

Mayflower Study Guide

Mayflower by Nathaniel Philbrick

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Plot Summary

Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War by Nathaniel Philbrick explores the first fifty-five years of the Pilgrims' life in the New World. Philbrick particularly focuses on the social and economic relationships between the English and their Native American neighbors. The two groups evolve from distrust to a cooperative alliance to a bloody war within this short time frame. Their actions and beliefs would shape the development and structure of the country that would become the United States. Philbrick traces this history from the Pilgrims' departure from England to the death of Philip, the Pokanoket leader, in King Philip's War.

The Pilgrims sought religious freedom, which first led them to Leiden, Holland. However, they were afraid that their children were losing their English identity and the group made the decision to form a colony in the New World. They secured a patent and funding, but were forced to include individuals not part of their congregation, or Strangers. Sailing on the *Mayflower*, they arrived in the fall of 1621, unsure of what awaited them. They spent their first several months in the New World finding a settlement spot and beginning to build their colony.

Although the Native Americans and the Pilgrims distrusted each other in the beginning, with good reason due to past events between the English and Indians, Massasoit and William Bradford brought the two groups to an alliance. Without this, the Pilgrims would have perished their first year in America, from starvation, exposure, or attack. Both groups benefited from the implied protection of the other, although they also manipulated the alliance at times for their own benefit.

Yet, less than sixty years later, the English found themselves in a war with their Native American neighbors. In many ways, the English pushed too hard on the social and economic boundaries of the region. They humiliated Native leaders, collected land, distrusted Indians loyal to them, and forgot many of the lessons that their fathers and mothers had learned when they reached the New World. For their part, the Native Americans had grown tired of the humiliation and believed the English had killed the sachem, Alexander. The war would be one of the bloodiest in American history. King Philip's War would profoundly impact the region for years to come.

Philbrick argues that many of our notions about this time period fail to capture the complex events and motives. Whether the symbolizing the good of America in the first Thanksgiving or the evil of the English in their treatment of the Native population, the myths about the Pilgrims hide the overall humanity of the people involved. Both groups manipulated, cooperated, took, gave, killed, and were killed.



Preface: The Two Voyages

Preface: The Two Voyages Summary and Analysis

Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War by Nathaniel Philbrick explores the first fifty-five years of the Pilgrims' life in the New World. Philbrick particularly focuses on the social and economic relationships between the English and their Native American neighbors. The two groups evolve from distrust to a cooperative alliance to a bloody war within this short time frame. Their actions and beliefs would shape the development and structure of the country that would become the United States. Philbrick traces this history from the Pilgrims' departure from England to the death of Philip, the Pokanoket leader, in King Philip's War.

People are fascinated by beginnings. We want to know what happened at the start of things. However, Philbrick argues that beginnings are often not as clear cut as we would like. The voyage of the Mayflower is one of these complicated beginnings. Most people have heard at least part of the story. In 1620, the Pilgrims sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to the New World. They sought religious freedom. They agreed on the Mayflower Compact and landed at Plymouth Rock. There, they met the local Native Americans, the Wampanoags, who taught them how to plant corn. With the Wampanoags, the Pilgrims celebrated the first Thanksgiving.

Yet, through his research, Philbrick began to see that this simple story hides the complex and conflicting events that took place during the first fifty years the Pilgrims lived in the area. The two groups lived in peace for many years, before a bloody battle broke out. Fifty-six years after the Mayflower sailed across the Atlantic Ocean, the Seaflower sailed south to the Caribbean with 180 Native American slaves onboard. These individuals were participants and victims in the uprising against the colony.

The conflict is today known as King Philip's War. Philip's father was Massasoit, the Wampanoag leader when the Pilgrims landed in the New World. In 1675, he went to war against the same people that his father greeted. The war lasted just over a year, but it changed the area. About one third of the towns in New England were burned to the ground. Many Indians faced the conflict of which side to join as the groups had grown close in the fifty years the Pilgrims had been in New England. The colonial forces won the war. Over five thousand individuals died, with about three fourths of that number Native Americans. Percentage wise, it was one of the bloodiest conflicts in America.

Philbrick was researching Nantucket Island when he came across a reference to Philip. He wanted to know why Philip had traveled to Nantucket. In the beginning, Philbrick says that he had two misconceptions. One was that the Pilgrims symbolized all that was good about America. The second was the story about how evil Europeans had killed innocent Indians when they arrived in America. Philbrick argues that he soon learned that both groups were human, full of good and bad, and not easily stereotyped.



Massasoit helped the Pilgrims survive and he saw his future connected to the English. However, the two groups did not live in peaceful harmony. The fifty-five years were full of compromise. The war happened because the leaders of the Native Americans and English allowed it to happen. They began to demonize each other, despite their previous peace.



Part 1: Chapter 1, They Knew They Were Pilgrims

Part1: Chapter 1, They Knew They Were Pilgrims Summary and Analysis

The Mayflower was ten weeks into the journey across the Atlantic Ocean. It was November and the voyage was to have been completed during the summer, but circumstances had delayed them. There were 102 people onboard. They were out of firewood and their water and beer was almost gone. The voyage had been miserable, with storms, ship repairs, and sickness.

The colonists were an unusual group. They consisted of families who sought religious freedom in the New World and were willing to endure the crossing to get it. The goal had begun in Leiden, Holland with a group of English Puritans. They rebelled against the Church of England and left the church, an illegal act in those days. The group was also known as Separatists and they were a radical group. They moved to Holland in 1608, seeking greater religious freedom. In Holland, the religious tolerance that they sought had begun to retract and violence against them was a threat. The Puritans' main concern, however, was that their children were becoming Dutch and losing their English heritage. The group still saw themselves as English and they hoped that moving to the New World would allow them to recreate an English way of life for their children.

The plan was daring. Settlements in the New World had not been very successful. In Jamestown, over half of the settlers died during the first year. From 1619-1622, 3,600 settlers moved to the colony and 3,000 of them would die. Starvation, disease, and Indian attack threatened any settlement. What we know of the Pilgrims comes from William Bradford, who wrote a book about their experiences. Without this, we would have virtually no information on their crossing.

In Europe during the early seventeenth century, controversy raged about how Christians were to approach God. Catholics and some Protestants believed that because of man's fall, they could not question the traditions in the church. Puritans felt differently. They felt that people need to go back to Christianity's beginnings and that if something was not in the Bible, it should be abandoned as a distortion. For example, hymns were thought to be a corruption so a Puritan would read directly from the Bible. Puritans also believed that God had already determined who the saved were. Nothing a person could do on earth would change this. Since no one was sure if he was saved or not, he had to live a pure life. Puritans compared themselves to others in order to judge whether they were saved or not.

William Bradford came from a prosperous family, but he suffered from an illness as a child. He found comfort in the Bible and would become one of the most influential figures in New England history. Bradford was only twelve when he began becoming uneasy about



how his local church worshipped. He began to meet with a group of Separatists, including William Brewster, in secret. The spiritual intensity combined with the secrecy of hiding an illegal activity bonded the group to each other. In 1607, the group was discovered and some members were thrown in jail. The group had to leave if they wanted to continue to worship as they wanted.

After moving to Holland, Bradford became one of the leaders of the congregation. He purchased a home in Leiden and he married Dorothy May in 1613. However, he also experienced business problems there, along with the growing tensions over religion in the area. Leiden had about forty thousand inhabitants at the time the Pilgrims lived there. The place was very different from what the Pilgrims had experienced in England. In Holland, they had to work six days a week from dawn to dusk. In addition, William Brewster soon ran into legal trouble. He published a religious tract which criticized the English king and was forced into hiding when the king's agents came looking for him in Holland.

The Pilgrims began negotiations with officials in London to colonize a part of the New World. They secured a patent in 1619 from the Virginia Company, but they had no idea how to finance their move. They decided to trust their endeavor to Thomas Weston, a London merchant. He represented investors known as the Merchant Adventurers. The group obtained their own patent for a settlement at the mouth of the Hudson River.

Weston seemed wonderful in the beginning. He appeared sympathetic to the Pilgrims' religious ideas and proposed that the Pilgrims enter a joint stock company, where the Adventurers would put up the initial money and the Pilgrims would generate profit for them in the New World. They would have to work four days a week for the company and at the end of seven years, the profits would be divided among them. The Pilgrims would own their land and houses.

In 1620, plans were moving forward. Many decided to wait until a settlement had been established before crossing to the New World. Others, like Bradford, sold their houses and prepared to depart. About 125 people were ready to leave and the rest planned to follow later.

However, Weston began to cause problems. He argued that the agreement had to change and threatened that the Adventurers would back out if it did not. According to the new agreement, the Pilgrims would have to work six days a week for the company. Robert Cushman agreed to the new terms without consulting any of the other Pilgrims. In June, the group learned that Weston had not secured transportation for them even though they needed to depart quickly to avoid arriving in the winter. Non-separatists had also been added to the group who would be moving to the New World.

Determined to go forward, the Pilgrims purchased the Speedwell, a sixty ton ship. They hired a crew and fitted the vessel for an overseas crossing. In July, the group leaving made their way to where the Speedwell waited. They planned to meet with whatever ship Weston found in England. The parting was difficult, particularly for William Bradford



and his wife who left behind their three year old son. Yet, when the tide turned, they had to go.

In London, Weston had hired a ship named the Mayflower, which headed to meet the Speedwell. A typical merchant ship, the Mayflower was about three times the size of the Speedwell. The commanding officer was a man named Christopher Jones, who was around fifty years old and a part owner of the ship. He had been the master of the Mayflower for about eleven years. The two ships met in Southampton. Coming with the Mayflower were some of the members of the Leiden congregation, including William Brewster. Here, the various members of the congregation also met the people that they referred to as the Strangers, who had been recruited by the Adventurers.

The two ships left for the New World, but the group soon had to stop seventy-five miles south of Southampton for repairs. It was already the middle of August and they did not want to arrive in the New World during the winter months. After the repairs, the wind kept the group from departing and passengers began to feel panic about their situation. When they were finally able to depart, the Speedwell sprang a leak and the group was forced to leave the ship behind. Some of the group elected to remain in England, while the rest crowded onto the Mayflower. The provisions were low after more than a month of delays and the passengers were already tired of being onboard. Only 50 of the 102 passengers were from the Leiden congregation.

The voyage took more than two months and the demanding conditions, combined with fears about what awaited them, made the crossing even more difficult. The vessel encountered a number of bad storms. The ship's destination was the mouth of the Hudson River, but, with supplies running short and the passengers weakened from sickness, Jones made the decision to get to the coast as soon as possible. On November 9, 1620, the Mayflower sighted land in the form of Cape Cod.



Part 1: Chapter 2, Dangerous Shoals and Roaring Breakers

Part 1: Chapter 2, Dangerous Shoals and Roaring Breakers Summary and Analysis

Now that the Mayflower had reached the New World, decisions need to be made. The ship was well north of the mouth of the Hudson River, yet the Cape Cod region was well-known for its large schools of cod. Master Jones wanted the passengers on land as soon as possible and the wind was from the north, which could help them reach the proposed settlement area. However, there was not a reliable chart of the coast and he did not know what hazards could be between the ship and the Hudson River.

Soon, the Mayflower was in a treacherous area known as the Pollack Rip, a maze of sandbars and shoals. The sea churned as water rushed into the area. Finally, the wind changed, blowing from the south, and Jones made the decision to go north, away from the Hudson River. The passengers were in an uproar onboard that night, as their patent did not cover the area north of the Hudson. The Strangers were also growing more reluctant to stay in a community with the Puritans, but they knew it was the only way for the settlement to succeed. The two groups sat down and hammered out the Mayflower Compact.

The Mayflower Compact created a government based on civil consent and not divine vision. Although the Leiden contingent was not happy about this, there was no choice if the Strangers were to stay. The document did not really differ much from a local government back in England. However, the Leideners did have a slight majority in terms of numbers and they used this to vote John Carver as the governor of the settlement.

Jones aimed the ship toward Provincetown Harbor or Cape Cod Harbor. On November 11, 1620, the passengers gathered and signed the Mayflower Compact as the vessel reached the harbor. Although the passengers were eager to step on land again, they were also filled with worry and fear about what waited for them. They were over 3000 miles from home and had no idea what they would find on land.

The group had brought a shallop, an open boat that could be sailed or rowed, with them, but it had to be assembled. Until that was done, sixteen men took the smaller boat from the ship and rowed ashore. The men fell to their knees on land and praised God. Then, they wandered the sandy hills on the shore, finding firewood to take back with them.



Part 1: Chapter 3, Into the Void

Part 1: Chapter 3, Into the Void Summary and Analysis

Massasoit, the most powerful Native American leader in the region, lived about sixty miles from Provincetown Harbor. Although he was in the prime of his life, he led a group who had been battling disease. From 1616 to 1619, as many as ninety percent of the region's Native Americans died from what may have been bubonic plague. Coastal New England, which had been as densely populated as Europe, emptied.

Massasoit led the Pokanokets and the group had been hard hit. Before the plague killed many, the group had around twelve thousand members and around 3000 fighting men. After the plague, Massasoit was left with only a few hundred warriors. Although his group struggled to survive, Massasoit had allies who also disliked his enemies, the Narragansetts, who had about five thousand fighting men.

The Native Americans in the region had seen Europeans before. As early as 1524, an Italian explorer had ventured into the region and cod fishing vessels had become more and more common off the coast. Other Europeans had tried to settle in the area as well but abandoned for various reasons, including Native American attacks. The encounters between the Native Americans and the Europeans were not always benign, however.

Some took Natives captive, including one of John Smith's commanders, Thomas Hunt. He wanted to sell the Natives in Spain as slaves. His actions would have devastating consequences for Indian-European relations. When a French ship wrecked near Cape Cod, the Indians killed almost all of the crew, keeping several as slaves. One of the French slaves was adamant that God would punish the Indians for their actions. Within three years, the plague occurred.

In 1619, English explorer Thomas Dermer sailed into the area with one of the slaves that Hunt had taken. The Indian's name was Tisquantum or Squanto and after five years, he was back home. Squanto returned home to a land devastated by disease; however he came to see this as an opportunity for himself. He wanted to become a sachem, or leader. He remained when Dermer left for Europe. Squanto had spent time in Europe as well as possessing a strong relationship to the spirit world. Tisquantum's name was one of the names that Massasoit's people associated with death and the night. By taking this name, Squanto claimed a relationship with what the Pilgrims called the devil. Massasoit distrusted Squanto and kept him a prisoner.

When Dermer returned the following summer, he found the relationship between the English and Indians even more strained. An English ship had invited some of Massasoit's people onboard and then shot them in cold blood. Dermer would be attacked everywhere he traveled that summer.



Part 1: Chapter 4, Beaten with Their Own Rod

Part 1: Chapter 4, Beaten with Their Own Rod Summary and Analysis

The day following the Mayflower's arrival in Provincetown Harbor was a Sunday and the Pilgrims remained onboard to worship. On Monday, the carpenter began putting the shallop together on the shore and the passengers enjoyed a day off the ship. Some of the Pilgrims wanted to start an expedition into the area, but there were risks to this. They had not seen any hostile Natives, but large numbers could be there. Sixteen men set out, lead by Captain Miles Standish.

On November 15, the expedition rowed to shore. About a mile down the beach, they saw about half a dozen people and a dog. The people ran inland and disappeared. The expedition followed, hoping to make contact with them, but they had to stop after about ten miles. The next morning, they set out again, but they did not have food or water with them so they turned around for the shore.

In the morning, the group would find signs of Native agriculture as well as a grave site. They also found signs of past Europeans, possibly from the French shipwreck. Farther south, they found four bushels of dried corn that they decided to take with them. They were worried that their seeds for wheat, barley, and peas might not grow in the New World. Yet, they knew that stealing the corn had risks. They poured as much as they could take into a kettle and headed back to the Mayflower.

On Monday, November 27, the shallop was done and another expedition set out. Christopher Jones led this expedition, even though he had no responsibility to do so. However, it was in his interest to get the Pilgrims settled so he could leave again for Europe. Thirty-four individuals set out, meeting with bad weather. The group returned to Corn Hill and found more corn under the snow and Jones returned to the Mayflower with it. Standish led the eighteen remaining men, looking for Native Americans. They found more graves and some Indian houses, which had been left in a hurry. The pilgrims looted both the graves and the houses. Although they meant to leave beads, they forgot in their haste to get back to the Mayflower before dark.

The next order of business was to find a settlement site. Another expedition followed the shoreline in the shallop. They saw some Indians cutting blubber from a washed up whale, so that night, on shore, they made a barricade and large fire to protect themselves. Sometime around midnight, a "hideous" cry went up and the Pilgrims shot their muskets into the darkness. When they realized that it was probably a wolf howl, they settled back down. In the morning, however, a group of Indians shot arrows at the men as they were taking their weapons to the shallop. The Pilgrims thought there were around thirty Indians and they answered with their muskets. When the Indians finally

retreated, the Pilgrims followed for a short time and shot off their weapons as a show of force. The site would be known as First Encounter Beach.

The men continued sailing around the southern part of Cape Cod Bay. The weather turned windy and dangerous and they almost wrecked the shallop. They found that the harbor they were in could handle the Mayflower. The sheltered bay seemed a good place for a settlement. There was a large rock at the foot of a high hill, but there is no evidence that the Pilgrims stepped onto this rock, Plymouth Rock, first in their new land.

The men marched along the shores of Plymouth, finding no indication of recent Indian settlements. The following day they sailed back to the Mayflower with the news. The area was not ideal: the Mayflower could not get all the way into Plymouth Harbor and there was not a navigable river to the interior. Bradford's return to the ship was met with bad news as well. His wife had fallen overboard and drowned.



Part 1: Chapter 5, The Heart of Winter

Part 1: Chapter 5, The Heart of Winter Summary and Analysis

The Mayflower sailed to Plymouth Harbor on December 16. The Pilgrims took three days to decide where to begin building. The site they finally choose gave a good view of the surrounding land. The area had already been cleared by Native Americans as well. Stormy weather the next few days prevented them from starting to build. This, combined with the decreasing food supplies and the growing sickness among the passengers, made the situation grim. They put the first frame for a home up on December 25. They completed the first building two weeks later. Only seven houses would be built the first year, along with four common houses, as death claimed more and more passengers.

Tensions ran high in the coming weeks. Two or three people, on average, died each day in February and March. Several Indian sightings made everyone uneasy as well. The Pilgrims knew that the Native Americans around them were watching, but they had not tried to make contact or attack yet. The Pilgrims tried to conceal how many of their number had died and how vulnerable they really were.

On March 16, the men met to discuss military matters. As they did, an Indian appeared on Watson's Hill and began to walk toward them. The Pilgrims sounded the alarm as the Indian kept coming. He walked past their row of houses, toward the place where the women and children were. Several of the men stopped him. The Indian saluted and said, "Welcome Englishmen."



Part 1: Chapter 6, In a Dark and Dismal Swamp

Part 1: Chapter 6, In a Dark and Dismal Swamp Summary and Analysis

The Indian was tall and had long black hair in back. He was also "naked" with a strap of leather around his waist. Armed with a bow and a few arrows, the man requested beer when the Pilgrims offered him something to eat and drink. He introduced himself as Samoset, or at least this is what the Pilgrims heard, and said he was from farther north originally. His home region was frequented by English fishermen and he had learned to speak broken English through them. He told them that another Indian, Squanto, also spoke English and that he was with the region's leader, Massasoit. Samoset stayed with the Pilgrims that night before leaving with the promise to talk to Massasoit.

Massasoit had been watching and waiting. He knew the Pilgrims were there and his warriors had kept an eye on them. This group of Europeans was different than any others that had come to the area before in that they had brought women and children with them. They were also keeping to themselves and not trying to trade with the Native Americans. The leader was not sure what to do next. He did not want to put his people in danger. Squanto offered to serve as an interpreter, but Massasoit did not trust him.

Squanto had been telling Massasoit that the worst thing he could do would be to attack the Pilgrims. He talked about their fire power and the diseases that they could inflict upon the Indians. He also argued that if Massasoit allied with the Pilgrims, Massasoit could break the hold the Narragansett had over the Pokanokets. He reluctantly agreed to approach in a friendly way. He first sent Samoset to the Pilgrims.

Five days after his first visit, Samoset brought four Indians back with him to the Pilgrims. Squanto was one of them and he talked with the Pilgrims about England. The small group informed the Pilgrims that Massasoit waited nearby with about sixty warriors. Edward Winslow agreed to go to Massasoit as the governor's messenger. Winslow gave them some gifts and talked of peace. The Indians decided that they would hold Winslow while Massasoit went to meet with the Pilgrim leaders.

Massasoit and the Pilgrims came to an agreement that neither of their groups would attack each other and that if any other group harmed them, the other would come to their aid. Weapons would be left behind on any visits and they would return any tools that they happened to find. Massasoit left soon after, although Squanto and Samoset spent the night in the Pilgrim settlement. Massasoit promised to return quickly to help the Pilgrims plant corn.

On April 5, the Mayflower set sail for England. A number of the sailors had died from disease and Jones was eager to get back home. The ship made good time and arrived

in her home port on May 6. Jones would soon become sick and he died on March 5, 1622, less than a year after leaving the Pilgrims in the New World. The Mayflower was broken up for scrap several years later.

During the month of April, the Pilgrims planted seeds and watched them begin to sprout, although they still had many concerns. Governor Carver died and they laid him to rest with as much pomp and circumstance as they could manage. Although the treaty with Massasoit gave the group some security, they had not produced any profit for the Merchant Adventurers and some in the camp were rebelling against Standish. William Bradford agreed to serve as the next governor.



Part 1: Chapter 7, Thanksgiving

Part 1: Chapter 7, Thanksgiving Summary and Analysis

In July, Bradford decided to send a delegation to Massasoit, since they had not really explored the land around them. They also needed Massasoit to solve a problem they were having. Since his visit, they had had a steady stream of Indian visitors, which was diminishing their already dismal supply of food. Edward Winslow and Stephen Hopkins went with Squanto. Massasoit greeted the men when they arrived. His settlement took on a carnival atmosphere, with the two Pilgrims having a shooting contest and the Indians showing them their games of chance. After two days, Winslow and Hopkins decided to leave, as they had not been able to get much sleep in the settlement.

At the end of July, a young Pilgrim, sixteen year old John Billington, lost his way outside the settlement. He was found by a group of Indians and passed to the Nausets, who had attacked the Pilgrims at First Encounter Beach. Massasoit's power in the region was not as great as he had led the Pilgrims to believe and the first group of Indians passed the boy to what they saw as the most powerful group in the region. Word filtered back to the Pilgrims, who set out with Squanto as their interpreter. The Pilgrims agreed to reimburse the Indian from whom they had stolen the corn and they presented gifts to the leader.

The exact date of the first Thanksgiving is not known, although it was probably in September or October. It was probably nothing like what is pictured today and was more than likely a more Native celebration. Most of the participants probably sat on the ground around outdoor fires eating duck and deer.

Eleven months before, the Pilgrims had landed in the New World with little food and no knowledge of the area. Surprisingly, some of them managed to survive the winter and diseases. Their survival points to their resolve and faith. Massasoit's decision to help was a large factor in their survival as well. Yet, despite their growing strength, the Pilgrims were being controlled by an outsider, Squanto, although they did not realize it.

Part 1: Chapter 8, The Wall

Part 1: Chapter 8, The Wall Summary and Analysis

In mid-November, a ship appeared at Provincetown Harbor. The Pilgrims were not expecting a supply ship and they worried that the ship could be from France. Slowly, the vessel sailed to Plymouth Harbor and the Pilgrims discovered that it was another English ship, the *Fortune*, which carried thirty-seven passengers from the Merchant Adventurers. The colony's numbers almost doubled with this new arrival.

Although the Pilgrims were excited to see new faces, the new group also posed some problems. They had come without any provisions for the new settlement so the burden of feeding the group fell on the Pilgrims, just as winter approached. Weston had also sent a letter blasting the Pilgrims for not loading up the *Mayflower* with goods and supplies for her journey back. The Pilgrims had been in the New World for a year without showing any profit to the Merchant Adventurers. Over the next several weeks, the Pilgrims loaded the *Fortune* with beaver skins and other goods. The value of the cargo was about half their debt. On December 16, 1621, the *Fortune* departed for England.

Soon, the Pilgrims learned that the Narragansett were unhappy with the Plymouth-Pokanoket alliance and were rumored to be planning an attack. The Pilgrims showed some defiance and the threat seemed to dissipate a bit, but it was troubling. They realized that their tiny village was wide open for attack and that their muskets took too long to load. They set out to build an eight-foot high wall around the cannon platform and their houses, more than a half mile of wall. In addition, differences between the Strangers and the Leiden congregation were again causing problems. The work was backbreaking and the lack of food did not help matters. By March, they were done and the town was better protected. Miles Standish developed a defensive plan for the settlement, assigning duties to groups of men in they were attacked.

As some of the Pilgrims began preparing to visit the Massachusetts to trade furs, Hobbamock, a Pokanoket, told Bradford and Standish that the Massachusetts had joined with the Narragansett and they planned to attack the Pilgrim's trading party. After that, the Indians planned to attack the settlement and Hobbamock insisted that Squanto was helping plan the attack. The Pilgrim leaders met without letting Squanto know. They decided that they had to forge ahead as they could not remain trapped in their settlement forever. They were not sure what to do with the accusation about Squanto since there seemed to be jealousy between the two Native Americans. Bradford and Squanto had become close and Standish and Hobbamock had also bonded. They decided to keep a careful eye on both Indians, who were both named after the Native spirit that the Pilgrims would have referred to as the devil.

Standish and ten men left in April. Both Squanto and Hobbamock went with the group. A few hours after the group left, a family member of Squanto's appeared at the settlement



with a bloody face. He said that the Narragansett and the Pokanokets were planning to attack the settlement. The circumstances and the story did not seem to add up for the Pilgrims. They could not believe that Massasoit would turn on them and the timing, just after the trading party left, was suspect. The Pilgrims decided to sound the cannon as a warning.

Standish and his group happened to still be within earshot and they hurried back to the settlement. Hobbamock insisted that Massasoit would not have turned on the Pilgrims without telling him. He was right; Massasoit had no intention of attacking and he hurried to reassure the Pilgrims when he heard about the situation. It became clear that Squanto was trying to overthrow Massasoit by making it look like Massasoit was going to attack the Pilgrims. Although by treaty, the Pilgrims should have turned Squanto over to Massasoit, Bradford did not want to part with his interpreter. Massasoit insisted that Squanto be put to death for betraying the Pokanokets, but Bradford kept stalling, arguing that Squanto was needed for the survival of the Pilgrim settlement.

In the midst of the argument over Squanto, a fishing vessel appeared from England. The ship had been hired by Thomas Weston and the Pilgrims learned that Weston had abandoned them, securing his own patent and sending the people on board to form a new settlement. Even though he had betrayed them, Weston still expected the Pilgrims to host the sixty settlers for his site. Bradford felt that he had to help the new arrivals, even though they were a rough group of young men that upset the balance of the community.

The troubling news continued. Bradford also learned that the Fortune, with all the goods they had loaded on her, had been captured by the French before the ship could reach England. In addition, a fishing captain wrote to let them know that the Jamestown settlement had been attacked and over three hundred English colonists had been killed. The Pilgrims' relationship with the Pokanokets was suffering because of Bradford's insistence that Squanto not be punished. The Massachusetts and Narragansett were rumored to be preparing an attack as well.

Bradford decided that a reinforced structure had to be built in case of an attack. Even though food was low, the Pilgrims turned their attentions to building a fort. Winslow made a voyage to Maine in the shallop to get much needed food, in the form of fish, from the vessels there. Weston's men moved to their own settlement site, Wessagussett, and began building their own fort. The two groups, however, still needed to hold together to search for food and other provisions.

Bradford led an expedition on the fishing vessel brought over by the men at Wessagussett. He brought Squanto with him to act as interpreter and guide. Squanto had been trying to win the Pilgrims back over as well as Massasoit. When the vessel reached Pleasant Bay, Bradford and Squanto went to the village there, spending several days. Just before they were to depart, Squanto became ill and died. Although Bradford assumed that the death had been of natural causes, there were some suspected poisonings of Indians in New England during the seventeenth century. It is

possible that Massasoit had Squanto killed. Now the Pilgrims had to lean on Hobbamock, a warrior with deep loyalty for Massasoit.



Part 2: Chapter 9, A Ruffling Course

Part 2: Chapter 9, A Ruffling Course Summary and Analysis

By the winter of 1623, the town of Plymouth was a community. Bradford had convinced the Strangers that they all needed to work together and that religious and family ties bound them together. It was a different story in Wessagussett. Wessagussett was made up of a group of unattached men and set right next to a Massachusetts settlement. The men were not prepared for life in New England and seeking out food required them to leave the safety of their settlement. Malnutrition, fear, and despair were large problems. Their situation left them tempted to steal corn from the Indians nearby. Bradford urged them not to do this. John Sanders, the leader of Wessagussett, sailed away hoping to find provisions. The situation had grown dire as the Indians were harassing them and the men were trying to trade away their clothes for food.

Around the same time, Miles Standish went to get some corn that Bradford had traded for. While he was in Manomet, two Massachusetts Indians arrived. The two conversed with the local sachem, but Standish could not understand what they said. One of the Indians became the favored guest, over Standish, which upset the Pilgrim. He stormed out, not realizing that something of consequence had occurred. The Indians in the region were conspiring against the English, but Standish would not realize this until later.

While Standish was gone, news reached the Pilgrims that Massasoit was ill. Winslow and several other men, including Hobbamock, were sent to his settlement. About half way to Massasoit, they were informed that he had died. The news greatly affected Hobbamock, who wanted to return immediately to Plymouth. Winslow and the others, however, felt that they needed to show their respects to Corbitant, who would likely succeed Massasoit. Corbitant was not home when they arrived and his wife said that she did not know if Massasoit was alive or not. A messenger was sent to Pokanoket to find out and he returned with the news that Massasoit was not yet dead, although he was not expected to survive. They set out immediately for Massasoit's settlement.

When they arrived, they found Massasoit's wigwam full of people and Massasoit unable to see. Winslow attempted to give him some sweetened fruit, the first thing the leader had eaten in two days. Massasoit's swollen tongue and other symptoms indicate that he may have been suffering from typhus. The fruit seemed to revive Massasoit a bit and the Pilgrims sent back for medications. The men also saw to the other sick in the settlement when Massasoit asked them to. Massasoit continued to improve and before the Pilgrims left, he talked with Hobbamock privately.

Hobbamock later revealed to Winslow and the others that Plymouth was in danger. The Massachusetts were tired of Weston's men and wanted them gone. They knew, however, that those in Plymouth would come to the aid of their countrymen, so the only



solution, as they saw it, was to attack both settlements. The Massachusetts only had about forty warriors so they needed other Indians to help them attack the English. Massasoit had said that he had gained the support of some of the surrounding Indians, but the only way to prevent the attacks on the settlements was to attack the Massachusetts first. They had to act fast or it would be too late.

As the Pilgrims hurried back to Plymouth with the information, Phineas Pratt, one of the Wessagussett leaders, was trying to figure out how to get back to Plymouth. The suffering in the settlement was getting unbearable and an attack from the Indians seemed likely. Word reached Wessagussett that the Native Americans were planning an attack on both English settlements. The Indians were just waiting for the snow to melt. Pratt snuck out of Wessagussett and ran toward Plymouth. Pratt came across John Hamden, one of the Plymouth residents, who explained that they already knew about the plot. Bradford had just had a public meeting to decide what to do.

The Pilgrims knew that Massasoit expected them to launch an attack, but they were conflicted because no Indian had overtly threatened them. The attack was really just hearsay. They decided that they needed to trust Massasoit and form an attack. Standish put together a force of men, including Hobbamock and seven Englishmen. They did not want to attract attention and wanted to make it look like a trading expedition. They found some of the Wessagussett men at the Swan, but the men were unconcerned about an attack, claiming that some of the men were living in Massachusetts wigwams. Standish, however, was passionate about moving forward with the plan. He told the men that he was going to attack and kill as many of the Indians as he could. Weston's men joined in, since the attack meant they would have more food if successful. When the Massachusetts let it be known that they were on to Standish's plan, he had to wait for the right timing.

Standish lured two Massachusetts leaders into a settler's house for food. When they all sat down and began to eat, Standish had the doors to the house closed and he began stabbing one of the men. The English killed as many of the village's men as they could find and fought with others who fled. The men at Wessagussett decided to leave, sailing off in the Swan for another area, while the Pilgrims headed back to Plymouth. Standish and the men were welcomed back as heroes.

Many of the Native Americans in the region fled with news of the attack, fearing that the Pilgrims would attack others. As they hid out from the Pilgrims, they missed the crucial planting time for crops and Indians began starving to death that summer. The Native Americans feared that the God of the Pilgrims was offended with them and was going to destroy them all. The balance in the region had been greatly upset by the events. The Pilgrims had been unexpectedly violent. Massasoit had betrayed fellow Native Americans. The Pilgrims found it difficult to trade with any of the Indian groups. It was some time before balance was restored in the region again. The Pokanokets had benefited from the events most of all, becoming the most powerful group.



Part 3: Chapter 10, One Small Candle

Part 3: Chapter 10, One Small Candle Summary and Analysis

Plymouth remained the only significant English area in New England for some time. In 1630, seventeen English ships arrived in New England, bringing over a thousand English settlers, over three times the population of Plymouth at the time. For the Pilgrims, the new arrivals signaled that one of their goals would always be unachievable. As newcomers arrived with other religious ideals, the Pilgrims were left without their minister, who died before making the journey, and they felt like their purpose in coming to the New World was being diluted. In addition, many of the Strangers grew dissatisfied with life in Plymouth and moved to Virginia or went back to England.

The Pilgrims were dismayed at some of their new neighbors, particularly a man named Thomas Morton, who founded a settlement called Merrymount. Morton symbolized everything that the Pilgrims wanted to escape by coming to the New World. He participated in pagan celebrations, hunted on Sundays, and mocked the Pilgrim's solemn lifestyle. The Pilgrims had met "the frontiersman who happily thumbed his nose at authority while embracing the wilderness" (p. 163). The Pilgrims decided to seize Morton, who questioned the Pilgrims about what they had become in the years since they attacked the Massachusetts. He was not the only person who felt this way about the Pilgrims. The group had become increasingly violent and intolerant of others, seeming to forget that this was the exact thing they had fled from in England.

In 1623, the Pilgrims ended their food shortage of the years before. Bradford decided that each household would now have its own plots, instead of having communal crops. They also had animals like pigs, goats, and chickens. Cows and horses soon followed. Yet, the colony had trouble making a profit and in 1626, they assumed the debt of the colony when the Merchant Adventurers disbanded. With the introduction of wampum, shell beads, the colony established trading posts throughout New England. However, they still struggled to pay off the debt. It was not until 1648, after selling off some of their land, that they settled their accounts.

The events at Wessagussett also affected the Pokanokets. Massasoit had sold out his neighbors in favor of the English. His village traded with the English, but when the beaver skins began to run out, the only thing they had left to sell was their land. It began with the gift of Patuxet, which Massasoit gave to the Pilgrims. They believed that since no one was living there, it could be legally theirs.

By the 1630s, the Pilgrims' ideas on land ownership had changed in ways that would have profound effects. Their concept of land ownership was unfamiliar to the Indians anyway. They saw ownership as happening when the sachem distributed the land in his territory rather than through deeds and titles. The Pilgrims insisted that all land sales



have court approval, which gave clear record of buying and selling. Massasoit had agreed to use this system as well, although it appears that agreement was informal in the beginning. What the system did was to cut the Native Americans out of the land market. The Pilgrims could keep the price they paid for land low and they kept Massasoit from selling to the highest bidder.

The region's Indians also continued to come down with diseases and problems. Smallpox and influenza occurred in both Indian and English settlements in 1634. Massasoit also narrowly escaped an attack by the Narragansetts, after which he changed his name to Usamequin.

As life in England grew harder for nonconformists, about twenty-one thousand Puritans came to New England. Plymouth became a backwater colony, surrounded by larger ones on all sides. This influx caused the Pilgrims to think about government structure. By the 1630s, a General Court in each colony ruled, passing laws and collecting taxes.

Plymouth had its first murder trial in 1630, when John Billington fought with his neighbor John Newcomen and shot him several days later. Bradford determined that Billington should be executed. It was during this same year that Thomas Morton established Merrymount. The Puritans in Massachusetts Bay, whose territory Morton was in, arrested him and burned his house down. The magistrates from both Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, Bradford and John Winthrop respectively, came down hard on those who showed dissent. In the years to follow, they would persecute the Quakers and cast out anyone who opposed the religious regimes in place.

The Puritan settlement in Massachusetts Bay first brought economic gain to the Pilgrims, who traded with them, but as the Puritan settlement grew and expanded, tensions grew between the groups. Their ambitions also put the Puritans into conflict with the Native Americans of the regions. When the Pequots killed several Englishmen, the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay launched an attack, starting the Pequot War of 1637. Although some Native Americans supported the English in the beginning, this changed for many when the Puritans attacked a Pequot fortress. They killed over four hundred Pequot men, women, and children in a single day and burned the fortress to the ground. By 1643, the English colonies formed the United Colonies of New England, largely in response to deteriorating relationships with the Native Americans in the region.



Part 3: Chapter 11, The Ancient Mother

Part 3: Chapter 11, The Ancient Mother Summary and Analysis

During the 1640s, England was in a civil war and migration to the New World dwindled. Some settlers returned to England to join the effort to overthrow King Charles. When the king was executed in 1649, England became Puritan. England was now on center stage and many in America felt left out of the important events happening. The civil war also had a devastating effect on the economy of the America, where prices dropped and they were left with surpluses that they could not move.

Edward Winslow was one of the people who decided to return to England. For over twenty years, he had negotiated between Plymouth and England. In 1646, he sailed for England on a diplomatic voyage, but he kept delaying his return. He would never step foot in the New World again. He died in 1655 after contracting yellow fever. Although he made many contributions to the New World, his greatest may have been becoming the person Massasoit trusted most.

By 1656, Bradford was sixty-eight and Miles Standish and William Brewster had died. During the 1630s, many of the original settlers left Plymouth and established new settlements in areas with better soil and more land. For many of the settlers, land was a way to get rich and Bradford felt that this hunger would ruin New England. With these new towns, Plymouth fell on difficult times once again.

Although the towns followed Bradford's idea of a community of worshippers, the character of the colony changed as more settlers arrived. In 1655, he ordered that his subordinates do something about the spiritual state or he would resign. Although he stayed on as governor, he grew increasingly sadder as he neared the end of his life. He believed that God would exact vengeance on New England if the evil continued. He died in spring of 1657.

For Bradford, the punishment from God might come through the region's Native Americans, who were now expert marksmen. They became very effective hunters as they were used to the woods and got continual exercise. The English also continued to use the older matchlock muskets while the Indians favored the flintlocks. The gun toting Indian was a sign to Bradford that a fall was coming.

In addition to guns, the Native Americans were fascinated by many other English items and would trade for bracelets, rings, and other items when they could. They also showed an interest in their religion. While the Pilgrims did little to spread their religion, the Puritans in Massachusetts saw this as a priority. They tried to teach the Native Americans how to read and write and some Indians attended the newly created Harvard College. Yet, Christianity also disrupted the sachem's power and the balance of power in the area.



Although the English tried to avoid adopting anything native, this was difficult, particularly when it came to food. Maize or corn was an essential item in their diet. The English also used the Indian's shells as form of currency. Plymouth Colony tried to remain separate. They did not intermarry with the Indians, keeping the groups separate. However, the groups knew it was in their best interests to settle their differences and avoid war if at all possible.

In 1657, Massasoit was almost eighty. He seemed to disappear from the records of Plymouth Colony at this time, reappearing in those of Massachusetts Bay as the leader of the Quabaugs, over fifty miles away from Pokanoket. The Quabaugs and Pokanokets had a close relationship and Massasoit had claimed leadership with the Quabaugs as early as 1637. Historians speculate that Massasoit simply took up residence there during his later years.

This move would have given his eldest son, Wamsutta, the reigns of leadership for the Pokanokets. Wamsutta, around forty at this time, had already been showing signs of independence, acting without his father's permission and opposing some of his father's decisions. In 1660, Wamsutta changed his name to Alexander and his brother's name to Philip in the Plymouth court.



Part 3: Chapter 12, The Trial

Part 3: Chapter 12, The Trial Summary and Analysis

The second generation of Pilgrims did not share the same spiritual fervor their parents had. They became more consumed with material rewards than spiritual ones and church membership requirements were relaxed in many colonies. In future years, with growing violence and hardship, the children of the Pilgrims would look back on this as the reason for God's punishment and judgment.

The political and social climate in New England was also changing. Boston quickly became the economic center of the region. In Plymouth, Josiah Winslow, Edward Winslow's son, became the military leader at the age of thirty-three. He graduated from Harvard College and was seen as a distinguished member of the community. He knew the Indians well from his father, although he had a different relationship with the leaders.

The relationship enjoyed by the Pilgrims and the Pokanokets had changed since the early years as well. The English began to see the Indians as a hindrance to their prosperity and they no longer felt that their survival was tied to the Indians'. They treated the Pokanokets with less respect and tolerance than their parents had. The Indians also behaved differently with the English settlers. Alexander would sell land without Plymouth's permission and there were rumors that he would join the Narragansetts to fight the English.

When Alexander failed to appear in court for his "illegal" selling activities, Josiah Winslow was sent after him. Winslow left Plymouth in 1662 with ten armed men. They found Alexander with several of his men in a hunting and fishing area. Winslow had the wigwam surrounded and he went inside. The exchange between the two leaders became heated and Winslow brandished his gun, holding it to Alexander's chest. Alexander finally agreed to come along and a meeting of magistrates was organized in Duxbury.

The meeting appears to have calmed the high emotions. However, that night, Alexander stayed at Winslow's house where he suddenly became ill. His men carried him back to Mount Hope, where he died several days later. In the coming months and years, rumors flourished. Some claimed that the English had marched Alexander in the burning sun for too long. Philip, Alexander's brother, believed that the English had poisoned him.

Philip took over as the sachem of the Pokanokets. He made it clear that he believed he was the equal of the English king, which earned him the nickname, "King Philip," although he never used the name himself. Despite his new position, Philip knew that he could not accuse the English of killing his brother at that time. If Alexander had been killed for being too bold, Philip could walk into the same trap by doing the same. So instead of accusing Winslow of killing his brother, he told the English what they wanted to hear and made it appear as if he accepted the situation.



As Philip settled into his new role, New England continued to grow. Both the Pokanokets and the Pilgrims were feeling hemmed in. Native Americans in the regions faced diminished opportunities as the beaver became scarce and they continued to lose land. Philip tried to hold on to the land that the Pokanokets currently held, but his determination began to fail when large sums were offered.

Although Philip had assumed the role of sachem, his authority was not guaranteed. Philip needed to keep the trust and respect of his people so his people would remain loyal to him. As part of this, he needed to carry himself as a sachem, including dressing more elaborately than his people. From the accounts of others from the period, Philip looked the part of sachem.

Several events would reinforce Philip's hatred of the English. On at least one occasion, English settlers forced him to back down from executing an Indian for a serious transgression. Another time, an interpreter helped prepare Philip's will, but instead of following Philip's instructions, the interpreter wrote that Philip was leaving his lands to the interpreter. Philip blamed this treachery on the Christian influence and the native interpreter took refuge with the English. Winslow also confiscated the Pokanokets' guns after the English heard a rumor that Philip was talking about joining forces with the Dutch and French.

In March 1671, reports came in that Indians were gathering at Mount Hope. Rumors also flew that Philip was going to abduct the Plymouth governor and hold him for ransom. Many began to fear that war was on the horizon. It is not entirely clear why Philip chose this particular time to start planning for war. Some settlers suggested, in a rather unpopular argument, that the Indians were not completely to blame for the deteriorating relations because of the way the English treated the Pokanokets.

The English magistrates decided to hold a meeting with Philip. Tensions were high. The magistrates forced Philip to back down and made him sign a document that acknowledged his bad behavior. They also made Indians in the region sign loyalty documents. Officials in Massachusetts backed these actions and forced Philip to turn over all weapons and pay a fine. These acts would continue to fuel Philip's hatred.

Although Philip was diminished, he was not defeated. He immediately began making plans to acquire more weapons. He mortgaged some land and began selling off other pieces. He used English greed to get the money he needed, intending to reclaim the land he sold when he had defeated the English. He also needed to draw other Indians into the fight, since the Pokanokets were only five percent of the population in New England.

The English remained convinced that Philip was under control. However, in 1675, John Sassamon, a native with ties to both Native leaders and English missionaries, brought Philip's plans to Josiah Winslow's attention. Sassamon warned Winslow that if anyone knew he was revealing Philip's plans, his life would be in danger. Winslow dismissed the claims, but Sassamon's body would be later discovered beneath the ice of a pond.



Although it looked like Sassamon had drowned, he had bruises around his neck and no water was in his lungs.

The English mounted an investigation and Philip voluntarily came to answer questions. He denied his involvement in Sassamon's death. The investigators soon found a man who claimed to have witnessed the death and he fingered Tobias, one of Philip's counselors, Tobias's son, and another. They put the three men on trial. According to colony law, two witnesses were needed to find a person guilty of murder. The English only had one, who also had bad blood between him and the accused. Nevertheless, the court found the three men guilty, a "shocking miscarriage of justice" (p. 222). The two adults were executed, but the son escaped when his noose broke.

When the Native Americans learned of the executions, emotions ran high. The trial had not been in accordance with the law and was seen as a challenge to the Natives. Philip's warriors were sure that the time had come to launch an attack on the English. Although Philip did not want to rush things, his warriors were not willing to give him a choice. Some stories indicate that Philip tried to control the Indians, warning those close to Mount Hope to leave and weeping when hearing news that the first Englishman had been killed.

The English assumed that the problems with the Indians would disappear in time. They would soon learn otherwise. They had pushed Philip to the brink of war and were powerless to control the fight that was to come.



Part 4: Chapter 13, Kindling the Flame

Part 4: Chapter 13, Kindling the Flame Summary and Analysis

By June 1675, hundreds of warriors had gathered and were participating in a war dance. According to the powwows, the English had to strike first if Philip and his men were to be successful. Philip decided that on June 20, his warriors could pillage houses and livestock, hoping to incite the English to draw first blood. Several houses were burned.

Governor Winslow ordered towns to get their militia ready and meet in Taunton. He requested help from Boston, knowing that those in Massachusetts Bay were critical of how Plymouth was handling the Indians in the region. However, they decided to support Plymouth in this fight. Winslow believed the troubles were happening because the colony was not right with God. He made June 24th a day of fasting and humiliation. However, the colony did not believe that they had done anything wrong in regards to their Native neighbors. If the Indians were simply God's punishment, the only way to solve the problem was by praying and fighting, not through diplomacy.

As the militia began assembling at Taunton, there was one man who was aware of the movements of the Pokanokets and their territory. Benjamin Church was a thirty-three year old carpenter who had settled at the southeastern tip of Narragansett Bay, surrounded by Native Americans. Church did not mind being the only Englishman in the area and he had good relations with those around him, including the female sachem Awashonks. He was connected by blood and marriage to Plymouth and he was ambitious.

Church had been in Plymouth when the call for militia came. He quickly went to Swansea and found he liked life as a soldier. However, the Indians were growing bolder and looting more places each day. On June 23, some of the residents in the garrison decided to go back home. A father and son came across a group of Indians looting a house and the son fired on them. An Indian was injured, giving them the go ahead, in their eyes, for war.

On June 24th, the day of fasting, ten people, including the father and son, were killed in Swansea. Many of the victims were scalped. The soldiers in the garrison were stuck until reinforcements arrived, which left them vulnerable to the Indians' attacks. On June 28, reinforcements finally arrived from Massachusetts Bay, some under the command of Samuel Moseley, a sea captain. Moseley had experience fighting Indians already in Maine and he brought with him to Swansea a rowdy group of volunteer fighters.

With new soldiers in the fort, some requested the chance to go look for Indians. However, when the group of twelve set out, they were ambushed quickly and had to retreat. Having grown up on stories of English military superiority, the events were



troublesome. Yet, they believed that they would overcome. Several days later, they advanced towards Mount Hope, finding the settlement of Kickemuit burned and Bibles torn into pieces. They also found the bodies of eight Englishmen, who had been scalped and their heads set on poles. When the troops passed Indian corn fields in an abandoned Pokanoket village, they uprooted all the stalks. The English commander decided to build a fort on the deserted site.

The English also decided to make contact with the Narragansetts, concerned that this group might join Philip's. The Narragansetts had been watching the conflict with careful eyes. When they asked the English why the Puritans and other English had joined with Plymouth in the fight, they were told that all the English were colonists of King Charles and they were bound to help each other. This would be an important blunder on the part of the English. Their answer made the conflict racial, rather than just a political fight. The Indians realized that the English saw all of them as potential enemies rather than as the allies.

Church received permission to chase the Indians who had fled. He and his men took boats to Pocasset and set off in search of the Indian warriors. They eventually saw two Indians and gave chase, but soon realized that they had been ambushed. The English hid behind a small stone wall and waited until boats arrived to rescue them. During the six hours they waited, just twenty English had held off several hundred Indians.

Although some English, like Church, hoped that not all of the Native Americans would join Philip's fight, the actions of the English around New England did little to prevent this. Loyal Indians tried to seek shelter in English settlements, but were turned away. Soldiers and others shot down Indians, without trying to discover whether they were friend or foe. Governor Winslow also avoided any diplomacy that might have kept some of the Native groups from joining Philip. When several hundred peaceful Indians surrendered, believing that they would receive amnesty, Winslow declared them guilty and shipped them away as slaves.

On July 19, the English ventured into a seven mile swamp in search of Philip. Moseley led the charge, assisted by dogs, but the swamp made them ineffective. The Indians disguised themselves with branches and leaves, becoming virtually invisible. The English had trouble walking in the mire, while the Indians seemed to glide over it. The English fired on their own men in confusion. Soon, they gave up the chase.

It soon became apparent that more Native Americans had joined the fight. Philip also realized that he needed to get out of Plymouth Colony and headed towards the Nipmucks, his father's last home. He narrowly escaped capture and his force dwindled to 30 or 40 men. Yet, other groups were taking up the fight.



Part 4: Chapter 14, The God of Armies

Part 4: Chapter 14, The God of Armies Summary and Analysis

As other parts of New England erupted in violence, Plymouth became calm, like the eye of a hurricane. Towns around the region feared that they would be next to face the Native Americans' ambushes and attacks. In Hatfield, one hundred English descended on local Indians, who had no choice but to fight, even though they had not joined the war at that point.

Paranoia grew as well as racism and bigotry. New England towns began to turn on the Praying Towns of Native Americans, who had remained out of the fight. Massachusetts officials relocated the Praying Indians to an internment camp at Deer Island, located in Boston Harbor. Hundreds of Praying Indians would die of starvation and exposure in the coming months.

English towns began to suffer from the fear. So many residents from the west had invaded Boston that officials restricted travel without approval. Coastal Maine was one of the bloodiest areas, as the remote settlements made easy targets. Philip's legend had become almost mythic to the English, who saw him involved in every battle and attack. Rumors spread that he moved from cave to cave as he watched the smoke rise from burned English towns. In reality, Philip had holed up on the present day Vermont border with his meager group of warriors.

The English demanded that the Narragansetts turn over any Pokanokets or Pocassets in their midst. However, the Narragansetts did not acknowledge the demand. The colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Plymouth decided to raise the largest army they could. The time for negotiation was past. In December, 1000 English soldiers invaded Rhode Island led by Josiah Winslow, with Benjamin Church serving as his aide.

Church and Winslow headed to Boston to meet with officials there. With soliders, they headed for Rhode Island where they were to meet up with Moseley's soldiers. They captured an Indian who told them that 3000 fighting men were in a swamp southwest of the garrison. The English headed out several days later, finding a huge wooden fort. It contained about five hundred wigwams and thousands of Indians. It used both Native and European design. The English looked for a way to get into the fort and in a remote corner, they found what appeared to be an unfinished spot. As they tried to invade using the spot, Indians within the fort cut them down as the "weak" spot may have been an intentional trap.

The events at the fort illustrate who the aggressors were in the conflict. The Narragansetts within the fort had spent the fall and winter building a fort to protect themselves rather than attacking English settlements. Yet, the English were now poised to annihilate an entire community, including women and children.



The English stormed the fort and fought their way in. Church saw warriors abandoning the fort, taking up positions outside in the swamp, continuing to fire on the English. Church led his men into the swamp. In the fighting, Church was shot in the thigh. With darkness approaching, the English set fire to the wigwams, which hid women, children, and provisions. Church tried to stop them, arguing that they could use the provisions. Winslow had ordered the act so Church talked to him about saving the provisions for their own use. Moseley, however, argued that the fort was not secure. The soldiers burned the fort with hundreds of women and children still inside.

The Great Swamp Fight, as it came to be known, resulted in twenty percent of the English forces either killed or wounded. Historians estimate that up to 600 Natives, including women and children, died. What Narragansetts lived now had reason to join the fight against the English.

The English army pursued the Indians again in January. However, they did not have sufficient provisions and morale fell. The weather was cold and many of the English became sick. The Hungry March continued into February. Church disbanded his army.



Part 4: Chapter 15, In a Strange Way

Part 4: Chapter 15, In a Strange Way Summary and Analysis

Philip and his small band moved to the Hudson River Valley. He hoped to stage his return from this area, where he had access to Dutch traders and the French. Philip had earlier met a French official who promised three hundred Indians from Canada to help fight the English. In return, the French official wanted Philip to preserve the mills and best houses so that the French could use them when they triumphed. In January, the New York governor wrote that Philip had hundreds of North Indians with him.

Philip also wanted to bring the Mohawks into the fight. However, the New York governor was also trying to establish an alliance with them. Philip resorted to deception, killing several Mohawks and blaming the English. His plan did not work as one of the victims escaped and the Mohawks later attacked his forces. Philip was on the run again, leaving the future of the war with others.

Two Praying Indians volunteered to serve as English spies. Both had been on Deer Island and suffered the conditions there. The first to come back reported that the Indians planned to attack eastern settlements. They would begin in Lancaster, destroying the bridge to the town and then burn it down. The Massachusetts officials did not heed the warning. However, on February 9, the second spy arrived, telling the same tale and stating that the attack would be the following day.

Dispatches were sent out immediately, but by the time soldiers arrived, the bridge had been burned. The Indians took hostages from the town, including women and children. They continued to the north where Philip was waiting for them on the opposite bank of the Connecticut River.

March of 1676 was a horrible month for the English. Coming together, Indians from all over New England attacked towns, including Plymouth on March 26. This would be one of the English's worst defeats. English forces ran into an ambush of close to a thousand Indians. Fifty-five English died and nine were taken alive and tortured to death. Two days later, about 1,500 Indians attacked Rehoboth, although only one person died. In the days to come, the English would also face a lethal influenza virus.

Unlike the other colonies, Connecticut had used friendly Indians in the war from the very beginning. Their forces caught the powerful Narragansett leader, Canonchet. They executed him, creating one of the turning points of the war. In late March, another turning point would happen as the Praying Indians approached the Indians and offered ransom for English hostages. The Indians attacked a local town, killing over seventy English, but it was not as great a victory as they needed to force the English to make peace.



On June 9, the Nipmucks decided to make peace with the English. Philip, not wanting to become a pawn, left Nipmuck territory, heading toward his home land of Plymouth. Philip's return to the region would also signal Benjamin Church's return to the English army as well.



Part 4: Chapter 16, The Better Side of the Hedge

Part 4: Chapter 16, The Better Side of the Hedge Summary and Analysis

In June, Plymouth officials finally agreed to use the Praying Indians to hunt down Philip. They would be led by Major Bradford. Church did not want to serve under Bradford so he went looking for the Awashonks, believing he could get them to join him in the fight against Philip. After some negotiating, they agreed. At the same time, Philip came south with about a thousand Pokanokets, Narragansetts, and others. He continued to attack settlements along his way.

Church had to get Plymouth officials to agree to let the Awashonks fight with the English. The Awashonks were told to gather at the base of Cape Cod to await the governor's decision. Church finally got everyone to agree and he rounded up the fighting men that he wanted with him. In the weeks that followed, Church would pursue Phillip relentlessly, going into swamps and wilderness that no other Englishman had ever seen.

King's Philip War was costly for everyone involved. Large casualties happened on both sides. The colony of Plymouth lost about eight percent of the adult male population. By comparison, during WWII, the United States lost about one percent of the adult male population and about four to five percent during the Civil War. Native Americans lost even more. Between those killed in the war, those who died of starvation and illness, and those who were shipped out of the country as slaves, the overall population diminished by sixty to eighty percent. The English won in large part because they were able to outlast the Indians.

By August, most of the English forces had disbanded and gone home. Church and his men were the only ones still pursuing Philip. They surprised Philip early one morning. Philip tried to run but was shot in the heart. Church and the men quartered Philip's body. They went on to capture the remaining parts of Philip's group.

Epilogue: Conscience

Epilogue: Conscience Summary and Analysis

Slave ships began sailing from New England in 1675. The first ship took 178 Indians and by 1676, Plymouth was removing any male Indian over the age of fourteen from the colony. During the war, at least a thousand Indians were sold as slaves and over half of that amount came from Plymouth. Fifty-six years after the Pilgrims arrived in the New World, their descendants were doing their best to eliminate the Natives in their colony.

The war had extensive consequences for the region. It left a huge chasm between the English and the Native Americans. The English on the frontier were wide open to attack because they did not have friendly Indians to help protect them. In the next century, a number of Indian wars would ravage New England.

Both the English and the Indians were profoundly influenced by each other, from the time that the Pilgrims landed in the New World. Within fifty years, however, their cooperation had largely been lost. They both wanted a land that was theirs, without obligations to other groups.

With Philip's death, King Philip's War officially ended. Church would continue to fight, however, leading expeditions into Maine to fight the French and Indians. As the years passed, the collective myth of the first Thanksgiving and the Pilgrims' journey came to be a celebration of national identity. Americans looked back with nostalgia at the cooperation, but paid little attention to events like King Philip's War.



Characters

William Bradford

William Bradford was born in Austerfield, Yorkshire, a tiny farming village in northern England. His family was prosperous, but he lost his father, mother, sister, and grandfather before he reached the age of twelve. After he went to live with two uncles, he was struck by a mysterious ailment. Seeking comfort from his sickness, Bradford turned to the Bible and soon became uneasy about the way people worshipped God. He sought out a group of Separatists in a nearby town and began meeting with them secretly. He went with the group to Leiden, Holland after the group was discovered. He married Dorothy May in 1613 and their son, John, was born four years later. Both Bradford and his wife sailed on the Mayflower for the New World.

Although Bradford had shown leadership skills in Europe, he came into his own in the New World. When Governor Carver died during their first year in Plymouth, Bradford agreed to take his place as the leader of the colony. He helped draft the Mayflower Compact, the agreement with Massasoit, and the colony's government and laws. Bradford oversaw much of the development of Plymouth, including the First Thanksgiving. He tried to foster a good relationship with Massasoit and relied heavily on Squanto, although he did not always succeed in rising above their manipulations. Bradford also tried to maintain the original purpose of the colony, even as the colonists gradually intermingled with Strangers and became greedy over land.

Philbrick argues that Bradford was increasingly sad in his later years, due in part to the decreasing spiritual state of the colony. He may have also felt regret over his first son, who remained in Holland for a number of years before coming to the New World, and who drifted away from Plymouth in his adult years. Bradford believed that God would punish the Pilgrims for their sins and poor spiritual state. He died in early May, 1657, before the events of King Philip's War.

Massasoit

Massasoit was the sachem, or leader, of the Pokanokets and the father of Philip and Alexander. When the Pilgrims arrived in Plymouth, Massasoit was leading a group devastated by disease and trying to avoid humiliation from his neighboring enemies, the Narragansetts. He was the first sachem to reach agreement with the English and his relationship with them would both hinder and help him in the coming years. The Pokanokets, including Massasoit, celebrated the first Thanksgiving with the Pilgrims and his group helped the Pilgrims learn how to plant corn and other native crops. Without Massasoit's help, the Pilgrims would probably have died in the New World.

The arrangement between the two groups separated Massasoit from the other natives around him. At times the agreement made other groups reluctant to attack Massasoit,



fearing English retaliation. Massasoit also used the relationship to his benefit, gaining a trade partner, protection from enemies, and a way of gaining more power in the region. Yet, his betrayal of the neighboring Natives when he told the English of a planned attack made other Indians mistrust his motives.

When he was nearing eighty, Massasoit became the leader of the Quabaugs, part of the Nipmucks, who lived over fifty miles from Pokanoket. He had become the leader as early as 1637, but seemed to take up permanent residence there in 1657 as his sons pushed for more authority and power. He died sometime before 1660, although the details of his passing are not know.

Philip

Philip was Massasoit's son and Alexander's brother. After Alexander's death, Philip became the sachem of the Pokanokets. He was a resourceful leader who looked and acted the part. He dressed more elaborately than his people and he had a large wigwam. Philip carried himself with pride and he had a great deal of ambition. He believed he was the equal of the English King, earning the nickname King Philip.

Philip increasingly was pressured by the English and the growing numbers of people in New England. The officials in Plymouth forced him to back down on several occasions, humiliating the proud leader. He also believed the English were responsible for the death of his brother, Alexander. He began preparing to attack the English. Accounts suggest Philip was not yet ready to start a war when his warriors pushed him toward it. He managed to escape capture several times, before leaving Plymouth Colony. Other Indians, however, carried on the fight. Philip became a mythical sort of figure, believed to be fighting in various places, even when he was not.

Philip died in battle in 1676. His body was quartered and it was decreed that he should not be buried. The war officially ended with his death, although fighting in Maine would go on between the English and the Indians and French.

Benjamin Church

Benjamin Church was an English settler who was tied by blood and marriage to the original Pilgrims. He was thirty-three years old when King Philip's War broke out and he served in several important battles, including the Great Swamp Fight where he was injured. During the war, Church led soldiers into battle, served as Governor Winslow's aide, and commanded a group of friendly natives in the hunt for Philip. His group of soldiers tracked down Philip and killed him, and took a number of Indians hostage. Throughout the fighting, Church wanted to have as much control as he could, in part because he disagreed with some of the official's decisions, and he turned down several positions. After the war, he fought in Maine against the French and the Indians.

Unlike some of the other men at the time, Church choose to live in a remote area, surrounded by Native groups. He was friendly with them and tried to help at least one of



the groups before they were forced into the war. He believed the English could learn and live peaceably with the Indians in New England. Church opposed the cruel treatment he saw the English using against the Native Americans, including selling them off into slavery. He also tried to save the women and children inside the fort during the Great Swamp Fight, although hundreds would end up perishing in the fires.

Squanto

Squanto, or Tisquantum, was a Native American taken captive by Thomas Hunt in 1614. He spent around five years in England, Spain, and Newfoundland before returning to New England with Thomas Dermer. On his return, Squanto learned that most of his village had died during the plagues that wiped out many Indians in the early 1600s. He was given to Massasoit in exchange for a Frenchman that Massasoit was holding.

When the Pilgrims arrived, Squanto became one of the interpreters between the Native Americans and Pilgrims. Bradford came to rely on Squanto deeply, but this trust was not always well-placed. Squanto had ambitions of becoming a powerful sachem and his dealings with the English put him in a position to orchestrate events that furthered his power. He tried to make it look like Massasoit was conspiring against the Pilgrims so they would attack his settlement. If Massasoit was out of the way, Squanto could move in as sachem. His plot failed and Massasoit demanded that Squanto be executed. Bradford delayed, afraid of living without his interpreter. On a trading voyage with Bradford, Squanto became ill and died. Although Bradford believed the cause was natural, it is possible Squanto was poisoned for his actions against Massasoit.

Miles Standish

Miles Standish came over on the Mayflower and became the colony's military leader. Accounts of the time suggest that he was a strict disciplinarian and that the colony's descent onto a more violent path was due, in large part, to him. He led several of the expeditions into the New World when the Pilgrims arrived and also led several attacks on Indian groups, including the one at Wessagussett.

He was a small man with a powerful physique and red hair. He had been born on the Isle of Man, but had been denied his ancestral home. Whether from this or other experiences, Standish had a chip on his shoulder and expected to be obeyed without question. The colony had a decidedly military feel due to his leadership.

Christopher Jones

Jones was the part owner and commander of the Mayflower. He sailed with the Pilgrims to the New World and helped with at least one expedition. Although he could have left the Pilgrims once they had found their settlement site, he stayed for several months, before leaving on April 5. After sailing back to England, Jones traveled to France on the



Mayflower to deliver some cargo. He became ill on his return and died on March 5, 1622, less than a year after leaving the Pilgrims.

Thomas Weston

Weston was the Englishman that helped the Pilgrims arrange their voyage to the New World. He was a part of the Merchant Adventurers and hired the Mayflower to take them across the Atlantic. Although Weston would often berate the Pilgrims for not making a profit, Weston had his own agenda. He sent several ships of passengers to the Pilgrims without extra provisions and eventually received his own patent for the colony of Wessagussett, making him a competitor of the Pilgrims. Despite this, he expected Plymouth to care and provide for the men he sent to live in his colony.

Alexander

Alexander was Massasoit's son and Philip's brother. He was the sachem for the Pokanokets after his father. After being taken at gunpoint by the English over an "illegal" land sale, Alexander fell sick and died. It was rumored the English had poisoned him or contributed to his death in other ways. The English involvement angered Philip and Philip's actions toward the English were, at least in part, due to Alexander's death.

John Carver

Carver was a member of the Leiden congregation who sailed to the New World on the Mayflower. He was chosen as the first governor of Plymouth Colony. He helped explore the area, build some of the first buildings, and plant the first crop. In April of the Pilgrim's first year in Plymouth, he lapsed into a coma and died.

Hobbamock

Hobbamock was a Pokanoket warrior loyal to Massasoit. He became close to Miles Standish, but he distrusted Squanto's influence in Plymouth. Hobbamock would eventually reveal Squanto's treachery to the Pilgrims, saving them from war with Massasoit. The Pilgrims placed trust in Hobbamock and he helped them by working as a intermediary between them and other Indians.

Edward Winslow

Winslow was one of the original Pilgrims who came over on the Mayflower. He saved Massasoit's life and worked to strengthen English and Indian relations. Winslow established trade partners and did diplomatic work between the groups.

Josiah Winslow

Winslow was the chief military officer for Plymouth before he became the governor of Plymouth after Governor Prence. Philip believed that Winslow poisoned his brother, Alexander. Winslow tended to deal with the neighboring Native Americans in a heavy-handed way, which contributed to King Philip's War.



Objects/Places

The Mayflower

The ship the Pilgrims traveled on to reach the New World.

Leiden, Holland

The Puritans fled to Leiden from England, hoping to find religious freedom. They departed from Leiden for their journey to the New World.

The Speedwell

The Pilgrims hired this ship to take them to the New World. However, it sprang a leak and was not able to leave England with them.

Cape Cod

Cape Cod is a thirty mile stretch of barrier beach in New England. It was the first land the Pilgrims sighted.

Mayflower Compact

An agreement made between the Strangers and the Leideners about the new colony. The Mayflower Compact set up a civil government and bound the Mayflower's passengers to each other.

Provincetown Harbor

This is where the Pilgrims first anchored and explored the New World from. They called it Cape Cod Harbor and it was one of the largest natural anchorages in the area.

Pokanokets

This was the group of Native Americans led by Massasoit. They would be allied with the Pilgrims during the early years of the colony.



Narragansett

This was the group of Native Americans that were the enemies of the Pokanokets. The Narragansett threatened the Pilgrims on several occasions.

Corn Hill

The Pilgrims found some of the Native American's corn here. They took some of the corn back with them to the Mayflower.

First Encounter Beach

The Pilgrims were attacked by some Native Americans at this spot while they were exploring for a settlement site.

Plymouth

Plymouth was the settlement the Pilgrims formed in the New World. They first built seven houses, four common houses, and a platform for the cannons.

Fort Hill

Part of Plymouth Colony, Fort Hill was a high hill overlooking the sea. The Pilgrims built a platform on it for cannons.

Strangers

The Leideners referred to the group of individuals who joined them on their voyage to the New World, but who were not apart of their congregation, as the Strangers.

Merchant Adventurers

The London group that financed the Pilgrim's move to the New World. Thomas Weston was a part of this group.

Wessagussett

The colony twenty miles north of Plymouth. Thomas Weston financed the patent for this colony, which was a group of unattached men who relied heavily on the Pilgrims for survival.



New Netherland

A Dutch colony at Manhattan. The Pilgrims established a trading relationship with the colony, helped by the fact that both groups spoke Dutch.

Mount Hope

Native Americans gathered here just before King Philip's War began.

Great Swamp Fight

This battle was an important one in King Philip's War. Benjamin Church was wounded during the fighting, the English claimed it as a major victory, and hundreds of Native American women and children died when the English set fire to the fort.



Themes

Humanity

Philbrick points out several times in *Mayflower* that the story of the Pilgrims is one that does not fit our notions of what happened. The story is not as simple as the Pilgrims symbolizing all that is good about America or the English unleashing disease and destruction on the Native Americans or savage Indians attacking the innocent English. In fact, none of these scenes tells the whole truth, which is that both the English and the Native Americans were human. They were, at the same time, full of goodness, greed, anger, uncertainty, and a host of other conflicting behaviors.

Both groups, at many points in this history, were concerned with their self-interest. Some of the Native Americans sought to rid New England of the English. Both Squanto and Massasoit manipulated events to their own benefit. The Pilgrims sought religious freedom at the same time that they tried to control what others could do. They stole from the Indians and manipulated land sales so they profited. Greed, ambition, and self-interest led to attacks, King Philip's War, and many smaller conflicts and hardships.

At the same time, there were times when the English and Native Americans cooperated and helped one another. The Pilgrims would not have survived without the help of Massasoit and the other Native American groups around them. The English also had their moments of charity and good intentions, particularly when the English helped save Massasoit.

As Philbrick shows, the myths and stereotypes of both groups fail to capture the reality of the situation. Both groups were human, which means they did not fit into clear categories or assumptions. They faced triumphs and adversity and handled those challenges in different ways. Their humanity led them to make both good and bad decisions, to help and hurt others, and to protect their own self-interest.

Difference

Difference plays a large role in the story of the Pilgrims and the history of New England. It is, after all, what led to the Pilgrims leaving England for the New World and the source of many conflicts between the English and the Native Americans in the region. In the end, the inability of various groups to handle the differences of others leads to distrust, conflicts, and violence.

The Pilgrims left England because they faced persecution for their religious beliefs. Known as the Separatists, their religious differences made them targets in both England and Holland. Wanting to find religious freedom and the ability to retain their English identity, they decided to voyage to the New World. Yet, their experiences of being challenged because of their differences did not seem to make them more tolerant or accepting of difference.



The conflicts over differences began before the Pilgrims even reached the New World. As they prepared to leave, the Pilgrims found that other individuals, whom they called the Strangers, would be going with them. The Strangers did not share their religious beliefs and they were not tied to the Pilgrims through community or family bonds. This caused problems at times as the Pilgrims tried to force their way of life on the Strangers and the Strangers rebelled. Later, other Englishmen, like Thomas Morton, would also present problems for the Pilgrims because they saw their differences as dangerous to the community.

Difference also led to distrust and violence between the English and their Native American neighbors. Before the Pilgrims even arrived, the Native Americans suffered at the hands of Europeans and enacted their revenge. In these cases, the groups did little to try to understand the others' position, but jumped to violence because of fear and distrust. The Pilgrims and their neighbors would experience the same emotions and conflicts. They did not understand very much about each other's cultures at first and they feared attacks and violence from the other group, without knowing anything about them. Their differences would continue to cause problems in the way that they understood land ownership. In many cases, their distrust over these differences in culture caused them to react in violent, reactionary ways rather than try to live peaceably and respectfully with those around them.

Uncertainty

From the departure of the Mayflower to the New World to the first encounters between the Indians and the Pilgrims, uncertainty and fear must have filled both the Pilgrims and the Native Americans in the region. The Pilgrims had no idea about what to expect from this new land and neither group knew what to expect from the other. Each step in those beginning days was uncertain and hesitant as they tried to figure out what to do and who to trust.

For the Pilgrims, the journey to the New World was fraught with fear and uncertainty. They were leaving a country that had been their home and venturing to a new area they knew little about. What they did know is that they would arrive in the New World with only their possessions. They would find no homes or shelters waiting them and they would not find any Englishmen waiting on shore to welcome them. Imagine standing by the railing of a ship, staring out into the trees not knowing what lay beyond them. Each time the Pilgrims stepped onto land in those early days could have been the last time. They did not know if Indians waited to attack them or if wild animals would kill them. They relied on their faith to get them through the uncertainty, but even with that resolve, it had to have been difficult.

Both the Pilgrims and the Native Americans in the region also faced uncertainty when they encountered each other, particularly in the early days. The Indians had already seen vicious attacks by Europeans and they must have assumed that the Pilgrims would do the same if given the chance. The Pilgrims too had been told of Indian attacks on Europeans and their fear is evident from Philbrick's description of their expeditions

into their new home. Always uneasy with each other and always questioning each other's motives, their uncertainty about each other led to conflicts and violence at many different points in New England history.



Style

Perspective

Nathaniel Philbrick is an award winning writer known for his New York Times bestseller, *In the Heart of the Sea*, and *Sea of Glory: The Epic South Seas Expedition, 1838-1842*. He has won the National Book Award and the Theodore and Franklin D. Roosevelt Naval History Prize.

Philbrick became interested in writing about the history of New England because he resides on Nantucket Island. In researching the history of the island, he came across a reference to Philip. Wanting to know more, he began to research Philip's history, which led him to Massasoit and the Pilgrims. He noticed that the real history of the events during this time were much more complicated than the stories often told about them.

Philbrick writes *Mayflower* with an adult audience in mind. The book is well-suited for people interested in the history of the Pilgrims and New England, including the Native groups that lived there before the Pilgrims arrived. The story will also appeal to those who want to know more about the social relationships and structures that developed between the English and Native Americans around Plymouth. His narrative goes beyond the simple explanation of events to show the complicated motives and reasons for the events that took place between 1620 and 1676.

Tone

Philbrick writes in an authoritative voice. He presents the narrative as being the true, accurate historical account of the events during the 1600s in New England. He uses historical documents within the text from time to time, quoting from Bradford's account or from letters written by other Pilgrims. It is clear that Philbrick did much research on the topic and has drawn from a variety of sources.

His tone gives readers the impression that Philbrick has given them the real story. His narrative leaves few openings for differences of opinion and someone would have to be knowledgeable about conflicting interpretations to find holes in Philbrick's work. The air of authority makes the book and the history contained in it easier to read as the reader can accept the narrative without getting lost in conflicting debates.

However, although the Pilgrims left many documents behind, the authoritative voice that Philbrick offers does skim over the differences in interpretation and conflicting accounts that almost always happen in historical research. In addition, the Native Americans of the region left little written documentation behind so what historians know about them is from Pilgrim accounts and from archaeological finds. While Philbrick's narrative makes the events sound like an accurate account of what happened, it is still an incomplete story.

Structure

Mayflower by Nathaniel Philbrick is divided into four separate sections, each detailing a period of history. Philbrick also included an extensive note section, bibliography, and an index. The book contains sixteen chapters, with an preface and an epilogue as well. Philbrick uses a chronological narrative, although there are several points where he includes past history or future events that are related to the events in the chapter.

The structure of Philbrick's work takes the reader from one point of time to another, allowing the reader to see how events and situations influenced and shaped what came after. This reinforces Philbrick's argument that the events surrounding the Pilgrims and King Philip's War were complex and not as clear cut as the mythical stories about them would have us believe.

Philbrick is writing for a general, educated audience and the notes that he includes are targeted toward such an audience as well. Rather than number points that match particular points in the text, Philbrick includes a general, narrative-like explanation of his sources and related material. For someone interested in the period or events, the notes provide quotes from letters, diaries, and books and where Philbrick found the information he used.

Quotes

"My initial impression of the period was bounded by two conflicting preconceptions: the time-honored tradition of how the Pilgrims came to symbolize all this is good about America and the now equally familiar modern tale of how the evil Europeans annihilated the innocent Native Americans. I soon learned that the real-life Indians and English of the seventeenth century were too smart, too generous, too greedy, too brave—in short, too human—to behave so predictably," Preface, p. xv-xvi.

"It was clear that if no one restrained him, the Indian was going to walk right into the entrance of the rendezvous. Finally, some of the men stepped into the Indian's path and indicated that he was not to go in. Apparently enjoying the fuss he had created, the Indian 'saluted' them and with great enthusiasm spoke the new famous words, 'Welcome, Englishmen!'" Part 1, Chapter 5, p. 92.

The First Thanksgiving marked the conclusion of a remarkable year. Eleven months earlier the Pilgrims had arrived at the tip of Cape Cod, fearful and uninformed. They had spent the next month alienating and angering every Native American they happened to come across. By all rights, none of the Pilgrims should have emerged from the first winter alive," Part 1, Chapter 7, p. 119.

"Neither Bradford nor Winslow ever wrote about it, but by their second year in America they knew enough of the Indians' spiritual beliefs to realize that the two Indians they had come to rely on most closely, Squanto and Hobbamock, were both named for the Native spirit whom the Pilgrims equated with the devil. It was more than a little ironic. They had come to America to serve God as best they knew how, and they were now dependent on two Indians named Satan," Part 1, Chapter 8, p. 131.

"As Pastor Robinson had suggested, the Pilgrims had lost more than a little of their collective soul at Wessagussett. But so had the Pokanokets. Massasoit had entered into a devil's bargain with the English. By selling out his Native neighbors in Massachusetts and Cape Cod, he had cast his lot with a culture and technology on which his own people increasingly came to depend," Part 2, Chapter 10, p. 169.

"It was an astonishing and disturbing sequence of events that put into bold relief just where matters stood between the English and Indians in Plymouth Colony. In 1623, Edward Winslow had earned Massasoit's undying love by doing everything in his power—even scraping the sachem's furrowed mouth—to save his life. Thirty-nine years later, Winslow's son had burst into Alexander's wigwam, brandishing a pistol. Within a week, the Pokanoket leader was dead," Part 3, Chapter 12, p. 203.

"Philip had been forced to prepare for war out of political necessity. After the disastrous summer of 1671, his survival as sachem had depended on it. But Armageddon had always been in the distant future. Thanks to the murder trial of Tobias and the others, Armageddon had arrived," Part 3, Chapter 12, p. 225.



By immediately assuming the conflict was racial rather than a political struggle, the English were, in effect, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy. As the magnitude of the English response increased, Indians across New England discovered that instead of considering them valued allies, the English had suddenly begun to regard them all as potential foes. Perhaps Philip was right: their only option was war," Part 4, Chapter 13, p. 245.

"By November, Philip had become an almost mythic figure in the imagination of the Puritans, who saw his hand in every burning house and lifeless English body. In the years to come, traditions sprang up in the river valley of how Philip moved from cave to cave and mountaintop to mountaintop, where he watched with satisfaction as fire and smoke arose from the towns along the blue necklace of the Connecticut," Part 4, Chapter 14, p. 264.

"Contemporary accounts of the battle focus on the bravery of the English officers and soldiers but make little mention of the slaughter that followed the taking of the fort. It must have been a horrendous and terrifying scene as Narragansett women and children screamed and cried amid the gunshots and flames," Part 4, Chapter 14, p. 277.

"In the end, the winner of the conflict was determined not by military prowess but by one side's ability to outlast the other. The colonies had suffered a series of terrible defeats, but they had England to provide them with food, muskets, and ammunition. The Indians had only themselves, and by summer they were without the stores of food and gunpowder required to conduct a war," Part 4, Chapter 16, p. 333.

"It is easy to mock past attempts to venerate and sanctify the Pilgrims, especially given what their sons and grandsons did to the Native Americans. And yet, we must look with something more than cynicism at a people who maintained more than half a century of peace with their Native neighbors. The great mystery of this story is how America emerged from the terrible darkness of King Philip's War to become the United States," Epilogue, p. 357.



Topics for Discussion

Why did the Pilgrims decide to come to the New World? What did they hope to find here?

Philbrick says the real history of the Pilgrims is different than what we are often taught. What does he mean by this? How does the real history differ from what we have been told?

What were the causes of King Philip's War? How did the actions of both Native Americans and the English lead to the conflict?

Philbrick argues that the Pilgrims probably would not have survived without the help of Massasoit. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

In what ways does Benjamin Church symbolize what America would become?

Compare and contrast William Bradford and Benjamin Church. In what ways did each contribute to the history of the Pilgrims and America?

The English forced many Native groups into King Philip's War. How did they do this? What effect did their actions have on the war?

Describe the relationship between Massasoit and the Pilgrims? What benefits did each gain from their alliance?

Discuss the social and economic changes that occurred in Plymouth Colony during the first fifty years of its existence. Were the changes positive or negative?