

Transcript: Part One, Episode Two Arriving in the New World

I'm Matthew. I'm Mike. On this episode of Keep Liberty Alive, we take a look at what coming to the New World had in store for our freedom-bound colonists. This is Part One, Episode Two- Arriving in the New World

At the end of Episode One, the Pilgrims decided to stay in Cape Cod instead of going to the Hudson River Area. They weren't ready to disembark because they had not surveyed the area and decided to remain on the Mayflower through the winter. It was a very cold winter that year and they were beset with disease, leading to about half of the Pilgrims dying during that winter. There was, however, one child born during this time, a son born to William and Susanna Wright named Peregrin. When the Pilgrims left England, the royal charter had not been finished yet (it was finished while they were on the voyage). The charter was intended for them to land at Hudson and not Plymouth. Some passengers, mainly the "strangers," argued that meant they were free to do as they pleased. There was disagreement and what William Bradford called "mutinous speeches." To maintain order, they drew up the Mayflower Compact. Every adult male, 41 of them, signed the document. It helped found the government of the Plymouth colony and established the concept of self-government in North America.

Mayflower Compact-

"In the name of God, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c. Having undertaking for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and the honour of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia; do by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the Presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for or better Ordering and Preservation, and Furtherance of the Ends aforesaid: And by Virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions, and Offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all do Submission and Obedience. In Witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, Anno Domini; 1620.

All of the adult men on board, which included the adult servants, signed the compact. The first signature was John Carver's. John Carver was the man who chartered the Mayflower. The Pilgrims chose him to be the first governor of the Plymouth Colony, a position he held until his death in April 1621. Some of the 43 men that signed the document were servants who were of age (18 and older). They were most likely indentured servants who agreed to seven years of labor in return for passage, food, protection, and land ownership if they survived.

The Pilgrims, led by Myles Standish and Christopher Jones began to do some exploration of the immediate area while others on board assembled and repaired a smaller sailing vessel (about 20 ft called a Shallop) that had been brought on the voyage unassembled and was slightly damaged in transit. During one of these trips, Standish and company found an abandoned European style house and some corn fields that had recently been cultivated. They also found

two homes of natives that looked to be inhabited, but the occupants had apparently left in fear of the party. Standish's crew found some corn and beans, decided to take them, and repay the residents when they ran across them again, which they apparently did. Also, they found some native burial mounds which contained corn. They took some of it to be used as seed for the next planting season and reburied the rest.

The winter turned harsh and cold and during the month of December, most of the people aboard the Mayflower had become sick and many had Scurvy. Most of the exploratory trips were halted due to the cold weather, ice and snow. Stuck on the ship for the winter and sick, fully half of the people aboard died. They literally risked everything to come to the new world for the sake of freedom.

Once they started exploring again aboard the Shallop, they came across some natives of the Nauset tribe, who ran away when the party approached. After camping for the night on shore, the Nauset returned in the night and shot arrows at the party. After returning the fire with muskets, the Nauset fled once again and were not seen again for a few months.

The Nauset were already wary of Europeans after a trader named Thomas Hunt had kidnapped several Nauset and Pawtuxet people a few years earlier to be sold as slaves in Europe. One of the captured Pawtuxet natives was a man named Tisquantum, who would later become known as Squanto. Hunt sold Squanto and some other natives to a group of monks in Spain who gave them an education and introduced them to Christianity. Squanto learned English and became a Christian, eventually making his way to England, possibly meeting Pocahontas while there. He left England and returned to his native home in the Cape Cod area in 1619 and found that his entire tribe had been wiped out by an epidemic, possibly smallpox. Squanto was the last of the Pawtuxet. He was the one to teach the pilgrims the fur trade and how to grow corn and became the liaison with the natives of the area.

After further exploration of the area the pilgrims found an area that had been previously cleared, which turned out to be the former village of the Patuxet people. They chose this place to build their colony. They began construction right away and finished most of the settlement by February. The first completed building became a hospital for the ill. Only 47 colonists and half of the crew survived the winter. When John Carver passed away in April, William Bradford became Governor.

Bradford was the one to first use the word pilgrims in his "Of Plymouth Plantation," which documented the group's journey and later became the term by which the colonists were known.