

Voyaging Through History: The Meanings of the Mayflower, 1620-2020



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VOYAGING through HISTORY the MAYFLOWER & BRITAIN

We are an Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded research group investigating the legacy of the Mayflower in British historical culture. Our project looks at four centuries of engagement from the first publications in the seventeenth century, to the commemorations of the twentieth, and the events of 2020. This pamphlet offers an overview of some of the key literary works and how the Mayflower story struck a chord with nineteenth and twentieth century audiences.

In 2020 the Anglo-American world marked the 400th anniversary of the transatlantic *Mayflower* voyage and the settlement of New Plymouth in present-day Massachusetts. Intensive interest in the story of the *Mayflower* is not a new phenomenon, especially in the United States, where it is seen by many as the bedrock of the nation's 'origin story'. In addition to this, the tale of the Pilgrim's voyage has also captured the British imagination. There have been moments of intense fascination in the Romantic period and the Victorian era; during and following the First and Second World War; and around the 350th anniversary celebrations dubbed 'Mayflower 70'. At both a local and national level, the tale of the Pilgrims' journey across the Atlantic Ocean, and their escape from religious persecution, has had

an enduring legacy for individuals, institutions, and communities. A rich range of novels, plays, films, memorials, and curated historical buildings are testament to the cultural, political and religious significance of the *Mayflower* in Britain.

The meaning of the *Mayflower* voyage has altered substantially to suit specific agendas at different points in history. It has been repurposed by Chartist radicals, abolitionists, religious conservatives, and even Irish revolutionaries. 'Voyaging through History' takes a critical view across a long chronological range and through a broad thematic scope: our project provides insights into the relationship between historical culture and religion, Anglo-American diplomacy, national identity, and place-making.

This pamphlet offers a guide to some of the key texts in British *Mayflower* literature. We provide a brief narrative of the development of the *Mayflower* story and its use by various authors over the four centuries since the founding of New Plymouth. The British Library provides a wealth of material with which one can trace this journey, so we have identified further texts for interested users in our annotated bibliography.

You can find out about our project by visiting our website and following us on social media:

On the web:

<http://voyagingthroughhistory.exeter.ac.uk/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/MayflowerBrit>

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<https://twitter.com/mayflowerbrit>

The Origins of a Myth...

On the 6th of September 1620 an unremarkable English merchant ship set sail from the English port of Plymouth, headed for the colony of Virginia. The *Mayflower* barely completed the voyage. Under the stress of 'fierce storms' the main beam 'bowed and cracked' and had the vessel not been so far across the Atlantic they would have considered turning back. Captain John Smith later described the *Mayflower* as 'a leaking and unwholesome ship' but it was the best the emigrants could afford given the circumstances. Travelling on the *Mayflower* were 30 crew members and 102 passengers, some of whom would become venerated as the 'Pilgrim Fathers' – the Puritan settlers who settled New Plymouth, Massachusetts. For many years after their voyage this group of 'Brownist separatists' was a footnote in the histories of the settlement of North America. However, from the late eighteenth-century onwards, and especially after the American Civil War, the *Mayflower* and the Pilgrim Fathers became key players in one of the defining national myths of the modern world.

The men and women who would become memorialised in American and British literature had spent over a decade in Holland. Persecuted for worshiping outside the Church of England in the tradition of Robert Browne, they relocated to Leiden with their pastor John Robertson. Whilst Robinson remained in Holland, the decision was taken for the congregation to relocate to America. The freedom afforded in Holland was also seen as a corrosive influence on morality and religious purity, and the Pilgrims were suffering poor economic fortune as well. The group left Holland on the *Speedwell*, a smaller ship that accompanied the *Mayflower* during its first departure from South-

ampton on August 15, 1620. Originally intended to make Atlantic crossing, the *Speedwell* proved dangerously unseaworthy, and twice forced to return to port. Ultimately, the *Mayflower* set out unaccompanied from Plymouth, destined for the New World.

After an arduous 66-day voyage the crew sighted land. The separatists intended to land in Northern Virginia near the Hudson River. However, due to bad weather they landed further north than anticipated, and outside the original patent granted to the company, on land already named New Plymouth. The first winter was harsh. Unable to build sufficient shelter, the company huddled onboard ship. Half of the settlers and crew members died from disease and malnutrition. Reduced in number the emigrants finally disembarked in March of 1621. Soon after, a peace treaty was negotiated with Massasoit, a Native American leader. In October of 1621, a harvest festival – now seen as the first Thanksgiving – was held by the remaining 53 settlers and around 80 of the Wampanoag people. The settlers also signed the 'Mayflower Compact', a set of rules of self-governance for New Plymouth, often deemed an important forerunner of the Constitution of the United States.



The Role of Storytellers

These details are familiar to generations of American schoolchildren, and the story of the *Mayflower* forms an important part of national identity in the United States. Famous American poets and novelists, such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Lydia Sigourney, and Harriet Beecher Stowe composed works that popularised the *Mayflower* narrative. Likewise, many British authors, painters, and composers also contributed to the growth of the mythology around the Mayflower story.

The Romantic poet Felicia Hemans made an important contribution to *Mayflower* literature with her poem 'The Landing on the Pilgrim Fathers in New England' (1825). Hemans was a poet and literary celebrity whose immense popularity rivalled any writer of the early nineteenth-century, even eclipsing that of Lord Byron after his death in 1824. Hemans' poem was a remarkable success and helped to popularise the term 'Pilgrim Fathers' which was largely unknown at the time. This literary success was particularly evident in the United States. In keeping with much of Hemans' work, it is a highly Romantic interpretation of the 1620 Atlantic crossing focusing on natural imagery and personal emotion. The opening stanza emphasises the peril of the voyage with dramatic descriptions of an ocean storm:

**The breaking waves dash'd high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches toss'd.**

This scene takes place on a 'dark' and 'heavy night' which combined with imagery of a des-

olate 'rock-bound' coast set again 'breaking waves' and a 'stormy sky' demonstrates influence from the Romantic sublime as well as Gothic literature. American audiences were receptive to the poem's depiction of the colonists and their religious mission. Indeed, the afterlife of the poem was considerable: her work was recited at celebrations of the Declaration of Independence in the nineteenth-century and schoolchildren were taught to memorise the poem well into the twentieth-century. The author James Albert Michener recollected his earliest experiences of poetry in his 1991 memoir *The World Is My Home*: 'Starting as a lad in primary school, I was required to learn traditional poems selected by enthusiastic and patriotic teachers [...] [I] learned the verse with such tenacity that they reverberate in my memory: "The breaking waves dashed high / On a stern and rock-bound coast"'.



Why was the poem so popular in both Britain and America? One reason was the increased cultural influence the verses gained when the poem was set to music by Hemans composer sister Harriet Browne (1798–1858). This became popular parlour music throughout the nineteenth century. The British library holds numerous musical scores of the song printed from the 1830s until as late as the 1930s.

The poem was also published in illustrated editions and gift books. One such example, Anne Lydia Bond's *Three Gems in One Setting* (1860), set Hemans poem alongside Alfred Lloyd Tennyson's 'The Poets Song' and Thomas Campbell's 'The Field Flowers' in a lavishly illustrated collection, which attests to the canonical reputation of the poem.

Chartism

Hemans' success saw the story of the Pilgrim Fathers also take a prominent position in political culture during the nineteenth century. A short, radical interpretation of the Mayflower story was published by notable reformist poet and activist Ebenezer Elliott (1781 – 1849). Elliott was an active participant in the Chartist movement and the Anti-Corn Law campaign

which earned him the title of the 'Corn Law rhymers'. His poetry was central to the development of Chartist verse, with Martha Vicinus referring to Elliott as the 'single most important predecessor of Chartist poets'.

Elliott poem provides a fiery invective that castigates modern Britain written in the voice of the Pilgrim Fathers speaking from across the Atlantic:

A VOICE of grief and anger—

Of pity mixed with scorn—

Moans o'er the waters of the west,

Thro' fire and darkness borne;

And fiercer voices join it—

A wild triumphant yell!

Using the origin myth of the *Mayflower*, the United States is positioned as a land of freedom in stark contrast with modern Britain. Speaking from the grave, the Pilgrim Fathers are disturbed to find the people of their homeland reduced to 'soulless slaves':

They speak! The Pilgrim Fathers

Speak to ye from their graves!

For earth hath muttered to their bones

That we are soulless slaves!

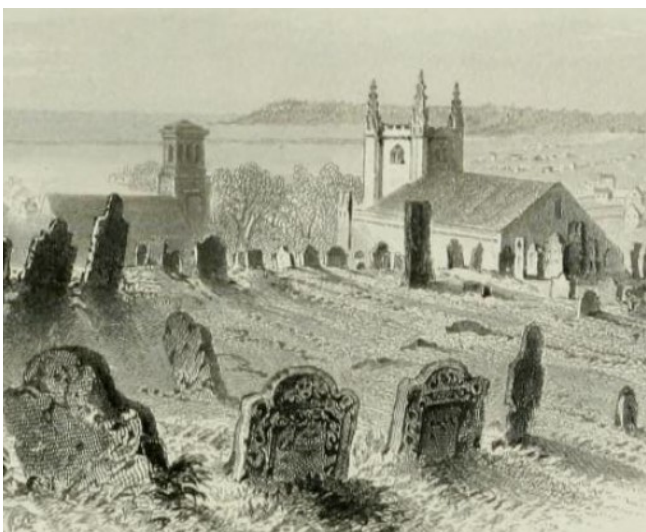
In Elliott's interpretation, the Pilgrim Fathers are positioned as radical freedom-fighters, 'men whose hearts were torches / For freedom's quenchless fire'. As Nigel Cross comments, Elliott wrote 'unrepentant political poetry, exhorting the working classes to commit themselves to the struggle against landlords, employers, and governments'. By leveraging the story of the *Mayflower* for the ends of British radicalism, Elliott demonstrates the malleability of Pilgrim Fathers as a cultural narrative.



Illustrators and Travel Writers

Not all works of *Mayflower* literature were as overtly political as Elliot's fiery Chartist verse. Indeed, the story of the *Mayflower* and New Plymouth was such a cultural mainstay in nineteenth-century Britain that it attracted the attention of illustrators and travel writers. William Henry Bartlett (1809 - 1854) was a London-based artist and engraver, who became one of the leading topographic illustrators of his generation. He travelled widely and produced works providing history and illustrations of the Balkans, the Middle East, and North America, of which *The Pilgrim Fathers, or, The founders of New England in the Reign of James the First* (1854) is a product. The work provides rich visual and literary description of the localities associated with the Pilgrim Fathers in Britain and America. Scenes from Plymouth, New England are given an extended portrait. In particular, the burial ground is illustrated in fine detail:

The 'Burying Hill' is the most remarkable spot in Plymouth. From whatever side we approach the town, it rises conspicuously above all its buildings – a lofty green mound, covered with dark grey tombstones – the



first place to receive the rays of the sun and the last upon which they linger.

The literary description adds to the romantic and picturesque nature of Bartlett's engraving. A lonely graveyard overlooking the bay on which the Pilgrim Fathers landed provides readers with a rich sense of history and pathos. Bartlett's work shows the continuing influence of Romanticism on the *Mayflower* narrative.

Abolitionism

Perhaps the most shocking and thought-provoking use of the Pilgrim Fathers was Elizabeth Barret Browning's 'The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point'. The speaker of the poem, a fugitive slave woman, stands at Pilgrim's Point in an ironic inversion of the history of liberty that had become an integral part of the *Mayflower* narrative and American national identity. The poem opens with the speaker addressing the Pilgrims directly:

I STAND on the mark beside the shore

Of the first white pilgrim's bended knee,

Where exile turned to ancestor,

And God was thanked for liberty.

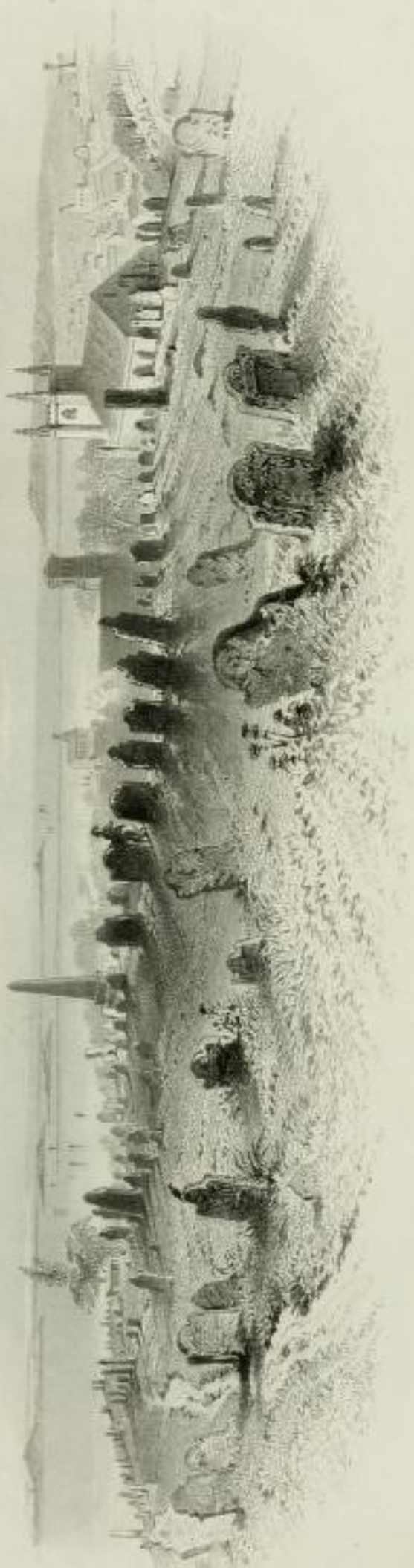
I have run through the night, my skin is as dark,

I bend my knee down on this mark . .

I look on the sky and the sea.

Through her speaker, Browning is directly challenging the historical association of the 'Pilgrim Fathers' as the origin myth for a nation founded on liberty. Browning presents

THE BURIAL HILL.
Plymouth.



another association, that of the intimate connection between race-based slavery and the settlement of North America. The runaway slave sees only the connection between the descendants of the Pilgrims and an inhuman system of bondage: 'O pilgrims, I have gasped and run/All night long from the whips of one/Who in your names works sin and woe'. From the opening stanza we can read how the poem makes powerful and pointed use of the *Mayflower* narrative in order to demonstrate the hypocrisy of a national myth based on freedom and liberty in a country that still supported slavery.

Children's Fiction

The story of the *Mayflower* also featured in much children's literature. Kate Thompson Sizer illustrated children's novel *Mayflower Pil-*

grims (1898) provides one good example. Focusing on the hardships and struggles of the first perilous years of the colony, Sizer's children's story is rich in pathos:

They all needed warm clothes, for bitter, bitter was the first winter after the landing of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims. The deep snows lay like a white blanket on the little settlement, and morning after morning they woke to find the north wind blowing, and the snowflakes driving in through wooden shutters and the crevices in the roughly-built walls. Before that terrible winter was over half of the Pilgrims lay sleeping in the little burial-ground on Cole's Hill, victims of cold and hardship.

Ultimately, however, it is explained that such immediate suffering will be redeemed in the future by the success of United States of America:

All that is best and truest in America to-day can be traced to the brave little band who, on Plymouth shores, suffered such terrible hardships.

This is a crucial intervention by the text's omniscient narrator. At this moment the narrative voice intervenes to console the young nineteenth-century audience with a clear reason behind the misery that has been described in such detail. In this way, Sizer is directly contributing to the use of the *Mayflower* narrative as a quasi-religious foundation myth, drawing implicit parallels between with the Christian narrative of suffering and redemption and the establishment of New Plymouth, and eventually, the United States.



Tourism and Ancestry

As the tourist industry increased in the late 19th century so did texts that catered towards Americans traveling to England to trace their ancestry. Marcus Huish's *The American Pilgrim's Way in England* (1907) combines elements of popular history and tourist guidebooks with the addition of extensive watercolour illustrations by Elizabeth Mary Chettle. Indeed, the work originated from the sale of postcards and paintings designed for American tourists visiting places such as Scrooby and Gainsborough in the English midlands. The beautiful and detailed watercolours provided by Chettle depict a Romanticized and saleable image of 'Old England'. The work can therefore be understood as part of the market for memorabilia produced for American tourists visiting the home of the 'Mayflower Pilgrims'.

The First World War and the 'Return of the Mayflower'

The voyage of *Mayflower* also had an important role to play during the First World War. The *Mayflower* was an immediate point of reference for newspapers reporting on the entry of the United States into the conflict. In July 1917 *The Times* reported '[t]he landing of the American troops the other day, although we knew of very little about it, was one of the most significant epochs that has occurred since the departure of the Pilgrim Fathers on board the Mayflower'. The powerful symbolism of the *Mayflower* story was noted by Britain's National War Aims Committee (NWAC), a parliamentary, cross-party organisation established in July 1917 to bolster the war effort and civilian morale. The Committee's express aim was to 'strengthen national morale and consolidate the national war aims as outlined by the executive government and endorsed by the great majority of the people'.



The NWAC later published *The Return of "The Mayflower": Why America is Fighting* (1918), the first in the 'Allies Series' of pamphlets focusing on strengthening sentiment between the Allied nations, with particular emphasis on Anglo-American relations.

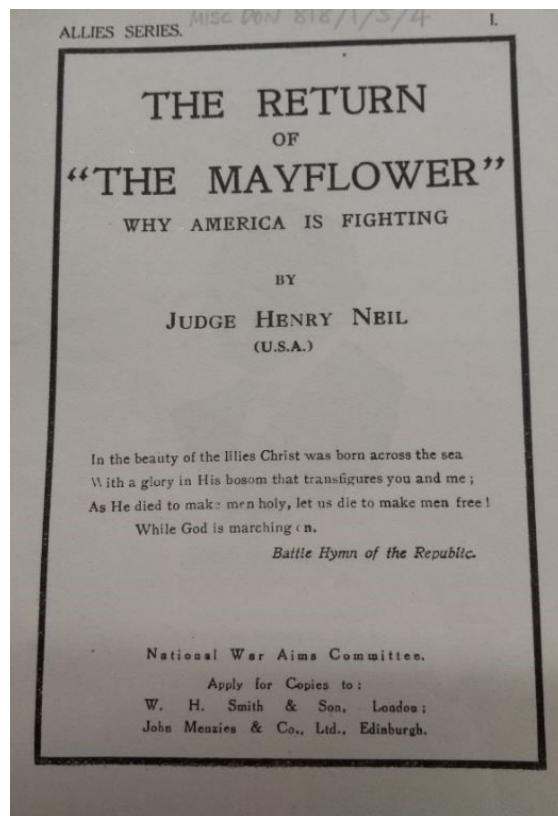
Written by 'Judge' Henry Neil (1863-1939), an American author, educator, and social reformer from Chicago, *The Return of "The Mayflower"* begins with a dramatic account of a 1917 Atlantic crossing: 'We were then in the danger zone. It was that week when the U-boats sank the largest number of ships. All of us were anxious, nervous, constantly on the lookout'. After defending America's entry into war as an attempt to 'extend the right of self-government to others' Neil makes extensive and emotive use of the *Mayflower* narrative:

Less than three hundred years ago The Mayflower took the liberty-loving Pilgrim Fathers from England to America.

These fearless pioneers, with righteous zeal, sowed the seed of democracy there. It fell on fruitful ground and for centuries blossomed and bloomed and filled the air with the sweet fragrance of freedom.

In this atmosphere a great people grew strong and brave, and ready, when the supreme hour arrived, to join the mother country in the greatest fight for human liberty the world has ever known.

As I watched that torpedo passing by I wondered if this huge ship, speeding on its way from America to the motherland, laden with the defences of freedom and evading every effort to destroy democracy, was not in reality the Mayflower returning home.



The 1920 Tercentenary

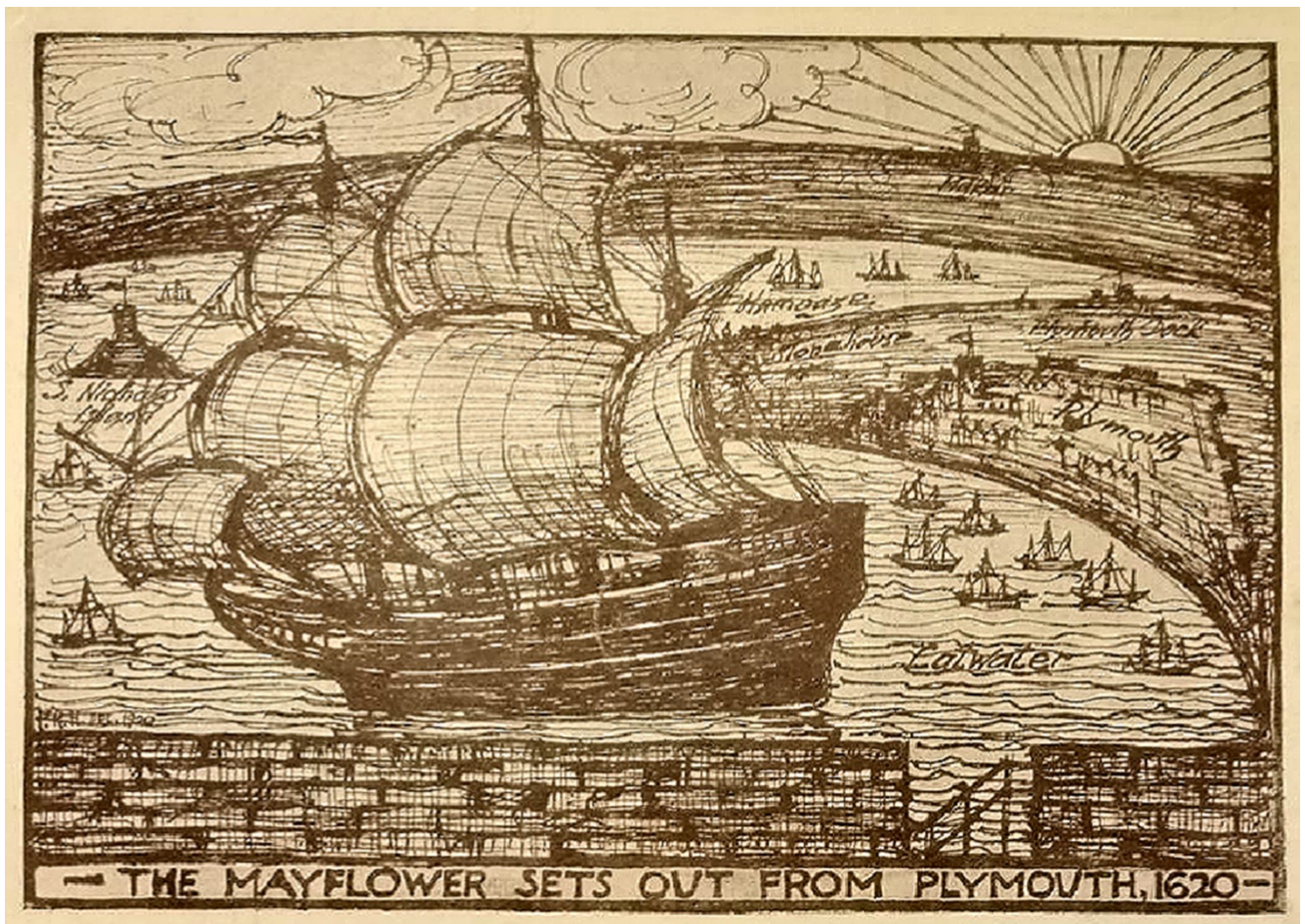
After the war the *Mayflower* remained in the public's consciousness. 1920 marked the Tercentenary of the Atlantic crossing and the settlement of New Plymouth. Celebrations were held around the country with large events taking place at both Southampton and Plymouth, the last two ports that the *Mayflower* sailed from. Southampton staged "John Alden's Choice", a pageant play dramatising the decision of Alden to make the journey to America. *The New York Times* noted the play was 'Presented Before American and British Spectators' and Anglo-American relations were a important theme in the work. The prologue makes this thematic focus clear:

**Within a kinder, wiser age
Two folks together turn the page,
Two nations hold it as a trust
To keep her memory from the dust,
The Mayflower.**

Plymouth also held celebrations. *Mother Plymouth: A Souvenir of the Mayflower Tercentenary Together with the Story of the Pilgrim Fathers 1620-1920* is a large, high-value souvenir that contains many photographs and reproductions of artworks relating to the *Mayflower*. The cover is adorned with a seventeenth-century style woodcut. The booklet contains 'Tercentenary Messages' from local and international luminaries, displayed alongside their photograph. Plymouth Mayor, Lovell R. Dunstan, fully celebrates the *Mayflower* as origin myth for the United States, acknowledging 'that band of Pilgrims whose courage and endurance enabled them to found one of the largest nations in the world'. American Ambassador to Britain John W. Davis describes himself as 'complimented to know that you desire to have a message from me in the Souvenir' and praises the 'striking proof of Anglo-American unity' evidenced in the celebrations.

From 1920 to 2020

After the Mayflower Tercentenary had itself become history, the story of the Pilgrims continued to be a popular one in Britain. Throughout the 1920s to the 1990s there were new memorials and monuments put up across the country—like the stone obelisk in Immingham (1925) or statue of Christopher Jones in Rotherhithe (1995). One of the continually popular public engagements with the Pilgrims could be found in the historical pageants staged in parks and fields or halls and theatres by enthusiastic amateur re-enactments. Hugh Parry's *The Historical Pageant of the Mayflower*, another first performed in 1920, went on tour until at least the late 1930s. Parry was a nonconformist minister, so his pageant told a tale of religious liberty from English origins in the 17th century to international importance in the shadow of the First World War.



Later, in 1957, an even more impressive re-enactment was staged: the reconstruction and sailing of the *Mayflower II* from Old Plymouth to New. This project was the brainchild of Warwick Charlton, a journalist and aficionado of the Anglo-American relationship (he had himself served under American command in the Second World War). Though no schematics for the original *Mayflower* exist, the 1957 reconstruction was based on extensive academic research in the years leading up to the sailing. Built in Brixham in Devon, the ship survives today in its new home of Plymouth, MA. Charlton—an expert in spinning a good yarn—memorialised the voyage in his highly readable account *The Voyage of Mayflower II* (1957). Over sixty years later, Charlton's son, Randal, published his own version of the story and his father's role: *The Wicked Pilgrim: The Story of the Englishman who Gave Mayflower II to America* (2019). The power of the *Mayflower* mythos did decline somewhat in Britain after a final highpoint in the 1950s, but its memory has been preserved in an ever-increasing number of local history books and heritage experiences in the English midlands and south coast.

Conclusion

The *Mayflower* myth has played an important part in British culture since the early nineteenth-century. Poets like Hemans not only influenced the growth of *Mayflower* media in Britain, but had an important impact in the United States as too. Repacked and reformat- ted for different cultural and political uses, the Pilgrim Fathers were also evoked by Chartists, Abolitionists, and travel writers. The idea of the *Mayflower* as a link between the Old and New world was even used by the British gov- ernment to strengthen Anglo-American rela- tions in a time of war. None of these evoca- tions had very much to do with the 'reality' of the 1620 voyage of Brownist separatists, but the boundaries between history and myth, and between fact and fiction, have always been po- rous—a truism that has lasted until the pre- sent day and the 400th anniversary in 2020.



Further reading on the cultural afterlife of the *Mayflower*

Abrams, Ann Uhry. *The Pilgrims and Pocahontas: Rival Myths of American Origin* (Boulder, CO, 1999)

Bangs, Jeremy Dupertuis. *New Light on the Old Colony: Plymouth, the Dutch Context of Toleration, and Patterns of Pilgrim Commemoration* (Leiden, 2018)

Bendroth, Margaret. *The Last Puritans: Mainline Protestants and the Power of the Past* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2015)

Bunker, Nick. *Making Haste from Babylon: The Mayflower Pilgrims and Their World: a New History* (London: Pimlico, 2011)

Gaskill, Malcolm. *Between Two Worlds: How the English Became Americans* (Oxford, 2014)

Goldstein, Erik. 'Diplomacy in the Service of History: Anglo-American Relations and the Return of the Bradford History of Plymouth Colony, 1898', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 25:1 (2014).

Heike, Paul. *The Myths That Made America: An Introduction to American Studies* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2014)

Hulme, Tom. 'The Mayflower and 'Mother Plymouth': Anglo-America, Civic Culture and the Urban Past' in *Cultural and Social History* (2021).

Hulme, Tom. 'Memories of the *Mayflower* in Southampton', *Hampshire Papers*, no. 8 (2020).

Philbrick, Nathaniel *Mayflower: A Voyage to War* (New York, Harper Perennial, 2011)

Sargent, Mark L. 'The Conservative Covenant: The Rise of the Mayflower Compact in American Myth', *The New England Quarterly*, 61 (1988).

Sargent, Mark L. 'William Bradford's "dialogue" with history', *New England Quarterly*, 65 (1992)

Scott, Anna. 'It's a man's world. Or is it? The "Pilgrim Fathers", religion, patriarchy, nationalism and tourism' in Wera Grahn and Ross J. Wilson (eds), *Gender and Heritage: Performance, Place and Politics* (London, 2018).

Seelye, John. *Memory's Nation: The Place of Plymouth Rock* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1998).

Silverman, David J. *This Land is Their Land: The Wampanoag Indians, Plymouth Colony, and the Troubled History of Thanksgiving* (New York, 2019).

Vandrei, Martha. "Why should not citadels become academies?": transatlantic tercentenaries, higher education, and local pasts in Britain after the First World War by Martha Vandrei, in *History: the Journal of the Historical Association* (2021).

Mayflower texts in the British Library

Bartlett, William Henry. *The Pilgrim Fathers, or, The founders of New England in the Reign of James the First* (1854). System number: 000216449.

William Henry Bartlett (1809 - 1854) was a London-based artist and engraver, who became one of the leading topographic illustrators of his generation. He travelled widely and produced works providing history and illustrations of the Balkans, the Middle East, and North America, of which *The Pilgrim Fathers, or, The Founders of New England in the Reign of James the First* (1854) is a product. A beautifully illustrated travel book, Bartlett takes readers on a tour of the homes of the Pilgrim Fathers, the places associated with group in Leiden, Holland, and finally a trip to New Plymouth in North America.

Bond, Anne Lydia. *Three Gems in One Setting*. By A. L. Bond. The Poet's Song, Tennyson. Field Flowers, Campbell. Pilgrim Fathers, Mrs Hemans. [With illuminations.] (1860) System number: 000405319.

Anne Lydia Bond (1822-1881) was an artist and photographic colourist from Southsea, Hampshire who produced illustrated editions of popular poetry in the nineteenth-century including Alfred Lord Tennyson's 'The Lady of Shalott' (1852) as well as writing and illustrating her own children's books such as *The Child's Natural History* (1867). *Three Gems in One Setting* (1860) provides lavish illustration to accompany Felicia Hemans' 'The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England' alongside Alfred Lloyd Tennyson's 'The Poets Song' and Thomas Campbell's 'The Field Flowers'. With interlaced floral borders, the pages are designed to imitate medieval illuminated manuscripts, a style popularised by the Pre-Raphaelites and common in mid-century Victorian art. This high-value gift book attests to the canonical status that Hemans' poem had achieved by the mid-century.

Buchan, John 'The Pilgrim Fathers' Newdigate Prize Poem (1898) System number: 000512768.

John Buchan (1875-1940) was a Scottish novelist, historian, and Unionist politician. Today he is best known today as the author of *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1915) first published in *Blackwood's Magazine* and later adapted into film by several directors including Alfred Hitchcock (1935). Buchan was awarded a scholarship to the University of Glasgow at age 17, he later studied Classics at Brasenose College, Oxford via a William Hulme scholarship in 1895. During his time at Oxford he penned an award-winning poem on the *Mayflower* voyage: 'The Pilgrim Fathers' which won the Newdigate Prize for Poetry in 1898. Written in rhyming couplets the poem offers a highly Romantic and dream-like evocation of a the Atlantic voyage through 'Long leagues of ocean whitening to the sky'.

Charlton, Warwick 'The Voyage of Mayflower II' (1957) System number: 010288360 .

Warwick Charlton (1918-2002) was an English journalist and public relations expert. He saw an opportunity to loosely celebrate the Anglo-American relationships of the Second World War, while boosting his own public profile too, by resailing a reconstruction of the *Mayflower* to the USA in 1957. In this memorialisation and ships log of the journey, he explains how he had his *Mayflower II* idea after stumbling across a copy of William Bradford's original history, but it seems likely that he had also been influenced by a Hollywood spectacular: *Plymouth Adventure* (1953). Charlton's own *Mayflower II* also tended towards spectacle and

consumerism too (as noted disapprovingly by the Foreign Office, reflecting highbrow fears about the Americanisation of popular culture). For two years, tabloids and newsreels eagerly tracked the building of the ship at a Brixham shipyard in Devon and the eventual voyage in the spring and early summer of 1957.

Devon, the Lovely Land of the Mayflower, Great Western Railway (c. 1920s) System number 010859389.

Sold at Paddington Station, this is a beautifully illustrated travel guide to Mayflower sites of interest in Devon. Produced by the Great Western Railway, the texts capitalised on the growth of domestic and American interest after the 1920 tercentenary celebration which centred around Plymouth. The guide demonstrates a growing association between the Mayflower voyage, tourism and popular history. As well as a detailed map the guide comes replete with a number of photographs of the region giving a glimpse into life in Devon in the 1920s.

Elliott, Ebenezer. *The Poetical Works of Ebenezer Elliott* (1876) System number 011540005.

Ebenezer Elliott (1781 – 1849) was notable reformist poet and political activist. His work as an active participant in the Chartist movement and the Anti-Corn Law campaign which earned him the title of the ‘Corn Law rhymers’. His poetry was central to the development of Chartist verse, with historian Martha Vicinus referring to Elliott as the ‘single most important predecessor of Chartist poets’. His 1846 poem ‘The Pilgrim Fathers’ contains all these elements is a fiery invective that castigates modern Britain written in the voice of the Pilgrim Fathers speaking from across the Atlantic. The poem had a long afterlife in British radical politics. In 1950 it was printed in the *Red Republican* magazine alongside the first English translation of the ‘Communist Manifesto’.

Hemans, Felicia. *The Pilgrim Fathers* [From “Records of Woman: with other poems.” With illuminations.] (1860) Identifier: System number: 000497442.

Felicia Hemans (1793 -1835) was an English poet and literary celebrity whose immense popularity rivalled any writer of the early nineteenth-century, even Lord Byron. Her 1825 poem ‘The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England’ was a landmark publication in *Mayflower* literature. First published in the *New Monthly Magazine* and circulated in newspapers such as *The Morning Post*, the poem celebrates the Pilgrim Fathers as an origin myth for the United States. It was set to music by Hemans’s composer sister Harriet Browne and saw remarkable success on both sides of the Atlantic. Hemans’ text helped to solidify the myth of the Pilgrim Fathers as a brave and pious band of exiles for both British and American audiences. Hemans’ ‘The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England’ was also a frequent topic for illustration, as can be seen in this 1860 edition of her poems.

Huish, Marcus B. *The American Pilgrim's Way in England* (1907) System number: 001762249.

A significant document in the growth of *Mayflower* tourist literature in Britain is Marcus Bourne Huish’s *The American Pilgrim’s Way in England* (1907). Huish was a barrister, writer and director of the Fine Arts Society with links to the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Following in the footsteps of Bartlett, Huish’s writing provides descriptions of Mayflower tourist sites across England. The star of the show, however, are the sumptuous watercolour illustrations by Mary Chettle (b.1858). *The American Pilgrim's Way in England* combines elements of popular history

and tourist guidebooks with the addition of a map of England with notable sites connected to the colonisation of New England, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

Parry, Hugh. *The Historical Pageant of the Mayflower* (1920) System number: 002784020

Reverend Hugh Parry's 'Mayflower Pageant', which had been commissioned by the Mayflower Council for Plymouth's tercentenary celebrations, was performed from 1920 to the 1930s. Mixing comical farce with more earnest calls for religious freedom, the storyline went all the way from imagining a meeting of Robinson, Bradford, William Brewster and Richard Clyfton at Scrooby in 1608 to peace-making attempts and thanksgiving with the Wampanoag people in 1621. Reflecting the influence of Longfellow's Courtship poem, a romantic subplot focused on John Alden and Priscilla Mullins; the epilogue depicted them staring into a crystal ball ('a gift from the Ancient Medicine Men of the Indians') and witnessing the *Mayflower* returning eastward – signifying America's coming to the aid of Britain during the Great War.

Peploe, Annie Webb *The Pilgrims of New England, a Tale of the Early American Settlers* (1853) System number: 016866717

Little-known today, Annie Webb-Peploe (1806–1880) was a popular and prolific Victorian author who published seventeen novels in her lifetime. These were often historical romance narratives with strong Christian moral themes. In addition to a robust Christian message, Webb-Peploe's novels feature dramatic and exciting sequences that typify Victorian historical romance fiction, which may also go some way to accounting for their enduring popularity throughout the nineteenth century. *The Pilgrims of New England, a Tale of the Early American Settlers* includes a beautifully illustrated frontispiece which takes inspiration from Hemans poem on the same subject.

Ruffin, John. *Sound Film of Governor William Bradford, the Pilgrim Fathers, the Mayflower. Script and Scenario* (1938) System number: 003185956.

A remarkable document that details one of the earliest Mayflower films *Sound Film of Governor William Bradford* (later retitled simply 'The Mayflower'). Produced in 1938 the film was written with reference to the rise of fascism in Europe the film portrays the Pilgrim Fathers as the progenitors of modern liberal democracy. Featuring a full script and multiple stills from the scenes of the film this works shows how the myth of the *Mayflower* has been repurposed for remarkably different political contexts; presenting the story of the *Mayflower* as one of pacifism and the importance of religious tolerance.

Sizer, Kate Thompson. *Mayflower Pilgrims: A Tale* (1898) System number: 003400433

Kate Thompson Sizer (1857-1909) was a popular Victorian author who published a number of illustrated children's books often with a historical setting in the late nineteenth century. *Mayflower Pilgrims* combines history, illustration, and narrative fiction to create an engaging narrative of escape from persecution. The story focuses on twin sisters named Grace and Annie, their lives in Leiden, Holland, and their adjustment to the fraught early years of New Plymouth. The children come close to starvation, though they ultimately endure such hardships to help create a prosperous community. Like many of Sizer's works of children's fiction, there is a clear religious message at the heart of *Mayflower Pilgrims*, one that demonstrates the value of suffering for faith in difficult circumstances. Moreover, the story functions almost as

a national-religious parable, rooting 'All that is best and truest in America' in the trials and of an early band of benighted religious exiles. This novel is a good example of how the *Mayflower* was used as a topic in children's fiction in the late nineteenth century.

Whitfeld. H. '*Mother Plymouth*' *A Souvenir of the Mayflower Tercentenary Together with the Story of the Pilgrim Fathers 1620-1920* (1920) System number: 003911678.

Priced at three shillings, *Mother Plymouth: A Souvenir of the Mayflower Tercentenary* is a large, high-value souvenir pamphlet that contains many photographs and reproductions of artworks relating to the *Mayflower*. A seventeenth-century style woodcut adorns the front cover with the caption 'The Mayflower sets out from Plymouth 1620'. As the forward reveals, this is a modern creation by Frederick R Hiorns 'a decorate scheme on the lines of a 17th century print' that gives the souvenir a sense of authenticity for a departure that did not leave a visual record. This is an original artwork created specifically for the pamphlet – and a good example of historical culture generated for the tercentenary. the booklet contains a number of 'Tercentenary Messages' from local and international luminaries, displayed alongside their photograph. Plymouth Mayor, Lovell R. Dunstan celebrates the *Mayflower* as an origin myth for the United States, acknowledging 'that band of Pilgrims whose courage and endurance enabled them to found one of the largest nations in the world'. American Ambassador to Britain John W. Davis describes himself as 'complimented to know that you desire to have a message from me in the Souvenir' and praises the 'striking proof of Anglo-American unity' evidenced in the celebrations. '*Mother Plymouth*' provides excellent documentary efforts of the cultural and diplomatic importance of the Tercentenary celebrations.