

The Story of the Mayflower Pilgrims

by Margot Morrell





When the *Mayflower* Pilgrims arrived in America, there was no one to greet them. No place to buy things. No place to stay. They were all alone.



Why did a small group of people make a lonely journey across the Atlantic Ocean to build their own community?

Let's find out!

LeadershipLives



Many years earlier, King Henry VIII declared everyone in England had to go to his church.



But some people wanted to study the Bible with their family and friends. We call these people Pilgrims.



The king made life very hard for the Pilgrims,
but he wouldn't let them leave England.



It wasn't easy but on their second try,
the Pilgrims escaped to Holland.



The Pilgrims lived in Holland for 12 years, but they missed their old way of life. They decided to move to America.



They hired the *Mayflower* and set sail for America.
They didn't know they were crossing the Atlantic Ocean
in the middle of hurricane season.



At sea, storms tossed the ship around like a little toy.
The passengers were always cold and damp.
The journey lasted over two months.



One day a huge wave swept a teenager overboard.
He grabbed a rope and his friends hauled him back onboard.



When the *Mayflower* reached Cape Cod,
the Pilgrims fell to their knees to thank God
for guiding them safely across the roaring sea.



They were out of fresh water and firewood on the ship,
and it was almost winter! They needed to find a place to live.



For weeks they searched for a suitable spot. Then, desperately, they sailed through a storm to the other side of the bay.



When the clouds cleared, they found exactly what they needed – acres of land with a brook for fresh water, open fields to grow food and a deep harbor for ships.



They named their settlement Plymouth and started building homes and a fort on top of a hill.



One morning, as they were working in the fields, a young Native American walked into their community calling, "Welcome Englishmen!" His name was Samoset.



Samoset stayed overnight and showed the Pilgrims the best ways to catch fish and plant corn.



He introduced his new friends to Squanto who spoke even better English and to Massasoit who was the powerful chief of the Native American tribes in the area.



With Squanto's help, the Pilgrims and Massasoit worked out a peace treaty to help each other that lasted for over 50 years.



In April, the *Mayflower* sailed back to England loaded with letters for friends and families in England and Holland.



That fall, after the harvest, the Pilgrims invited Massasoit and ninety of his friends to celebrate America's first Thanksgiving.



Today, millions of Americans are descended from the tiny community of Pilgrims who arrived in the *Mayflower*.

The End