shame to speak of, what will they be when there is less restraint in word and deed? My only suit⁷ to all men is, that whether they live there or here, they would learn to use this world as they used it not,⁸ keeping faith and a good conscience, both with God and men, that when the day of account shall come, they may come forth as good and fruitful servants, and freely be received, and enter into the joy of their Master.

¹ [Cushman's note] 2 Chronicles 32.25. [In 2 Chronicles 32, God saves Hezekiah, King of Judah, from a sickness, but when Hezekiah is insufficiently grateful his kingdom is threatened with divine punishment.]

² [Cushman's note] Genesis 13.9–10. [In Genesis 13.9, Abraham resolves a dispute over shared pasture by giving Lot a portion of the Promised Land so that each patriarch can establish a separate settlement.]

³ *fain* Glad.

⁴ *consumption* Decay.

⁵ *rooms are better than their companies* Proverbial phrase meaning their absences are preferable to their presences.

⁶ *here* I.e., in England.

⁷ *suit* Plea.

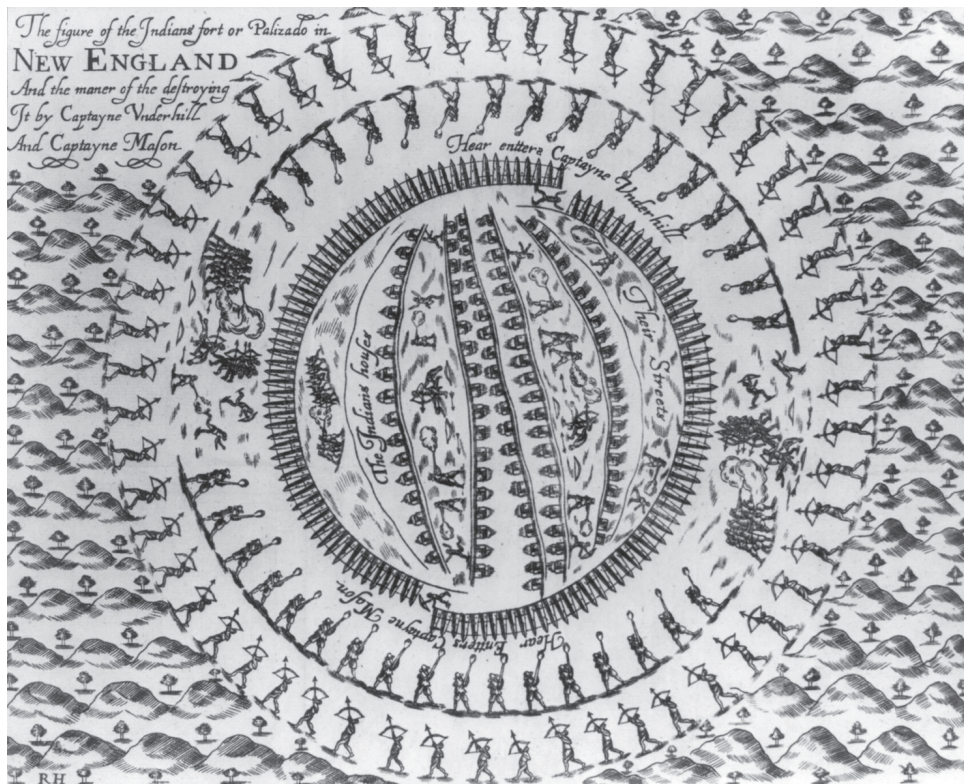
⁸ *use this world as they used it not* See 1 Corinthians 7.31, which urges “they that use this world” to act “as though they used it not,” i.e., as though they did not need or care about earthly things.

 IN CONTEXT

Mapping Colonial Conflict

The following are historical mappings of conflicts between settlers and Indigenous peoples in seventeenth-century New England. The first map depicts the genocide of the Pequot known as the Mystic Massacre (1637); the second documents Indigenous oral records of the boundaries of Pequot territory before the Pequot War (1636–38); and the third is a settler map marking sites of conflict across New England.

John Underhill, "The Figure of the Indians' Fort or Palizado in New England and the Manner of Destroying It by Captain Underhill and Captain Mason," *News from America* (1638)

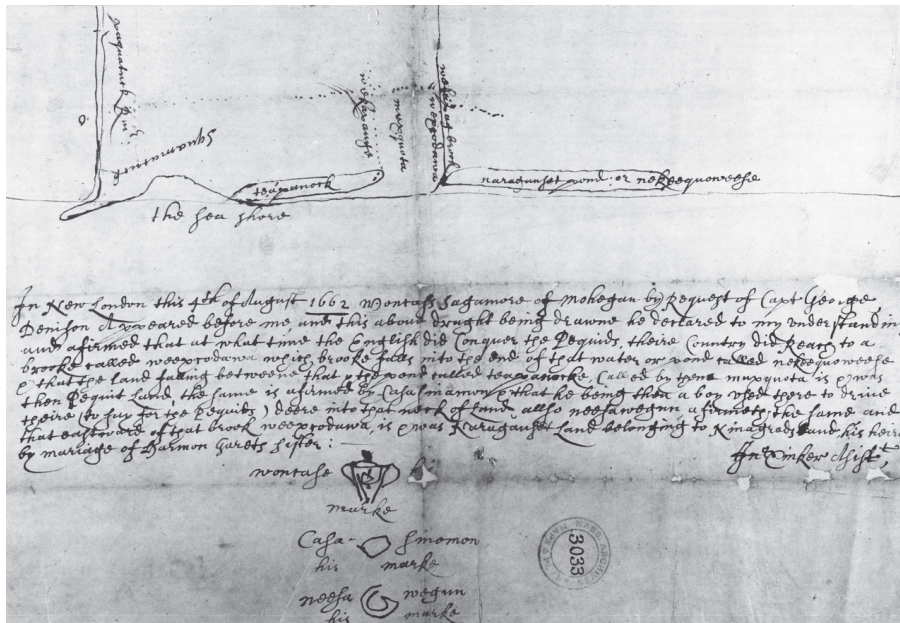


John Underhill and John Mason, colonists from Connecticut, led a genocide of the Pequots at their fortress on the Mystic River on 26 May 1637, killing everyone inside—including children and the elderly. The death toll of 400 people constituted a large percentage of the Pequot population, and the attack marked a devastating turning point in the Pequot War; after the massacre, almost all surviving Pequots were hunted down and killed or enslaved by settlers and their Indigenous allies, and were for a time not permitted to call themselves Pequot. It was not until 1983 that the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation was recognized by the federal government; another tribal nation, the Eastern Pequot, is still pursuing federal recognition.

This map depicting the massacre appeared in Underhill's *News from America*, an account of his experiences as a militia captain during the Pequot War. Underhill describes the Mystic Massacre as follows:

Captain Mason entering into a wigwam, brought out a firebrand, after he had wounded many in the house, then he set fire on the west side where he entered, myself set fire on the south end with a train of powder. The fires of both meeting in the center of the fort blazed most terribly, and burnt all in the space of half an hour; many courageous fellows were unwilling to come out, and fought most desperately through the pallsadoes, so as they were scorched and burnt with the very flame, and were deprived of their arms, in regard the fire burnt their very bowstrings, and so perished valiantly: mercy they did deserve for their valour, could we have had opportunity to have bestowed it; many were burnt in the Fort, both men, women, and children, others forced out, and came in troops to the Indians [the colonists' Narragansett and Mohegan allies], twenty, and thirty at a time, which our soldiers received and entertained with the point of the sword; down fell men, women, and children. Those that scaped us, fell into the hands of the Indians, that were in the rear of us; it is reported by themselves, that there were about four hundred souls in this Fort, and not above five of them escaped out of our hands. Great and doleful was the bloody sight to the view of young soldiers that never had been in war, to see so many souls lie gasping on the ground so thick in some places, that you could hardly pass along. It may be demanded, Why should you be so furious (as some have said) should not Christians have more mercy and compassion? But I would refer you to David's war, when a people is grown to such a height of blood, and sin against God and man ... there he hath no respect to persons, but harrows them, and saws them, and puts them to the sword, and the most terriblest death that may be: sometimes the Scripture declares women and children must perish with their parents; sometime[s] the case alters: but we will not dispute it now. We had sufficient light from the word of God for our proceedings.

John Tinker, Uncas, Wesawegun, Cassacinamon, Harry Wright, and Ninigret, "Plan of the Pequot Country and Testimony of Uncas, Cassacinamon, and Wesawegun" (1662)



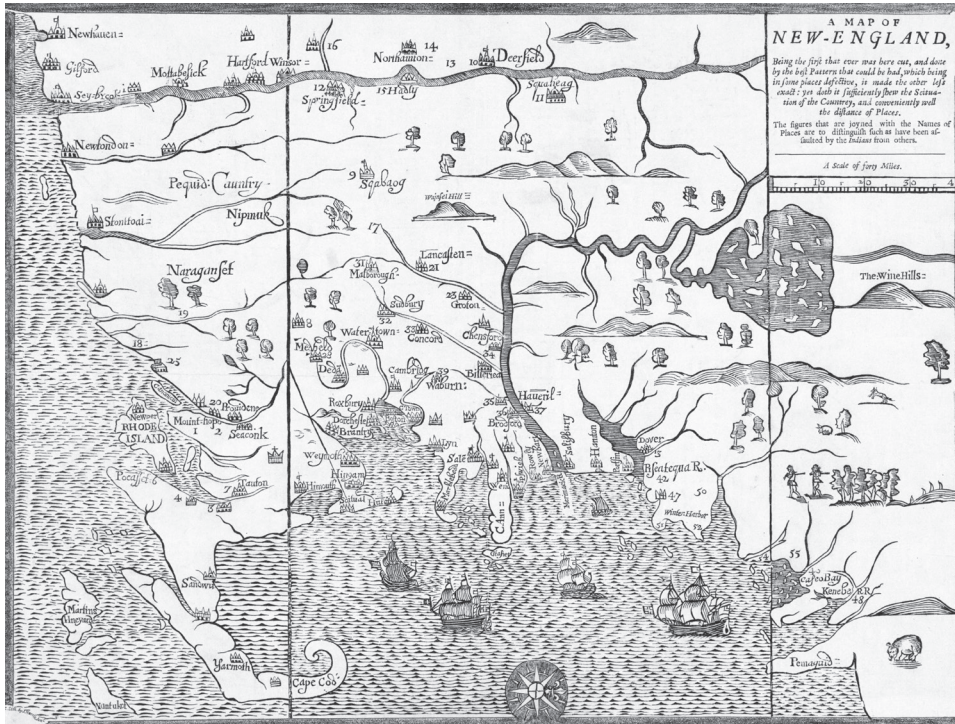
This image shows the extent of Pequot territory before the Pequot War, with testimony of Uncas, Cassacinamon, and Wesawegun regarding the borders of the land. The map is made by the war's victors: the colonists and the Mohegan and the Narragansett, the Indigenous tribes that fought alongside the colonists. The 1638 Treaty of Hartford had declared Pequot territory to be the property of the English colonists. In 1662, however, there was conflict among the colonists after Charles II issued the Connecticut charter, which transferred the Pequot lands from Massachusetts to Connecticut. There were disagreements among the colonists as to the extent of the land, and disagreements between the Mohegan and the Narragansett as well, who each claimed some portion of the land as spoils of war. To help sort out the various claims, Indigenous leaders were gathered together at the General Court in New London to document their knowledge of the territory's boundaries. John Tinker and Harry Wright, two colonial representatives, were joined by Uncas; other signatories to the map were Pequot survivors Wesawegun and Cassacinamon. The following is a lightly modernized transcription of the writing on the map:

In New London this 4th of August 1662 Woncass [Uncas] Sagamore of Mohegan by request of Captain George Denison appeared before me, and this above draft being drawn he declared to my understanding and affirmed that at what time the English did conquer the Pequots [Pequots], their country did reach to a brook called Weex-co-da-wa, which brook falls into the end of that water or pond called Nekeequeweese, and that the land falling between that and the pond called Teapanocke, called by them Muxquota, is and was then Pequot land, the same is affirmed by Cassacinamon, and that he being then a boy used there to drive their (to say for the Pequots) deer into that neck of land, also Wesawegun affirmeth the same, and that eastward of that brook Weexcodawa, is and was Narragansett land belonging to Ninigrads [Ninigret] and his heirs by marriage of Hermon Garret's sister:

John Tinker, Assist.

- Woncass [Uncas] his mark
- Cassinomon his mark
- Wesawegun his mark

William Hubbard, A Map of New-England (1677)



This is the first map printed in America, issued by Boston printer John Foster. It was an illustration in English-born writer and clergy member William Hubbard's book *The Present State of New England: Being a Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians* (1677). The description in the upper right corner identifies the map as "the first that ever was here [in America] cut, and done by the best pattern that could be had, which being in some places defective, it made the other less exact: yet doth it sufficiently show the situation of the country, and conveniently well the distance of places." The crowns on the map mark European settlements; the numbers mark places where there had been conflicts with Indigenous peoples.