



# Mayflower

By Nathaniel Philbrick

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**Mayflower** By Nathaniel Philbrick

"Vivid and remarkably fresh...Philbrick has recast the Pilgrims for the ages."  
--*The New York Times Book Review*

*Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in history*  
*New York Times Book Review Top Ten books of the Year*

How did America begin? That simple question launches the acclaimed author of *Bunker Hill* and *Valiant Ambition* on an extraordinary journey to understand the truth behind our most sacred national myth: the voyage of the *Mayflower* and the settlement of Plymouth Colony. As Philbrick reveals in this electrifying history of the Pilgrims, the story of Plymouth Colony was a fifty-five year epic that began in peril and ended in war. New England erupted into a bloody conflict that nearly wiped out the English colonists and natives alike. These events shaped the existing communities and the country that would grow from them.

*From the Trade Paperback edition.*

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## **Mayflower By Nathaniel Philbrick Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #85187 in eBooks
- Published on: 2006-05-09
- Released on: 2006-05-09
- Format: Kindle eBook

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

*Starred Review.* What makes Philbrick's book so fascinating and accessible—the way he turns the Pilgrim legend on its head and shakes out fresh insights from the crusty old mythology we all absorbed in grade school—is present in full force in this exceptional audio version. With more than 800 audiobooks to his credit, Guidall gives the term "veteran reader" a whole new meaning. Such leading figures as William Bradford, Benjamin Church and Miles Standish of the so-called Plymouth Colony (which was not even close to Plymouth or its now-famous rock) emerge from the pages of history as understandable if not always admirable figures, and Guidall's evocations of the sadly depleted (by European diseases) Wampanoag Indians and their chief, Massasoit, are equally believable. The bitter voyage of the *Seaflower* (a slave ship taking captive Wampanoags to be sold in the Caribbean after a disastrous war with Massasoit's son, Philip), which rounds out Philbrick's masterful account, is treated with energy, respect and a straightforwardness that only increases its power.

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

*Mayflower* rethinks the events and players that gave rise to a national mythology about Pilgrims living harmoniously with their Indian neighbors. Instead, Philbrick tells a story of ethnic cleansing, bloody wars, environmental ruin, and the deterioration of English-Indian relations. While he introduces familiar elements, Philbrick also recasts well-known characters like Miles Standish ("Captain Shrimp"), William Bradford, and Benjamin Church. Most critics agree that he provides a well-researched, unbiased revisionist history (though we should note that for years many people have been reading about the environmental devastation of New England, the bloody Indian-English wars, and the less-than-pious Pilgrims). If not as gripping as the National Book Award-winning *In the Heart of the Sea* (2000), particularly the second half, *Mayflower* nonetheless provides a harrowing account of survival and, despite its grim themes, a celebration of courage.

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From [Booklist](#)

*\*Starred Review\** Departing from his customary nautical stories, including the phenomenally popular *In the Heart of the Sea* (2000), Philbrick makes landfall with the saga of the Pilgrims. By necessity, all modern writing about the founding colonists relies on William Bradford's *Of Plymouth Plantation*, interpreting it through modern historical sensibilities that incorporate native perspectives on the newcomers from across the ocean. Long gone is the once inculcated version of friendly Indians helping starving English religious refugees through hard times. The scholarly thesis now has the Pilgrims arriving amid coastal Indian societies that had been decimated by a pandemic. The Pilgrims appeared in 1620 as a potential ally to the weakened Pokanoketts and their sachem Massasoit against neighboring enemies: the Massachusetts and the Narragansetts. Philbrick essentially recounts this reigning interpretation with sensitivity to landscape description, narrative suspense, and understanding of motivations: piety, wrath, gratitude, duplicity--a panorama of human character and historical portent is on display in Philbrick's skillful rendering. Chronologically tracking the fortunes of the alliance struck by Massasoit with Bradford, Philbrick carries events through the second generation, in whose collective hands the alliance exploded into King Philip's War of 1675-76. A sterling synthesis of sources, Philbrick's epic seems poised to become a critical and commercial hit. *Gilbert Taylor*

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## **Users Review**

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