

DALA

Digital American Literature Anthology



Unit Three: Puritans, Pilgrims and Opponents

Version 1.5

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Unit Three Introduction:

Pilgrims, Puritans, and Opponents

The New England Puritan settlers' influences upon the United States, even through today, should not be underestimated. Though the writing of this period is often less appreciated by today's readers than later works of American literature, the underlying cultural and historical foundations that derive from these early colonists in North America wind their way through our society and our writings in very significant ways.

Interestingly, these influences come from a group that, measured by today's standards, would be considered rigid, fundamentalist, authoritarian, dogmatic, and unforgiving to those who did not believe as they did. Writing nearly a century ago, scholar Vernon Parrington described the movement in this manner.

New England Puritanism - like the greater movement of which it was so characteristic an offshoot - is one of the fascinating puzzles in the history of the English people. It phrased its aspirations in so strange a dialect, and interpreted its programme in such esoteric terms, that it appears almost like an alien episode in the records of a practical race. No other phase of Anglo-Saxon civilization seems so singularly remote from everyday reality, so little leavened by natural human impulses and promptings. Certain generations of Englishmen, seemingly for no sufficient reason, yielded their intellects to a rigid system of dogmatic theology, and surrendered their freedom to the letter of the Hebrew Scriptures; and in endeavouring to conform their institutions as well as their daily actions to self-imposed authorities, they produced a social order that fills with amazement other generations of Englishmen who have broken with that order. Strange, perverted, scarce intelligible beings those old Puritans seem to us—mere crabbed theologians disputing endlessly over Calvinistic dogma, or chilling the marrow of honest men and women with their tales of hell-fire. And we should be inclined to dismiss them as curious eccentricities were it not for the amazing fact that those old preachers were not mere accidents or by-products, but the very heart and passion of the times. If they were listened to gladly, it was because they uttered what many were thinking; if they were followed through tribulation and sacrifice by multitudes, it was because the way which they pointed out seemed to the best intelligence of their hearers the divinely approved path, which, if faithfully followed, must lead society out of the present welter of sin and misery and misrule into a nobler state. For the moment religion and statecraft were merged in the thought of Englishmen; and it was because the Puritan ministers were statesmen as well as theologians—the political quite as much as the religious leaders—that the difficult task of social guidance rested for those generations with the divines. How they conducted themselves in that serious business, what account they rendered of their stewardship, becomes therefore a question which the historian may not neglect.

The rest of Parrington's essay can be found at:

http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Cambridge_History_of_American_Literature/Book_I/Chapter_III

Writing more recently, American literary scholar Emory Elliott discusses the lasting influence of these early Puritan colonists.

Many scholars have argued that various elements of Puritanism persisted in the culture and society of the United States long after the New England Puritanism discussed in the following pages was recognizable. However, many of the verbal formulations that the early Congregational and Presbyterian clergy devised as ways to imagine themselves as a special people on a sacred errand into the wilderness of a New World have been sustained in the social, political, economic, and religious thinking of Americans even to the present. Two leading literary and cultural scholars of New England Puritanism and its legacy, Harvard Professors Perry Miller in the 1940s and 50s and, more recently, Sacvan Bercovitch, studied the rhetorical strategies of the New England Puritans and demonstrated the remarkable extent to which the leaders and clergy created a rich American Christian mythology to describe their Providential role as the new Chosen People in world history. Passed down through generations to our own time, many assumptions regarding God's promises to his chosen American People have persisted through the American Revolution, the Civil War, and all periods of crisis down to our own time. Still visible in much religious and political rhetoric in United States are versions of the grand narrative of the Reverend Cotton Mather's prose epic, Magnalia Christi Americana (1702), where he proclaims: "I WRITE the Wonders of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, flying from the Deprivation of Europe, to the American Strand." This vision of a Christian American utopia was first expressed by John Winthrop in his writings in the 1630s and remains alive in many religious and political forms in the United States today.

Elliott's engaging introduction to Puritan influences continues at:

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/eighteen/ekeyinfo/legacy.htm>

Key Lecture: Paul Reuben has an informative introductory lecture on the Puritans here:

<http://www.csustan.edu/english/reuben/pal/chap1/1intro.html>

Some of the identified characteristics of the New England Puritan legacy on the culture of the United States include the following.

America held up as uniquely blessed; a chosen people for all others to emulate.

John Winthrop's original vision of America (or at least of his community of fellow settlers) as an exemplar of a more perfect society, built through strong community and social compact, was just the beginning of the Puritan cultural legacy the remains with the United States today. Hence, the embryonic concept of manifest destiny, that will loom large in this country's history, seems to begin with the Puritans. Echoes of this early vision find their way into some current

manifestations of our "American Dream."

Strong intellectual foundations, dedicated to learning and literacy; the establishment of English as the national language.

New England Puritans were keen on recording everyday events in journals, reflecting on those events, and glorifying God. This required an educated populous. The theocracy set up by the Puritans also drove the need for institutions of higher education to train the next generation of ministers, clerics, and divines. The level of education and the quantity of writing the Puritans produced may have had a direct influence on the establishment of English as the primary language of North America. The Norton Anthology of American Literature states, "*Since the English language arrived late to the New World, it was by no means inevitable that the English would dominate, even in their own colonies. But by 1700, the strength of the (mostly religious) literary output of New England had made English the preeminent language of early American literature. Boston's size, independent college and printing press at Harvard (founded in 1636), and non-nationalist, locally driven project of producing Puritan literature gave New England the publishing edge over the other colonies.*"

Another legacy of the Puritan culture may have been an expectation for and quicker expansion of private and public education for the masses. As Kathryn VanSpanckeren notes,

It is likely that no other colonists in the history of the world were as intellectual as the Puritans. Between 1630 and 1690, there were as many university graduates in the northeastern section of the United States, known as New England, as in the mother country -- an astounding fact when one considers that most educated people of the time were aristocrats who were unwilling to risk their lives in wilderness conditions. The self-made and often self-educated Puritans were notable exceptions. They wanted education to understand and execute God's will as they established their colonies throughout New England.

Interestingly, in Walter Bronson's comparison of early southern settlements (Virginian) to northern settlements (New England) in America, in the realms of literature and education, he notes this contrast.

The more intelligent Virginians were not indifferent to education; private schools were soon established, and a college was planned as early as 1622, although circumstances delayed its actual founding until 1693. But the Virginians, as a whole, had not much zeal for education; the difficulty of providing instruction for all was greatly increased by the sparseness of the population and in consequence the mass of the people were comparatively illiterate. Even the better class of planters, loving field-sports and life in the open air, cared less for books than did the New Englander. The clergymen, sent over by the authorities of the Church of England as good enough for a [southern] colony, were often ignorant and immoral. The indentured white servants (many of them paupers and convicts) and the negro slaves were . . . mostly indifferent to education.

This educational divide between the North and South will eventually work its way into the 19th century genre of literature known as southwestern humor, setting up a contrast between educated Yankee "easterners" and "down-home backwoodsmen or frontiersmen" within that subgenre of U. S. literature.

Social Compacts. Foundational attitudes of self-reliance and independence of the gathered community for the common good.

The 1620 Mayflower Compact of the Plymouth Colony of Pilgrims and Separatists helped established an early form of self-governance in the New World based upon a majoritarian model, dedicated to the survival and welfare of that small community of colonists. The theory of social contracts were just developing as an important part of western European thought. Philosophers Hobbes and Locke would write at length about social contracts, later in the 17th century, dedicated to the idea that humans were born free but could agree to give up some freedom in exchange for the benefits of society and civilization. Just preceding these ideas, the Mayflower Compact now seems to loom large in the history of a country that would use many of the ideas of social contracts in its creation. A people gathered together, distant, isolated, and far from other "homelands" and civilizations would have a clear need to make arrangements for their own protection and mutual governance.

Puritan history in the mother country of England describes a story of revolt against an aristocratic monarch. During the English Civil War (1642-1651) the forces of King Charles I and Parliament clashed, leading to Charles' execution and the establishment of a Commonwealth, ending the rein of power of both the King and the Church of England. This provided a period of Puritan supremacy in England until the restoration of Charles II in 1660. Some of the democratic thoughts and principles, and independent-mindedness, established during this period may have eventually influenced the revolutionary thought in the American colonies that would lead to independence over a century later.

The beginnings of the Puritan (or protestant) work ethic (often used to support an acceptance of the capitalistic economic system)

This is the legacy of where the concept of life-long dedication to hard work and devoted godliness could lead an individual to eventual happiness and success. Puritans believed that the outward appearances of material success were positive indications that an individual was, indeed, one of the elect, or one of God's chosen, and thus assured of a heavenly afterlife. This underlying legacy has advocates and critics. Scholars Sacvan Bercovitch and Edmund Morgan support these ideas in their writings. Critics such as Andrew Delbanco think New England Puritans were actually trying to return to a simpler world of the earliest Christians, and would have been shocked that they may have been perceived as the forerunners of a modern, democratic capitalistic world that relies upon materialism as a sign of success.

Perry Miller points out that Puritan writers and clergy ". . . *tell the story, and tell it coherently, of a society which was founded by men dedicated, in unity and simplicity, to realizing on earth*

eternal and immutable principles and which progressively became involved with fishing, trade, and settlement. They constitute a chapter in the emergence of the capitalist mentality, showing how intelligence copes with or more cogently, how it fails to cope with a change it simultaneously desires and abhors. One remarkable fact emerges: while the ministers were excoriating the behavior of merchants, laborers, and frontiersmen, they never for a moment condemned merchandizing, laboring, or expansion of the frontier. They berated the consequences of progress, but never progress; deplored the effects of trade upon religion, but did not ask men to desist from trading; arraigned men of great estates, but not estates. The temporal welfare of a people, said Jonathan Mitchell in 1667, required safety, honesty, orthodoxy, and also "Prosperity in matters of outward Estate and Liveleyhood."

The Puritan dedication to hard work, based in religious typology and the ongoing need for survival in a new world, will remain even when some of the religious fervor of later generations of colonists fades. It will eventually be incorporated into the practical "can-do" Yankee attitudes of pragmatists like Benjamin Franklin less than a century later.

The Jeremiad or Puritan Sermon

Many literary critics and historians have pointed out the importance of the long-lasting genre of the jeremiad over the centuries in America. Donna Campbell defines these sermons in this manner. "*The term jeremiad refers to a sermon or another work that accounts for the misfortunes of an era as a just penalty for great social and moral evils, but holds out hope for changes that will bring a happier future.*" The combination of holding groups and individuals responsible for their failures while presenting positive options for a better future has long been embedded in the culture of the U.S. since the time of the Puritans. Emory Elliott points out the usefulness of jeremiads through the Revolutionary Period in American history, including their uses in "arousing the population" against Great Britain. He goes on to discuss the evolution of the jeremiad over time.

During the Civil War in the nineteenth century, clergy on both sides employed the jeremiad again to inspire support for their cause. In fact, in every war in which the United States has been involved, sermons and speeches about America's manifest destiny and sacred errand and heritage have been central to the discourses of the war. For over two-hundred years, in State of the Union addresses and Fourth of July orations, American Presidents have preached similar jeremiads. They follow familiar jeremiad formula: we must beware of enemies who plot to destroy us; we must acknowledge the gap between our ideals and current realities; and we must reject corruption, greed, and selfishness, and other sins; and finally, we must work together to restore our superiority among the world's nations. With God on our side, we shall continue the American Dream and fulfill our sacred Manifest Destiny.

Key Resources: See Donna Campbell's fuller descriptions of jeremiads at:

<http://public.wsu.edu/~campbelld/amlit/jeremiad.htm> along with her page on Sermon Structure at <http://public.wsu.edu/~campbelld/amlit/sermstru.htm>

Of course, the story of early American literature is not just one of the New England Puritans, but also a tale of challenges to them and their beliefs.

Henry A. Beers writes of some of these external and internal challenges. The Salem Witch Trials of this period offer a cautionary tale of how a fear of "outside forces and influences" is taken too far.

*Besides the threat of an Indian war and their anxious concern for the purity of the Gospel in their churches, the colonists were haunted by superstitious forebodings of the darkest kind. It seemed to them that Satan, angered by the setting up of the kingdom of the saints in America, had "come down in great wrath," and was present among them, sometimes even in visible shape, to terrify and tempt. Special providences and unusual phenomena, like earth quakes, mirages, and the northern lights, are gravely recorded by Winthrop and Mather and others as portents of supernatural persecutions. Thus Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, the celebrated leader of the Familists, having, according to rumor, been delivered of a monstrous birth, the Rev. John Cotton, in open assembly, at Boston, upon a lecture day, "thereupon gathered that it might signify her error in denying inherent righteousness." "There will be an unusual range of the devil among us," wrote Mather, "a little before the second coming of our Lord. The evening wolves will be much abroad when we are near the evening of the world." This belief culminated in the horrible witchcraft delusion at Salem in 1692, that "spectral puppet play," which, beginning with the malicious pranks of a few children who accused certain uncanny old women and other persons of mean condition and suspected lives of having tormented them with magic, gradually drew into its vortex victims of the highest character, and resulted in the judicial murder of over nineteen people. Many of the possessed pretended to have been visited by the apparition of a little black man, who urged them to inscribe their names in a red book which he carried—a sort of muster-roll of those who had forsworn God's service for the devil's. Others testified to having been present at meetings of witches in the forest. It is difficult now to read without contempt the "evidence" which grave justices and learned divines considered sufficient to condemn to death men and women of unblemished lives. It is true that the belief in witchcraft was general at that time all over the civilized world, and that sporadic cases of witch-burnings had occurred in different parts of America and Europe. Sir Thomas Browne, in his *Religio Medici*, 1635, affirmed his belief in witches, and pronounced those who doubted of them "a sort of atheist." But the superstition came to a head in the Salem trials and executions, and was the more shocking from the general high level of intelligence in the community in which these were held. It would be well if those who lament the decay of "faith" would remember what things were done in New England in the name of faith less than two hundred years ago. It is not wonderful that, to the Massachusetts Puritans of the seventeenth century, the mysterious forest held no beautiful suggestion; to them it was simply a grim and hideous wilderness, whose dark aisles were the ambush of prowling savages and the rendezvous of those other "devil-worshippers" who celebrated there a kind of vulgar Walpurgis night.*

Elliott writes of the challenges of Anne Hutchinson and John Williams, who were expelled

from the Puritan community.

The most serious and destructive case of dissent arose from within the original group of settlers and involved a very prominent family. Having immigrated to Boston in 1634 to follow their minister John Cotton, Anne and William Hutchinson quickly became prominent figures in the community. William was elected deputy to the Massachusetts Court, and Anne continued her community service as a nurse midwife and spiritual adviser to women. As people grew weary of not receiving grace and others faked conversion experiences, all the clergy could do was to encourage people to pray, study the scriptures, and await grace and conversion. The Hutchinsons had followed Cotton from England because of his brilliant preaching and his firm commitment to the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace which held God's grace was the only way salvation. But this doctrine was frustrating for many who felt that living a virtuous life of good deeds should count for something toward receiving grace and salvation. In order to soften the strict doctrine of predestination, some ministers began to preach what the Hutchinsons recognized as a Doctrine of Works—a heresy in Calvin's theology. When the Reverend John Wilson, who was the pastor of the congregation in which Cotton was the teacher, seemed to go too far in the direction of suggesting that good works might lead to salvation, the Hutchinsons were disturbed. Wilson was one of several ministers who began preaching what they called the "Doctrine of the Preparation of the Heart." They said that God would not be so cruel as to give people no hope of helping themselves to prepare for grace and that good works and gracious behavior laid the path for the coming of grace. Disturbed by what she heard as heresy, Anne began to hold weekly meetings in her home to discuss theology. She believed that Wilson and other "preparationists" were rejecting the Doctrine of Predestination and verged on heresy. She and her husband gathered others who sought to oust Reverend John Wilson, but the clergy closed ranks and declared Hutchinson to be the heretic. Unlike her husband, she refused to recant her opinion and was subjected to a sensational trial that included suggestions that she was in love with John Cotton. Cotton was forced to condemn her, and she was excommunicated. When she and her family were banished in 1638, they moved to Rhode Island for five years and then to New York where all of her family but one was killed in an Indian raid.

While the Hutchinson case is the most famous of many theological and political upheavals that occurred in the first decades of the colonies, Roger Williams was also disturbed by the preparation doctrine, and he disputed the use being made of Biblical typology to construct such notions as the Puritans being the new Chosen People and Boston being the new Zion. In addition, he challenged the role of the clergy in political and judicial issues as he believed in the separation of church and state, and he deeply opposed the taking of land from the Native peoples without compensation. His debates with John Cotton led Williams to leave Massachusetts and establish a colony in Rhode Island.

Finally, Walter Bronson comments on one of the early Puritan opponents and his writing in this manner.

Very different from the grave Puritan histories is the New English Canaan (1637) by Thomas Morton, a rollicking Royalist, who with thirty followers established himself at "Merrymount," near Boston, in 1626. He set up a Maypole eighty feet high, and danced about it with his jolly crew, the Indians joining in the revels, which it is probable were not wholly innocent. Morton's Puritan neighbors, greatly scandalized, cut down the wicked Maypole and when Morton persisted in selling guns and rum to the Indians, they shipped him back to England. There he wrote his book, describing the country and making fun of his strait-laced adversaries. Its intrinsic merits are small. But the figure of Thomas Morton dancing about his Maypole in reckless jollity, while the godly look on with horror-stricken visages, is like a dash of color in a somber landscape, and we could better spare a better man.

Questions and Considerations

Very briefly summarize the Puritan belief system and the way that these beliefs contributed to their harsh theocracy. Why do you think writers like Nathaniel Hawthorne would criticize the Puritans so much in his writings?

Briefly outline the Puritan cultural contributions to the founding of the United States.

Briefly outline the ways New England Puritans reacted to the native peoples that surrounded them.

Contrast Quaker William Penn's relationships with native peoples to that of the Puritans.

Briefly catalogue the ways that the Puritans reacted to other European settlers who believed differently than they did, such as Thomas Morton or Anne Hutchinson.

Do you believe there are any modern day parallels to the New England Puritans, groups of people of good will and faith who, perhaps, take their convictions too far or to such an extreme that some of their means may not justify their ends? Discuss.

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Unit Three Readings:

Pilgrims, Puritans, and Opponents

John Winthrop (1588-1649)

[[image](#)] John Winthrop was the leader of the Puritans who arrived in New England in 1630 to form the Massachusetts Bay Colony, on the ship the *Arabella*. A lawyer and professed separatist from the Church of England, he sought to escape the English government's oppression of Calvinists in his birth country. He was elected governor of the colony and retained that position for much of his life, intent on creating and maintaining a theocratic society for those who believed as he and his fellow Puritans did. He is, perhaps, mostly remembered for his famous sermon, delivered on board the *Arabella*, "A Model of Christian

Charity." Students seeking more information on Winthrop may examine any of these works: Michael J. Colacurcio's *Godly Letters: The Literature of the American Puritans*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006; *American Colonial Writers 1606-1734*, edited by Emory Elliott, Detroit: Gale, 1984; Ivy Schweitzer's *Perfecting Friendship: Politics and Affiliation in Early American Literature*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006; and Lee Schweningner's *John Winthrop*, Boston: Twayne, 1990.

Winthrop, John. *A Model of Christian Charity*. Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society. 3rd series. Boston, 1838.

source of electronic text: <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/winthmod.html>

from A Model of Christian Charity

Editor's note: Spelling has been modernized in the brief passage of the sermon provided.

[text omitted]

Now the only way to avoid this shipwreck, and to provide for our posterity, is to follow the counsel of Micah, to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God. For this end, we must be knit together, in this work, as one man. We must entertain each other in brotherly affection. We must be willing to abridge ourselves of our superfluities, for the supply of other's necessities. We must uphold a familiar commerce together in all meekness, gentleness, patience and liberality. We must delight in each other; make other's conditions our own; rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work, as members of the same body. So shall we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The Lord will be our God, and delight to dwell among us, as his own people, and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways. So that we shall see much more of his wisdom, power, goodness and truth, than formerly we have been acquainted with. We shall find that the God of Israel is among us, when ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies; when he shall make us a praise and glory that men shall say of succeeding plantations, "the Lord make it like that of New England." For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world. We shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God, and all professors for God's sake. We shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us till we be consumed out of the good land whither we are a going.

I shall shut up this discourse with that exhortation of Moses, that faithful servant of the Lord, in his last farewell to Israel, Deut. 30. Beloved there is now set before us life and good, Death and evil, in that we are commanded this day to love the Lord our God, and to love one

another, to walk in his ways and to keep his Commandments and his Ordinance and his laws, and the articles of our Covenant with him, that we may live and be multiplied, and that the Lord our God may bless us in the land whither we go to possess it. But if our hearts shall turn away, so that we will not obey, but shall be seduced, and worship and serve other Gods, our pleasure and profits, and serve them; it is propounded unto us this day, we shall surely perish out of the good land whither we pass over this vast sea to possess it;

Therefore let us choose life

that we, and our seed

may live, by obeying His

voice and cleaving to Him,

for He is our life and

our prosperity.

[text omitted]

<http://history.hanover.edu/texts/winthmod.html>

electronic text from Hanover Historical Texts Project

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[Unit Three: Pilgrims, Puritans and Opponents](#)

[Resources for Pilgrims, Puritans and Opponents](#)

William Bradford (1588-1657)

William Bradford was born at Austerfield in Yorkshire, England, in March of 1588. He became a Puritan when he was eighteen, and soon emigrated to Holland with other like-minded individuals, seeking to escape the religious persecution of their homeland. Struggling there with cultural influences on their children, this group decided to cross the Atlantic and resettle in an English colony in Virginia. Departing in September of 1620, these "pilgrims," along with a number of other colonists, battled storms and harsh conditions aboard the Mayflower, to land in Massachusetts, finally settling in Plymouth. Bradford's descriptions and reflections of the early struggles and eventual successes of the Plymouth Plantation provide readers with a

better understanding of this influential group of settlers. He became a long-time governor of the colony, and is best known for his book, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, along with his recovered journal. He died at Plymouth, Massachusetts, on May 9, 1657. Important criticism on Bradford and his writing includes, Douglas Anderson's *William Bradford's Books: Of Plimmoth Plantation and the Printed Word*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003 and Michael Colacurcio's *Godly Letters: The Literature of the American Puritans*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006. Also of note is David Read's *New World, Known World: Shaping Knowledge in Early Anglo-American Writing*, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2005.

Bradford, William. *History of Plymouth Plantation*. Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Company, 1898.

electronic source for text: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/24950>

Editor's note: Modernized spelling and editing for readability in the passages provided are partially drawn from "The Log of the 'Mayflower,'" McClure's Magazine, Volume IX, Number 3, July 1897.

from History of Plymouth Plantation

from the 9th Chapter 1620

illustration: [The Mayflower Compact, 1620](#), from the oil painting by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris (1863–1930)

September 6, 1620. These troubles being blown over, and now being all compacted together in one ship, they put to sea again with a prosperous wind, which continued divers days together, which was some encouragement unto them; yet according to the usual manner many were afflicted with sea sickness. And I may not omit here a special mark of God's providence: there was a proud, a very profane young man, one of the seamen, of a lusty able body, which made him the more haughty. He would always be condemning the poor people in their sickness, and cursing them daily with grievous execrations; and did not let to tell the, that he hoped to help cast half of them overboard before they came to journey's end, and to make merry with what they had; and if he were by any gently reprov'd, he would curse and swear most bitterly. But it pleased God before they came half seas over to smite this young man with a grievous disease, of which he died in a desperate manner; and so was himself the first who was thrown overboard. Thus his curses light on his own head; and it was an astonishment to all his fellows, for they noted it to be the just hand of God upon him.

After they had enjoyed fair winds and weather for some time, they encountered cross winds and many fierce storms by which the ship was much shaken and her upper works made very leaky. One of the main beams amid-ships was bent and cracked, which made them afraid that

she might not be able to complete the voyage. So some of the chief of the voyagers, seeing that the sailors doubted the efficiency of the ship, entered into serious consultation with the captain and officers, to weigh the danger betimes and rather to return than to cast themselves into desperate and inevitable peril. Indeed there was great difference of opinion amongst the crew themselves. They wished to do whatever could be done for the sake of their wages, being now halfway over; on the other hand they were loath to risk their lives too desperately. But at length all opinions, the captain's and others' included, agreed that the ship was sound under the water-line, and as for the buckling of the main beam, there was a great iron screw the passengers brought out of Holland, by which the beam could be raised into its place; and the carpenter affirmed that with a post put under it, set firm in the lower deck, and otherwise fastened, he could make it hold. As for the decks and upper works, they said they would caulk them as well as they could; and though with the working of the ship they would not long keep stanch, yet there would otherwise be no great danger, if they did not over-press her with sail.

So they committed themselves to the will of God, and resolved to proceed. In several of these storms the wind was so strong and the seas so high that they could not carry a knot of sail, but were forced to hull for many days. Once, as they thus lay at hull in a terrible storm, a strong young man, called John Rowland, coming on deck was thrown into the sea ; but it pleased God that he caught hold of the top-sail halyards which hung overboard and ran out at length ; but he kept his hold, though he was several fathoms under water, till he was hauled up by the rope and then with a boat-hook helped into the ship and saved; and though he was somewhat ill from it he lived many years and became a profitable member both of the church and commonwealth. In all the voyage only one of the passengers died, and that was William Button, a youth, servant to Samuel Fuller, when they were nearing the coast But to be brief, after long beating at sea, on November 11th they fell in with a part of the land called Cape Cod, at which they were not a little joyful. After some deliberation among themselves and with the captain, they tacked about and resolved to stand for the southward, the wind and weather being fair, to find some place near Hudson's River for their habitation. But after they had kept that course about half a day, they met with dangerous shoals and roaring breakers, and as they conceived themselves in great danger, — the wind falling, — they resolved to bear up again for the Cape, and thought themselves happy to get out of danger before night overtook them, as by God's providence they did. Next day they got into the bay, where they rode in safety.

Illustration: [Mayflower in Plymouth Harbor, by William Halsall, 1882 at Pilgrim Hall Museum, Plymouth, Massachusetts, USA.](#)

from "Anno Dom 1628"

Some three or four years before this there came over one, Captain Wollaston, a man of fine qualities, with three or four others of some distinction, who brought with them a great many

servants, with provisions and other necessaries to found a settlement. They pitched upon a place within Massachusetts, which they called, after their Captain, Mount Wollaston. Among them was one, Mr. Morton, who, it seems, had some small share with them in the enterprise, either on his own account or as an agent ; but he was little respected amongst them and even slighted by the servants. Having remained there some time, and not finding things answer their expectations, Captain Wollaston took the majority of the servants to Virginia, where he hired out their services profitably to other employers. So he wrote up to Mr. Rasdell, one of the chief partners who was acting as their merchant, to bring another party of them to Virginia for the same purpose. With the consent of Rasdell he appointed one Pitcher, as his deputy, to govern the remnant of the colony till one of them should return.

But Morton, in the others' absence, having more craft than honesty — he had been a kind of petti-fogger of Fumival's Inn — watched his opportunity when rations were scarce with them, got some drink and other junkets and made them a feast, and after they were merry began to tell them he would give them good counsel. "You see," says he, "that many of your comrades have been taken to Virginia; and if you stay till this Rasdell returns you too will be carried off and sold as slaves with the rest So I would advise you to oust this Lieutenant Pitcher; and I, having a share in this settlement, will take you as partners, and you will be free from service, and we will trade, plant, and live together as equals, and support and protect one another" — and so on. This advice was easily received; so they drove out Lieutenant Pitcher and would not allow him to come amongst them, forcing him to get food and other relief from his neighbors, till he could get passage to England. They then fell to utter licentiousness, and led a dissolute and profane life. Morton became lord of misrule, and maintained, as it were, a school of Atheism. As soon as they acquired some means by trading with the Indians, they spent it in drinking wine and strong drinks to great excess, — as some reported, ten pounds worth in a morning. They set up a Maypole, drinking and dancing about it for several days at a time, inviting the Indian women for their consorts, dancing and frisking together like so many fairies,— -or furies rather, — to say nothing of worse practices. It was as if they had revived the celebrated feasts of the Roman goddess Flora, or the beastly practices of the mad Bacchanalians. Morton, to show his poetry, composed sundry verses and rhymes, some tending to lasciviousness and others to the detraction and scandal of some persons, affixing them to his idle, or idol. Maypole. They changed the name of the place, and instead of calling it Mount Wollaston, they called it Merry Mount, as if this jollity would last forever. But it did not continue long, for, shortly after, Morton was sent back to England, as will appear. In the meantime that worthy gentleman, Mr. John Endicott, arrived from England, bringing over a patent under the broad seal, for the government of Massachusetts. Visiting this neighborhood, he had the May-pole cut down, and reprimanded them for their profaneness, admonishing them to improve their way of living. In consequence, others changed the name of their place again and called it Mount Dagon!

In order to maintain this riotous prodigality and excess, Morton, hearing what profit the French and the fishermen had made by trading guns, powder, and shot to the Indians, began to practice it hereabouts, teaching them how to use them. Having instructed them, he employed

some of them to hunt and fowl for him, until they became far more able than the English, owing to their swiftness on foot and nimbleness of body, being quick-sighted, and knowing the haunts of all sorts of game. With the result that, when they saw what execution a gun would do and the advantage of it, they were mad for them and would pay any price for them, thinking their bows and arrows but baubles in comparison.

And here I must bewail the mischief that this wicked man began in this district, and which, continued by men that should know better, has now become prevalent, notwithstanding the laws to the contrary. The result is that the Indians are stocked with all kinds of arms, — fowling-pieces, muskets, pistols, etc. They even have molds to make shots of all sorts, — musket bullets, pistol bullets, swan and geese shot and smaller sorts. It is well known that they often have powder and shot when the English lack it and cannot get it, it having been bought up and sold to those who trade it to the Indians at a shilling per pound — for they will buy it at any price. This goes on while their neighbors are being killed by the Indians every day, or are only living at their mercy. They have even been told how gun-powder is made, and all the materials that are in it, and that they are to be had in their own land ; and I am confident that if they could only get saltpeter they would make gunpowder itself.

Oh, the horror of this villainy! How many Dutch and English have lately been killed by Indians, thus furnished; and no remedy is provided, — nay, the evil has increased. The blood of their brothers has been sold for profit; and in what danger all these colonies are is too well-known. Oh! that princes and parliaments would take some timely steps to prevent this mischief and to suppress it, by exemplary punishment of some of those gain-thirsty murderers, — for they deserve no better title, — before their colonies in these parts are wiped out by the barbarous savages, armed with their own weapons by these traitors to their country. But I have forgotten myself, and have been too long on this digression; now to return.

Morton having taught them the use of guns, sold them all he could spare, and he and his associates determined to send for large supplies from England, having already sent for over a score by some of the ships. This being known, several members of the scattered settlements hereabouts agreed to solicit the settlers at New Plymouth, who then outnumbered them all, to join with them to prevent the further growth of this mischief, and to suppress Morton and his associates. Those who joined in this action, and afterwards contributed to the expense of sending him to England, were from Piscataqua, Naumkeag, Winnisimmett, Weesagascussett, Nantasket, and other places where the English had settled. The New Plymouth colonists thus addressed by their messengers and letters, and weighing their reasons and the common danger, were willing to help, though they themselves had least cause for fear.

So, to be short, they first decided to write to Morton jointly, in a friendly and neighborly way, requesting him to desist, and sent a messenger with the letter to bring his answer. But he was so overbearing that he scorned all advice; he asked what it had to do with them; he would trade guns to the Indians in spite of them all, with many other scurrilous remarks, full of disdain. So they sent to him again and bade him be better advised and more temperate in

his terms ; that the country would not bear the injury he was doing; it was against their common safety and against the king's proclamation.

He answered in high terms as before, and that the king's proclamation was no law; demanding what penalty was upon it. It was answered, more than he could bear, his majesty's displeasure. But insolently he persisted, and said the king was dead and his displeasure with him, and many the like things; and threatened with all that if any came to molest him, let them look to themselves, for he would prepare for them. Upon which they saw there was no way but to take him by force; and having so far proceeded, now to give over would make him far more haughty and insolent. So they mutually resolved to proceed, and obtained of the Governor of Plymouth to send Captain Standish, and some other aide with him, to take Morton by force. The which accordingly was done; but they found him to stand stiffly in his defense, having made fast his doors, armed his consorts, set diverse dishes of powder and bullets ready on the table; and if they had not been over armed with drink, more hurt might have been done. They summoned him. to yield, but he kept his house, and they could get nothing but scoffs and scorns from him; but at length, fearing they would do some violence to the house, he and some of his crew came out, but not to yield, but to shoot; but they were so steeled with drink as their pieces were too heavy for them; himself with a carbine (over charged and almost half filled with powder and shot, as was after found) had thought to have shot Captain Standish; but he stepped to him, and put by his piece, and took him. Neither was there any hurt done to any of either side, save that one was so drunk that he ran his own nose upon the point of a sword that one held before him as he entered the house; but he lost but a little of his hot blood. Morton they brought away to Plymouth, where he was kept, till a ship went from the Ile of Shoals for England, with which he was sent to the Counsel of New-England; and letters written to give them information of his course and carriage; and also one was sent at their common charge to inform their Honors more particularly, and to prosecute against him. But he fooled of the messenger,' after he was gone from hence, and sough he went for England, yet nothing was done to him, not much as rebuked, for ought was heard; but returned the next year. Some of the worst of the company were dispersed, and some of the more modest kept the house till he should be heard from. But I have been too long about so unworthy a person, and a bad cause.

from "Anno Dom 1642"

And after the time of the writing of these things befell a very sad accident of the like foul nature in this government, this very year, which I shall now relate. There was a youth whose name was Thomas Granger. He was servant to an honest man of Duxbury, being about 16 or 17 years of age.... He was this year detected of buggery, and indicted for the same, with a mare, a cow, two goats, five sheep, two calves and a turkey. Horrible it is to mention, but the truth of the history requires it. He was first discovered by one that accidentally saw his lewd practice towards the mare. (I forbear particulars.) Being upon it examined and committed, in the end he not only confessed the fact with that beast at that time, but sundry times before

and at several times with all the rest of the forenamed in his indictment. And this his free confession was not only in private to the magistrates (though at first he strived to deny it) but to sundry, both ministers and others; and afterwards, upon his indictment, to the whole Court and jury; and confirmed it at his execution. And whereas some of the sheep could not so well be known by his description of them, others with them were brought before him and he declared which were they and which were not. And accordingly he was cast by the jury and condemned, and after executed about the 8th of September, 1642. A very sad spectacle it was. For first the mare and then the cow and the rest of the lesser cattle were killed before his face, according to the law, Leviticus xx. 15; and then he himself was executed. The cattle were all cast into a great large pit that was dug of purpose for them, and no use made of any part of them.

Upon the examination of this person and also of a former that had made some sodomitical attempts upon another, it being demanded of them how they came first to the knowledge and practice of such wickedness, the one confessed he had long used it in old England; and this youth last spoken of said he was taught it by another that had heard of such things from some in England when he was there, and they kept cattle together. By which it appears how one wicked person may infect many, and what care all ought to have what servants they bring into their families. But it may be demanded how came it to pass that so many wicked persons and profane people should so quickly come over into this land and mix themselves amongst them? Seeing it was religious men that began the work and they came for religion's sake? I confess this may be marveled at, at least in time to come, when the reasons thereof should not be known; and the more because here was so many hardships and wants met "withal. I shall therefore endeavor to give some answer hereunto.

1. And first, according to that in the gospel, it is ever to be remembered that where the Lord begins to sow good seed, there the envious man will endeavor to sow tares [weeds].

2. Men being to come over into a "wilderness," in which much labor and service was to be done about building and planting, etc., such as wanted help in that respect, when they could not have such as they would, were glad to take such as they could; and so, many untoward servants, sundry of them proved, that were thus brought over, both men and women-kind who, when their times were expired, became families of themselves, which gave increase hereunto.

3. Another and a main reason hereof was that men, finding so many godly disposed persons willing to come into these parts, some began to make a trade of it, to transport passengers and their goods, and hired ships for that end. And then, to make up their freight and advance their profit, cared not who the persons were, so they had money to pay them. And by this means the country became pestered with many unworthy persons who, being come over, crept into one place or other.

4. Again the Lord's blessing usually following his people, as well in outward as spiritual things (though afflictions be mixed with all), do make many to adhere to the people of God, as many

followed Christ, for love's sake, John 6.26, and a mixed multitude came into the wilderness with the people of God out of Egypt of old, Exodus 12.38; so also there were sent by their friends some under hope that they would be made better; others that they might be eased of such burdens, and they kept from shame at home it would necessarily follow their dissolute courses. And thus, by one means or the other, in 20 years' time, it is a question whether the greater part be not grown the worse.

[Resources for Pilgrims, Puritans and Opponents](#)

Thomas Morton (1575/1579?-1647)

Thomas Morton, known today as a nemesis, or at least an irritant, to William Bradford's Plymouth Bay Colony, was born in Devon, England around 1578, into a wealthy Anglican family. He studied law then worked for Ferdinando Gorges, the governor of the English port of Plymouth, to oversee the governor's interests in the colonies. Partnering with Captain Richard Wollaston, Morton and 30 indentured men set up a trading post in New England, which later become known as Mount Wollaston (or Merry Mount), and today as Quincy, Massachusetts. The outpost traded weapons for furs to the native Algonquian tribes, much to the consternation of the nearby Plymouth puritans. The three volumes of Morton's *New English Canaan* memoirs provide a contrasting Anglican and entrepreneurial viewpoint to the nearby belief systems of the Pilgrim settlement. Morton's humorous and poignant run ins with his neighbors, and especially with Miles Standish, are refreshing. Imprisoned by the Puritans, he escapes to England, only to return to be imprisoned again in Boston for slander. He eventually settled in Maine and died in 1647. Nathaniel Hawthorne's story, "The May-pole of Merry Mount," provides a third, more literary view of some of the events both Bradford and Morton write about.

Morton, Thomas. "The May-pole Revels at Merry Mount." *Colonial Prose and Poetry*. Volume 1. Trent and Wells, eds. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1901.

source of electronic text: <http://archive.org/details/colonialprosepoe00tren>

from **The May-pole Revels at Merry Mount.**

[From *New English Canaan*, Amsterdam, 1637, Book III. Chap. XIV.]

THE INHABITANTS of Pasonagessit (having translated the name of their inhabitation from that ancient savage name to Ma-re Mount; and being resolved to have the new name confirmed for a memorial to after ages) did devise amongst themselves to have it performed in a solemn manner with revels and merriment after the old English custom, prepared to set

up a May-pole upon the festival day of Philip and Jacob; and therefore brewed a barrel of excellent beer, and provided a case of bottles to be spent, with other good cheer, for all comers of that day. And because they would have it in a complete form, they had prepared a song fitting to the time and present occasion. And upon May-day they brought the May-pole to the place appointed, with drums, guns, pistols, and other fitting instruments, for that purpose; and there erected it with the help of savages, that came thither of purpose to see the manner of our revels. A goodly pine tree of eighty foot long, was reared up, with a pair of buck's horns nailed on, somewhat near unto the top of it: where it stood as a fair sea-mark for directions how to find out the way to mine Host of Ma-re Mount....

The setting up of this May-pole was a lamentable spectacle to the precise Separatists that lived at New Plymouth. They termed it an idol; yea, they called it the Calf of Horeb: and stood at defiance with the place, naming it Mount Dagon; threatening to make it a woful mount, and not a merry mount....

There was likewise a merry song made, which (to make their revels more fashionable) was sung with a chorus, every man bearing his part; which they performed in a dance, hand in hand about the May-pole, whilst one of the company sung, and filled out the good liquor like Gammedes and Jupiter.

THE SONG.

Drink and be merry, merry, merry, boys;
Let all your delight be in Hymen's joys;
Io to Hymen now the day is come,
About the merry May-pole take a room.

Make green garlons, bring bottles out;
And fill sweet Nectar, freely about.
Uncover thy head, and fear no harm,
For here 's good liquor to keep it warm.

Then drink and be merry, etc.
Io to Hymen, etc.
Nectar is a thing assign'd,
By the Deity's own mind,

To cure the heart opprest with grief,
And of good liquors is the chief.
Then drink, etc.
Io to Hymen, etc.

Give to the melancholy man
A cup or two of 't now and then;
This physic will soon revive his blood,
And make him be of a merrier mood.

Then drink, etc.
Io to Hymen, etc.

Give to the nymph that's free from scorn,
No Irish stuff nor Scotch overworn.
Lasses in beaver coats, come away;
Ye shall be welcome to us night and day

To drink and be merry, etc.
Io to Hymen, etc.

This harmless mirth made by young men (that lived in hope to have wives brought over to them, that would save them a labor to make a voyage to fetch any over) was much distasted of the precise Separatists that kept much ado, about the tithes of mint and cumin, troubling their brains more than reason would require about things that are indifferent: and from that time sought occasion against my honest Host of Ma-re Mount to overthrow his undertakings, and to destroy his plantation quite and clean.

Captain Shrimp (Myles Standish) Captures Mine Host (Morton).

[From the Same, Book III. Chap. XV.]

Of a Great Monster supposed to be at Ma-re Mount; and the Preparation made to destroy It.

THE SEPARATISTS envying the prosperity and hope of the plantation at Ma-re Mount (which they perceived began to come forward, and to be in a good way for gain in the beaver trade), conspired together against mine Host especially, (who was the owner of that plantation) and made up a party against him; and mustered up what aid they could; accounting of him as of a great monster.

Many threatening speeches were given out both against his person, and his habitation, which they divulged should be consumed with fire. And taking advantage of the time when his company (which seemed little to regard their threats) were gone up into the inlands, to trade with the savages for beaver, they set upon my honest Host at a place, called Wessaguscus, where (by accident) they found him. The inhabitants there were in good hope of the subversion of the plantation at Ma-re Mount (which they principally aimed at), and the rather, because mine Host was a man that endeavored to advance the dignity of the Church of England; which they, on the contrary part, would labor to vilify with uncivil terms, inveighing against the sacred book of common prayer, and mine Host that used it in a laudable manner amongst his family, as a practice of piety.

There he would be a means to bring sacks to their mill (such is the thirst after beaver), and helped the conspirators to surprise mine Host (who was there all alone) and they charged him (because they would seem to have some reasonable cause against him to set a gloss upon

their malice) with criminal things, which indeed had been done by such a person, but was of their conspiracy. Mine Host demanded of the conspirators who it was, that was author of that information, that seemed to be their ground for what they now intended. And because they answered they would not tell him, he as peremptorily replied that he would not say whether he had or he had not done as they had been informed.

The answer made no matter (as it seemed) whether it had been negatively, or affirmatively made, for they had resolved what he should suffer, because (as they boasted,) they were now become the greater number: they had shaken off their shackles of servitude, and were become masters, and masterless people.

It appears, they were like bears' whelps in former time, when mine Host's plantation was of as much strength as theirs, but now (theirs being stronger,) they (like overgrown bears) seemed monstrous. In brief, mine Host must endure to be their prisoner until they could contrive it so that they might send him for England, (as they said,) there to suffer according to the merit of the fact, which they intended to father upon him; supposing (belike) it would prove a heinous crime.

Much rejoicing was made that they had gotten their capital enemy (as they concluded him) whom they purposed to hamper in such sort that he should not be able to uphold his plantation at Ma-re Mount.

The conspirators sported themselves at my honest Host, that meant them no hurt; and were so jocund that they feasted their bodies, and fell to tipping, as if they had obtained a great prize; like the Trojans when they had the custody of Hippeus' pine-tree horse.

Mine Host feigned grief, and could not be persuaded either to eat or drink, because he knew emptiness would be a means to make him as watchful as the geese kept in the Roman capitol: whereon, the contrary part, the conspirators would be so drowsy, that he might have an opportunity to give them a slip, instead of a tester. Six persons of the conspiracy were set to watch him at Wessaguscus. But he kept waking; and in the dead of night (one lying on the bed, for further surety,) up gets mine Host and got to the second door that he was to pass, which, notwithstanding the lock, he got open: and shut it after him with such violence, that it affrighted some of the conspirators.

The word, which was given with an alarm, was, "Oh, he's gone, he's gone! What shall we do? He's gone!" The rest (half asleep) start up in a maze, and like rams, ran their heads one at another full butt in the dark.

Their grand leader, Captain Shrimp, took on most furiously, and tore his clothes for anger, to see the empty nest, and their bird gone.

The rest were eager to have torn their hair from their heads, but it was so short that it would

give them no hold. Now Captain Shrimp thought in the loss of this prize (which he accounted his masterpiece,) all his honor would be lost forever.

In the meantime mine Host was got home to Ma-re Mount through the woods, eight miles, round about the head of the river Monatoquit, that parted the two plantations, finding his way by the help of the lightning (for it thundered, as he went, terribly). And there he prepared powder, three pounds dried, for his present employment, and four good guns for him, and the two assistants left at his house, with bullets of several sizes, three hundred or thereabouts, to be used if the conspirators should pursue him thither; and these two persons promised their aids in the quarrel, and confirmed that promise with a health in good rosa solis.

Now Captain Shrimp, the first captain in the land, (as he supposed,) must do some new act to repair this loss, and to vindicate his reputation, who had sustained blemish, by this oversight. Begins now to study how to repair or survive his honor in this manner; calling of council: they conclude.

He takes eight persons more to him, and (like the nine worthies of New Canaan) they embark with preparation against Ma-re Mount, where this monster of a man, as their phrase was, had his den; the whole number, had the rest not been from home, being but seven, would have given Captain Shrimp, (a quondam drummer,) such a welcome, as would have made him wish for a drum as big as Diogenes' tub, that he might have crept into it out of sight.

Now the nine worthies are approached; and mine Host prepared, having intelligence by a savage, that hastened in love from Wessaguscus, to give him notice of their intent. One of mine Host's men proved a craven; the other had proved his wits to purchase a little valor, before mine Host had observed his posture.

The nine worthies coming before the den of this supposed monster, (this seven-headed hydra, as they termed him) and began, like Don Quixote against the windmill, to beat a parley, and to offer quarter if mine Host would yield; for they resolved to send him for England, and bade him lay by his arms.

But he (who was the son of a soldier), having taken up arms in his just defence, replied that he would not lay by those arms, because they were so needful at sea, if he should be sent over. Yet to save the effusion of so much worthy blood, as would have issued out of the veins of these nine worthies of New Canaan, if mine Host should have played upon them out at his port-holes (for they came within danger like a flock of wild geese, as if they had been tailed one to another, as colts to be sold at a fair) mine Host was content to yield upon a quarter; and did capitulate with them in what manner it should be for more certainty, because he knew what Captain Shrimp was.

He expressed that no violence should be offered to his person, none to his goods, nor any of his household: but that he should have his arms, and what else was requisite for the voyage:

which their herald returns, it was agreed upon, and should be performed.

But mine Host no sooner had set open the door and issued out, but instantly Captain Shrimp and the rest of the worthies stepped to him, laid hold of his arms and had him down; and so eagerly was every man bent against him (not regarding any agreement made with such a carnal man,) that they fell upon him as if they would have eaten him. Some of them were so violent that they would have a slice with scabbard, and all for haste, until an old soldier (of the Queen's, as the proverb is) that was there by accident, clapped his gun under the weapons, and sharply rebuked these worthies for their unworthy practices. So the matter was taken into more deliberate consideration.

Captain Shrimp and the rest of the nine worthies made themselves by this outrageous riot masters of mine Host of Ma-re Mount, and disposed of what he had at his plantation.

This they knew (in the eye of the savages) would add to their glory; and diminish the reputation of mine honest Host, whom they practised to be rid of, upon any terms, as willingly as if it had been the very hydra of the time.

Morton's Fate

[From The Same, Book III., Chap. XVI.]

A conclusion was made and sentence given that mine Host should be sent to England a prisoner. But when he was brought to the ships for that purpose, no man durst be so foolhardy as to undertake carry him [an error of statement]. So these worthies set mine Host upon an island, without gun, powder, or shot or dog or so much as a knife to get any thing to feed upon, or any other clothes to shelter him with at winter than a thin suit which he had on at that time. Hence he could not get to Ma-re Mount. Upon this island he stayed a month at least, and was relieved by savages that took notice that mine Host was a Sachem of Passonagessit, and would bring bottles of strong liquor to him, and unite themselves into a league of brotherhood with mine Host; so full of humanity are these infidels before those Christians.

From this place for England sailed mine Host in a Plymouth ship....

[Resources for Pilgrims, Puritans and Opponents](#)

William Penn (1644-1718)

[\[image\]](#) William Penn was born on October 14, 1644, in London, England, son of Sir Admiral William Penn and Margaret Jasper. William Senior's service in the Commonwealth Navy earned him Irish estates from the Cromwell government. The younger Penn received a good

education and in his mid-teens was greatly influenced by a Quaker missionary in Ireland. After spending time in Paris, Penn, while back in Ireland, converted to Quakerism at age 22. He became a leading proponent of the Quakers, leading to a falling out with his family and imprisonment by the government of King Charles II. After coming into a large inheritance and facing continued persecution in England, Penn and other prominent Quakers purchased a large tract of land in America, as a place for a Quaker colony. It eventually was renamed Pennsylvania by Charles II in honor of the elder Penn. Penn dedicated much of his time promoting this new colony to attract settlers, including promising religious freedom to other persecuted groups, and guaranteeing good relations with area natives, the Lenape, by treating them fairly and honoring treaties. He insisted that Quaker grammar schools be open to all citizens, thereby producing a more educated work force and literate society. He helped found, plan and direct the development of Philadelphia. The city and colony thrived in the years to come. Penn died on July 30, 1718 and is buried in England.

Letter to the Free Society of Traders

Penn, William. "A Letter from William Penn, Proprietary and Governor of Pennsylvania in America, to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders of that Province, residing in London." London, 1683.

source of text: *History Matters*. <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/7440> Used by permission for non-commercial, educational purposes only.

For the Province, the general condition of it, take as follows:

I. The country itself in its soil, air, water, seasons, and produce, both natural and artificial, is not to be despised. The land contains divers sorts of earth, as sand, yellow and black, poor and rich; also gravel, both loamy and dusty; and in some places a fast fat earth, like to our best vales in England, especially by inland brooks and rivers. God in His wisdom having ordered it so, that the advantages of the country are divided, the back lands being generally three to one richer than those that lie by navigable waters. We have much of another soil, and that is a black hazel mold upon a stony or rocky bottom.

II. The air is sweet and clear, the heavens serene, like the south parts of France, rarely overcast; and as the woods come by numbers of people to be more cleared, that itself will refine.

III. The waters are generally good, for the rivers and brooks have mostly gravel and stony bottoms, and in number hardly credible. We have also mineral waters that operate in the same manner with Chipping Barnet and Northhaw, not two miles from Philadelphia.

IV. For the seasons of the year, having by God's goodness now lived over the coldest and hottest that the oldest liver in the province can remember, I can say something to an English

understanding...

V. The natural produce of the country, of vegetables, is trees, fruits, plants, flowers. The trees of most note are the black walnut, cedar, cypress, chestnut, poplar, gumwood, hickory, sassafras, ash, beech; and oak of divers sorts, as red, white, and black, Spanish, chestnut, and swamp, the most durable of all; of all which there is plenty for the use of man.

The fruits that I find in the woods are the white and black mulberry, chestnut, walnut, plums, strawberries, cranberries, huckleberries, and grapes of divers sorts. The great red grape (now ripe) called by ignorance the fox grape (because of the relish it has with unskillful palates), is in itself an extraordinary grape, and by art doubtless may be cultivated to an excellent wine; if not so sweet, yet little inferior to the Frontignac, as it is not much unlike [it] in taste, ruddiness set aside, which in such things, as well as mankind, differs the case much. There is a white kind of muscatel, and a little black grape like the cluster grape of England, not yet so ripe as the other; but, they tell me, when ripe, sweeter, and that they only want skillful pignerons to make good use of them. I intend to venture on it with my Frenchman this season, who shows some knowledge in those things. Here are also peaches, and very good, and in great quantities, not an Indian plantation without them;....

VI. The artificial produce of the country is wheat, barley, oats, rye, peas, beans, squashes, pumpkins, watermelons, muskmelons, and all herbs and roots that our gardens in England usually bring forth. Note, that Edward Jones, son-in-law to Thomas Wynne, living on the Schuylkill, had with ordinary cultivation, for one grain of English barley, seventy stalks and ears of barley; and it is common in this country from one bushel sown, to reap forty, often fifty, and sometimes sixty. And three pecks of wheat sow an acre here.

VII. Of living creatures, fish, fowl, and the beasts of the woods, here are divers sorts, some for food and profit, and some for profit only. For food as well as profit, the elk, as big as a small ox, deer bigger than ours, beaver, raccoon, rabbits [and] squirrels, and some eat young bear, and commend it. Of fowl of the land, there is the turkey (forty and fifty pound weight), which is very great, pheasants, heath-birds, pigeons, and partridges in abundance. Of the water, the swan, goose, white and gray, brants, ducks, teal, also the snipe and curlew, and that in great numbers; but the duck and teal excel, nor so good have I ever eaten in other countries. Offish, there is the sturgeon, herring, rock, shad, catshead, sheepshead, eel, smelt, perch, roach; and in inland rivers, trout, some say salmon, above the Falls. Of shellfish, we have oysters, crabs, cockles, conches and mussels; some oysters six inches long, and one sort of cockles as big as the stewing oysters; they make a rich broth. The creatures for profit only by skin or fur, and that are natural to these parts, are the wildcat, panther, otter, wolf, fox, fisher, mink, muskrat; and of the water, the whale for oil, of which we have good store; and two companies of whalers, whose boats are built, will soon begin their work, which has the appearance of a considerable improvement; to say nothing of our reasonable hopes of good cod in the bay.

VIII. We have no want of horses, and some are very good and shapely enough....

X. The woods are adorned with lovely flowers, for color, greatness, figure, and variety. I have seen the gardens of London best stored with that sort of beauty, but think they may be improved by our woods....

XI. The NATIVES I shall consider in their persons, language, manners, religion, and government, with my sense of their original. For their persons, they are generally tall, straight, well built, and of singular proportion; they tread strong and clever, and mostly walk with a lofty chin. Of complexion black, but by design, as the gypsies in England. They grease themselves with bear's fat clarified, and using no defense against sun or weather, their skins must needs be swarthy. Their eye is little and black, not unlike a straight-looking Jew....

XIII. Of their customs and manners there is much to be said. I will begin with children. So soon as they are born they wash them in water, and while very young, and in cold weather to choose, they plunge them in the rivers to harden and embolden them....

XVII. If a European comes to see them, or calls for lodging at their house or wigwam, they give him the best place and first cut [of meat]. If they come to visit us, they salute us with an Itah, which is as much as to say "Good be to you," and set them down, which is mostly on the ground, close to their heels, their legs upright. [It] may be they speak not a word more, but observe all passages. If you give them anything to eat or drink, [that is] well, for they will not ask; and, be it little or much, if it be with kindness, they are well pleased, else they go away sullen, but say nothing....

XIX. But in liberality they excel; nothing is too good for their friend. Give them a fine gun, coat, or other thing, it may pass twenty hands before it sticks; light of heart, strong affections, but soon spent, the most merry creatures that live, [they] feast and dance perpetually; they never have much, nor want much. Wealth circulates like the blood, all parts partake; and though none shall want what another has, yet [they are] exact observers of property....

XXV. We have agreed that in all differences between us, six of each side shall end the matter. Don't abuse them, but let them have justice, and you win them. The worst is, that they are the worse for the Christians, who have propagated their vices and yielded them tradition for ill, and not for good things. But as low an ebb as they are at, and as glorious as their own condition looks, the Christians have not outlived their sight with all their pretensions to a higher manifestation. What good then might not a good people graft, where there is so distinct a knowledge left between good and evil? I beseech God to incline the hearts of all that come into these parts to outlive the knowledge of the natives, by a fixed obedience to their greater knowledge of the will of God. For it were miserable indeed for us to fall under the just censure of the poor Indian conscience, while we make profession of things so far transcending....

XXVII. The first planters in these parts were the Dutch, and soon after them the Swedes and Finns. The Dutch applied themselves to traffic, the Swedes and Finns to husbandry. There were some disputes between them [for] some years; the Dutch looking upon them as intruders upon their purchase and possession, which was finally ended in the surrender made

by John Rising, the Swedes' governor, to Peter Stuyvesant, governor for the States of Holland, anno 1655....

XXXI.And for the well government of the said counties, courts of justice are established in every county, with proper officers, as justices, sheriffs, clerks, constables, etc.; which courts are held every two months. But, to prevent lawsuits, there are three peacemakers chosen by every county court, in the nature of common arbitrators, to hear and end differences betwixt man and man. And spring and fall there is an orphan's court in each county, to inspect and regulate the affairs of orphans and widows....

XXXIII.Your city lot is a whole street and one side of a street, from river to river, containing near one hundred acres, not easily valued; which is, besides your four hundred acres in the city liberties, part of your twenty thousand acres in the country....

Your kind cordial friend, William Penn

Illustration: [The Treaty of Penn with the Indians by Benjamin West. 1771.](#)

[Resources for Pilgrims, Puritans and Opponents](#)

Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672)

[[image](#)] Anne Bradstreet's British publication of *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America*, in 1650, marks her as the first poet and woman writer in early American literature. She was born in Northampton, England in 1612, to Thomas Dudley and Dorothy Yorke. The family sailed to the New World on the *Arabella* with John Winthrop in 1630. She married Simon Bradstreet when she was sixteen. Both her father and her husband would hold the position of governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony during her lifetime. Bradstreet was constantly on the move in New England, living in multiple households throughout the Massachusetts area, while having eight children with Simon. Bradstreet's verses are remarkable for their portrayal of Puritan life from a woman's perspective, often breaking stereotypical views of that life. Her works were largely forgotten or ignored until added to the American canon in the mid-twentieth century. Her writing is collected in *The Complete Works of Anne Bradstreet*. Ed. Joseph R. McElrath and Allan P. Robb. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981 and *The Works of Anne Bradstreet*. Ed. Jeannine Hensley. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1967. Criticism is available in Cowell, Pattie and Ann Standford, eds. *Critical Essays on Anne Bradstreet*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1983.

Illustration: [Cover of Bradstreet's The Tenth Muse, Lately Sprung Up in America, 1650.](#)

Campbell, Helen. *Anne Bradstreet and Her Time*. Boston: D. Lothrop Company, 1891.

source of electronic text: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/6854>

To My Dear and Loving Husband

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were loved by wife, then thee;
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me, ye women, if you can.
I prize thy love more than whole mines of gold
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
My love is such that rivers cannot quench,
Nor ought but love from thee, give recompense.
Thy love is such I can no way repay,
The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.
Then while we live, in love let's so persevere
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

The Author to her Book

Thou ill-form'd offspring of my feeble brain,
Who after birth did'st by my side remain,
Till snatcht from thence by friends, less wise than true
Who thee abroad, expos'd to publick view;
Made thee in rags, halting to th' press to trudge,
Where errors were not lessened (all may judge)
At thy return my blushing was not small,
My rambling brat (in print) should mother call,
I cast thee by as one unfit for light,
Thy visage was so irksome in my sight;
Yet being mine own, at length affection would
Thy blemishes amend, if so I could:
I wash'd thy face, but more defects I saw,
And rubbing off a spot, still made a flaw.
I stretcht thy joints to make thee even feet,
Yet still thou run'st more hobbling than is meet;
In better dress to trim thee was my mind,
But nought save home-spun cloth, i' th' house I find.
In this array, 'mongst vulgars mayst thou roam
In critics hands, beware thou dost not come;
And take thy way where yet thou art not known,
If for thy father askt, say, thou hadst none:
And for thy mother, she alas is poor,
Which caus'd her thus to send thee out of door.

A Letter to Her Husband, Absent Upon Public Employment

My head, my heart, mine eyes, my life, nay, more,
My joy, my magazine of earthly store,
If two be one, as surely thou and I,
How stayest thou there, wilt I at Ipswich lie?
So many steps, head from the heart to sever,
If but a neck, soon should we be together,
I, like the Earth this season, mourn in black,
My Sun is gone so far in's zodiac,
Whom whilst I 'joyed, nor storms, nor frost I felt,
His warmth such frigid colds did cause to melt.
My chilled limbs now numbed lie forlorn;
Return, return, sweet Sol, from Capricorn,
In this dead time, alas, what can I more
Than view those fruits which through thy heat I bore?
Which sweet contentment yield me for a space,
True living pictures of their father's face.
O strange effect! now thou art southward gone,
I weary grow the tedious day so long;
But when thou northward to me shalt return,
I wish my Sun may never set, but burn
Within the Cancer of my glowing breast,
The welcome house of him my dearest guest.
Where ever, ever stay, and go not thence,
Till nature's sad decree shall call thee hence;
Flesh of thy flesh, bone of thy bone,
I here, thou there, but both but one.

On the Burning of Our House

In silent night when rest I took,
For sorrow near I did not look,
I waken'd was with thund'ring noise
And piteous shrieks of dreadful voice.
That fearful sound of "fire" and "fire,"
Let no man know is my Desire.
I starting up, the light did spy,
And to my God my heart did cry
To straighten me in my Distress
And not to leave me succourless.
Then coming out, behold a space
The flame consume my dwelling place.
And when I could no longer look,
I blest his grace that gave and took,
That laid my goods now in the dust.
Yea, so it was, and so 'twas just.
It was his own; it was not mine.

Far be it that I should repine,
He might of all justly bereft
But yet sufficient for us left.
When by the Ruins oft I past
My sorrowing eyes aside did cast
And here and there the places spy
Where oft I sate and long did lie.
Here stood that Trunk, and there that chest,
There lay that store I counted best,
My pleasant things in ashes lie
And them behold no more shall I.
Under the roof no guest shall sit,
Nor at thy Table eat a bit.
No pleasant talk shall 'ere be told
Nor things recounted done of old.
No Candle 'ere shall shine in Thee,
Nor bridegroom's voice ere heard shall bee.
In silence ever shalt thou lie.
Adieu, Adieu, All's Vanity.
Then straight I 'gin my heart to chide:
And did thy wealth on earth abide,
Didst fix thy hope on mouldring dust,
The arm of flesh didst make thy trust?
Raise up thy thoughts above the sky
That dunghill mists away may fly.
Thou hast a house on high erect
Fram'd by that mighty Architect,
With glory richly furnished
Stands permanent, though this be fled.
It's purchased and paid for too
By him who hath enough to do.
A price so vast as is unknown,
Yet by his gift is made thine own.
There's wealth enough; I need no more.
Farewell, my pelf; farewell, my store.
The world no longer let me love;
My hope and Treasure lies above.

[Resources for Pilgrims, Puritans and Opponents](#)

Mary Rowlandson (1637?-1710)

[[image](#)] Mary Rowlandson was born in England and sailed as an infant for Salem, Massachusetts with her parents. She married Joseph Rowlandson in 1656, and was captured during an Indian raid in 1675 in Lancaster, Massachusetts, the basis for her famous captivity

narrative, during the conflict known as King Philip's War. Her tale is told as a series of "removes," as she is taken from one location to the next by her captors. Her document helps illustrate some of the difficult relationships between the ever-increasing number of settlers and the natives upon whose lands they were encroaching, along with providing a metaphoric tale of Christian faith and redemption to its early readers. At the end of her story, we find that local Puritan leaders are finally able to negotiate a release for Rowlandson, along with her sister, son, and daughter. Criticism includes Richard Slotkin's *Regeneration through Violence*. Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press, 2000. Also see the introduction in Neal Salisbury's *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*. Boston: Bedford-St. Martin's, 1997. Additional mentions of Rowlandson are in Linda Colley's *Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World, 1600-1850*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2003 and Derounian-Stodola and Levernier's *The Indian Captivity Narrative, 1550-1900*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1993.

The Narrative of the Captivity and the Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson

Rowlandson, Mary. *The Narrative of the Captivity and the Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*. Boston: Nathaniel Coverly, 1770.

source of electronic text: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/851>

The sovereignty and goodness of GOD, together with the faithfulness of his promises displayed, being a narrative of the captivity and restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson, commended by her, to all that desires to know the Lord's doings to, and dealings with her. Especially to her dear children and relations. The second Addition [sic] Corrected and amended. Written by her own hand for her private use, and now made public at the earnest desire of some friends, and for the benefit of the afflicted. Deut. 32.39. See now that I, even I am he, and there is no god with me, I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal, neither is there any can deliver out of my hand.

On the tenth of February 1675, came the Indians with great numbers upon Lancaster: their first coming was about sunrising; hearing the noise of some guns, we looked out; several houses were burning, and the smoke ascending to heaven. There were five persons taken in one house; the father, and the mother and a sucking child, they knocked on the head; the other two they took and carried away alive. There were two others, who being out of their garrison upon some occasion were set upon; one was knocked on the head, the other escaped; another there was who running along was shot and wounded, and fell down; he begged of them his life, promising them money (as they told me) but they would not hearken to him but knocked him in head, and stripped him naked, and split open his bowels. Another, seeing many of the Indians about his barn, ventured and went out, but was quickly shot down. There were three others belonging to the same garrison who were killed; the Indians getting up upon the roof of the barn, had advantage to shoot down upon them over their fortification.

Thus these murderous wretches went on, burning, and destroying before them.

At length they came and beset our own house, and quickly it was the dolefullest day that ever mine eyes saw. The house stood upon the edge of a hill; some of the Indians got behind the hill, others into the barn, and others behind anything that could shelter them; from all which places they shot against the house, so that the bullets seemed to fly like hail; and quickly they wounded one man among us, then another, and then a third. About two hours (according to my observation, in that amazing time) they had been about the house before they prevailed to fire it (which they did with flax and hemp, which they brought out of the barn, and there being no defense about the house, only two flankers at two opposite corners and one of them not finished); they fired it once and one ventured out and quenched it, but they quickly fired it again, and that took. Now is the dreadful hour come, that I have often heard of (in time of war, as it was the case of others), but now mine eyes see it. Some in our house were fighting for their lives, others wallowing in their blood, the house on fire over our heads, and the bloody heathen ready to knock us on the head, if we stirred out. Now might we hear mothers and children crying out for themselves, and one another, "Lord, what shall we do?" Then I took my children (and one of my sisters', hers) to go forth and leave the house: but as soon as we came to the door and appeared, the Indians shot so thick that the bullets rattled against the house, as if one had taken an handful of stones and threw them, so that we were fain to give back. We had six stout dogs belonging to our garrison, but none of them would stir, though another time, if any Indian had come to the door, they were ready to fly upon him and tear him down. The Lord hereby would make us the more acknowledge His hand, and to see that our help is always in Him. But out we must go, the fire increasing, and coming along behind us, roaring, and the Indians gaping before us with their guns, spears, and hatchets to devour us. No sooner were we out of the house, but my brother-in-law (being before wounded, in defending the house, in or near the throat) fell down dead, whereat the Indians scornfully shouted, and hallowed, and were presently upon him, stripping off his clothes, the bullets flying thick, one went through my side, and the same (as would seem) through the bowels and hand of my dear child in my arms. One of my elder sisters' children, named William, had then his leg broken, which the Indians perceiving, they knocked him on [his] head. Thus were we butchered by those merciless heathen, standing amazed, with the blood running down to our heels. My eldest sister being yet in the house, and seeing those woeful sights, the infidels hauling mothers one way, and children another, and some wallowing in their blood: and her elder son telling her that her son William was dead, and myself was wounded, she said, "And Lord, let me die with them," which was no sooner said, but she was struck with a bullet, and fell down dead over the threshold. I hope she is reaping the fruit of her good labors, being faithful to the service of God in her place. In her younger years she lay under much trouble upon spiritual accounts, till it pleased God to make that precious scripture take hold of her heart, "And he said unto me, my Grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Corinthians 12.9). More than twenty years after, I have heard her tell how sweet and comfortable that place was to her. But to return: the Indians laid hold of us, pulling me one way, and the children another, and said, "Come go along with us"; I told them they would kill me: they answered, if I were willing to go

along with them, they would not hurt me.

Oh the doleful sight that now was to behold at this house! "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he has made in the earth." Of thirty-seven persons who were in this one house, none escaped either present death, or a bitter captivity, save only one, who might say as he, "And I only am escaped alone to tell the News" (Job 1.15). There were twelve killed, some shot, some stabbed with their spears, some knocked down with their hatchets. When we are in prosperity, Oh the little that we think of such dreadful sights, and to see our dear friends, and relations lie bleeding out their heart-blood upon the ground. There was one who was chopped into the head with a hatchet, and stripped naked, and yet was crawling up and down. It is a solemn sight to see so many Christians lying in their blood, some here, and some there, like a company of sheep torn by wolves, all of them stripped naked by a company of hell-hounds, roaring, singing, ranting, and insulting, as if they would have torn our very hearts out; yet the Lord by His almighty power preserved a number of us from death, for there were twenty-four of us taken alive and carried captive.

I had often before this said that if the Indians should come, I should choose rather to be killed by them than taken alive, but when it came to the trial my mind changed; their glittering weapons so daunted my spirit, that I chose rather to go along with those (as I may say) ravenous beasts, than that moment to end my days; and that I may the better declare what happened to me during that grievous captivity, I shall particularly speak of the several removes we had up and down the wilderness.

The First Remove

Now away we must go with those barbarous creatures, with our bodies wounded and bleeding, and our hearts no less than our bodies. About a mile we went that night, up upon a hill within sight of the town, where they intended to lodge. There was hard by a vacant house (deserted by the English before, for fear of the Indians). I asked them whether I might not lodge in the house that night, to which they answered, "What, will you love English men still?" This was the dolefullest night that ever my eyes saw. Oh the roaring, and singing and dancing, and yelling of those black creatures in the night, which made the place a lively resemblance of hell. And as miserable was the waste that was there made of horses, cattle, sheep, swine, calves, lambs, roasting pigs, and fowl (which they had plundered in the town), some roasting, some lying and burning, and some boiling to feed our merciless enemies; who were joyful enough, though we were disconsolate. To add to the dolefulness of the former day, and the dismalness of the present night, my thoughts ran upon my losses and sad bereaved condition. All was gone, my husband gone (at least separated from me, he being in the Bay; and to add to my grief, the Indians told me they would kill him as he came homeward), my children gone, my relations and friends gone, our house and home and all our comforts--within door and without--all was gone (except my life), and I knew not but the next moment that might go too. There remained nothing to me but one poor wounded babe, and it seemed at present worse than death that it was in such a pitiful condition, bespeaking

compassion, and I had no refreshing for it, nor suitable things to revive it. Little do many think what is the savageness and brutishness of this barbarous enemy, Ay, even those that seem to profess more than others among them, when the English have fallen into their hands.

Those seven that were killed at Lancaster the summer before upon a Sabbath day, and the one that was afterward killed upon a weekday, were slain and mangled in a barbarous manner, by one-eyed John, and Marlborough's Praying Indians, which Capt. Mosely brought to Boston, as the Indians told me.

The Second Remove

But now, the next morning, I must turn my back upon the town, and travel with them into the vast and desolate wilderness, I knew not whither. It is not my tongue, or pen, can express the sorrows of my heart, and bitterness of my spirit that I had at this departure: but God was with me in a wonderful manner, carrying me along, and bearing up my spirit, that it did not quite fail. One of the Indians carried my poor wounded babe upon a horse; it went moaning all along, "I shall die, I shall die." I went on foot after it, with sorrow that cannot be expressed. At length I took it off the horse, and carried it in my arms till my strength failed, and I fell down with it. Then they set me upon a horse with my wounded child in my lap, and there being no furniture upon the horse's back, as we were going down a steep hill we both fell over the horse's head, at which they, like inhumane creatures, laughed, and rejoiced to see it, though I thought we should there have ended our days, as overcome with so many difficulties. But the Lord renewed my strength still, and carried me along, that I might see more of His power; yea, so much that I could never have thought of, had I not experienced it.

After this it quickly began to snow, and when night came on, they stopped, and now down I must sit in the snow, by a little fire, and a few boughs behind me, with my sick child in my lap; and calling much for water, being now (through the wound) fallen into a violent fever. My own wound also growing so stiff that I could scarce sit down or rise up; yet so it must be, that I must sit all this cold winter night upon the cold snowy ground, with my sick child in my arms, looking that every hour would be the last of its life; and having no Christian friend near me, either to comfort or help me. Oh, I may see the wonderful power of God, that my Spirit did not utterly sink under my affliction: still the Lord upheld me with His gracious and merciful spirit, and we were both alive to see the light of the next morning.

The Third Remove

The morning being come, they prepared to go on their way. One of the Indians got up upon a horse, and they set me up behind him, with my poor sick babe in my lap. A very wearisome and tedious day I had of it; what with my own wound, and my child's being so exceeding sick, and in a lamentable condition with her wound. It may be easily judged what a poor feeble condition we were in, there being not the least crumb of refreshing that came within either of our mouths from Wednesday night to Saturday night, except only a little cold water. This day in the afternoon, about an hour by sun, we came to the place where they intended, viz. an

Indian town, called Wenimesset, northward of Quabaug. When we were come, Oh the number of pagans (now merciless enemies) that there came about me, that I may say as David, "I had fainted, unless I had believed, etc" (Psalm 27.13). The next day was the Sabbath. I then remembered how careless I had been of God's holy time; how many Sabbaths I had lost and misspent, and how evilly I had walked in God's sight; which lay so close unto my spirit, that it was easy for me to see how righteous it was with God to cut off the thread of my life and cast me out of His presence forever. Yet the Lord still showed mercy to me, and upheld me; and as He wounded me with one hand, so he healed me with the other. This day there came to me one Robert Pepper (a man belonging to Roxbury) who was taken in Captain Beers's fight, and had been now a considerable time with the Indians; and up with them almost as far as Albany, to see King Philip, as he told me, and was now very lately come into these parts. Hearing, I say, that I was in this Indian town, he obtained leave to come and see me. He told me he himself was wounded in the leg at Captain Beer's fight; and was not able some time to go, but as they carried him, and as he took oaken leaves and laid to his wound, and through the blessing of God he was able to travel again. Then I took oaken leaves and laid to my side, and with the blessing of God it cured me also; yet before the cure was wrought, I may say, as it is in Psalm 38.5-6 "My wounds stink and are corrupt, I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long." I sat much alone with a poor wounded child in my lap, which moaned night and day, having nothing to revive the body, or cheer the spirits of her, but instead of that, sometimes one Indian would come and tell me one hour that "your master will knock your child in the head," and then a second, and then a third, "your master will quickly knock your child in the head."

This was the comfort I had from them, miserable comforters are ye all, as he said. Thus nine days I sat upon my knees, with my babe in my lap, till my flesh was raw again; my child being even ready to depart this sorrowful world, they bade me carry it out to another wigwam (I suppose because they would not be troubled with such spectacles) whither I went with a very heavy heart, and down I sat with the picture of death in my lap. About two hours in the night, my sweet babe like a lamb departed this life on Feb. 18, 1675. It being about six years, and five months old. It was nine days from the first wounding, in this miserable condition, without any refreshing of one nature or other, except a little cold water. I cannot but take notice how at another time I could not bear to be in the room where any dead person was, but now the case is changed; I must and could lie down by my dead babe, side by side all the night after. I have thought since of the wonderful goodness of God to me in preserving me in the use of my reason and senses in that distressed time, that I did not use wicked and violent means to end my own miserable life. In the morning, when they understood that my child was dead they sent for me home to my master's wigwam (by my master in this writing, must be understood Quinnapin, who was a Sagamore, and married King Philip's wife's sister; not that he first took me, but I was sold to him by another Narragansett Indian, who took me when first I came out of the garrison). I went to take up my dead child in my arms to carry it with me, but they bid me let it alone; there was no resisting, but go I must and leave it. When I had been at my master's wigwam, I took the first opportunity I could get to go look after my dead child. When I

came I asked them what they had done with it; then they told me it was upon the hill. Then they went and showed me where it was, where I saw the ground was newly digged, and there they told me they had buried it. There I left that child in the wilderness, and must commit it, and myself also in this wilderness condition, to Him who is above all. God having taken away this dear child, I went to see my daughter Mary, who was at this same Indian town, at a wigwam not very far off, though we had little liberty or opportunity to see one another. She was about ten years old, and taken from the door at first by a Praying Ind. and afterward sold for a gun. When I came in sight, she would fall weeping; at which they were provoked, and would not let me come near her, but bade me be gone; which was a heart-cutting word to me. I had one child dead, another in the wilderness, I knew not where, the third they would not let me come near to: "Me (as he said) have ye bereaved of my Children, Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin also, all these things are against me." I could not sit still in this condition, but kept walking from one place to another. And as I was going along, my heart was even overwhelmed with the thoughts of my condition, and that I should have children, and a nation which I knew not, ruled over them. Whereupon I earnestly entreated the Lord, that He would consider my low estate, and show me a token for good, and if it were His blessed will, some sign and hope of some relief. And indeed quickly the Lord answered, in some measure, my poor prayers; for as I was going up and down mourning and lamenting my condition, my son came to me, and asked me how I did. I had not seen him before, since the destruction of the town, and I knew not where he was, till I was informed by himself, that he was amongst a smaller parcel of Indians, whose place was about six miles off. With tears in his eyes, he asked me whether his sister Sarah was dead; and told me he had seen his sister Mary; and prayed me, that I would not be troubled in reference to himself. The occasion of his coming to see me at this time, was this: there was, as I said, about six miles from us, a small plantation of Indians, where it seems he had been during his captivity; and at this time, there were some forces of the Ind. gathered out of our company, and some also from them (among whom was my son's master) to go to assault and burn Medfield. In this time of the absence of his master, his dame brought him to see me. I took this to be some gracious answer to my earnest and unfeigned desire. The next day, viz. to this, the Indians returned from Medfield, all the company, for those that belonged to the other small company, came through the town that now we were at. But before they came to us, Oh! the outrageous roaring and hooping that there was. They began their din about a mile before they came to us. By their noise and hooping they signified how many they had destroyed (which was at that time twenty-three). Those that were with us at home were gathered together as soon as they heard the hooping, and every time that the other went over their number, these at home gave a shout, that the very earth rung again. And thus they continued till those that had been upon the expedition were come up to the Sagamore's wigwam; and then, Oh, the hideous insulting and triumphing that there was over some Englishmen's scalps that they had taken (as their manner is) and brought with them. I cannot but take notice of the wonderful mercy of God to me in those afflictions, in sending me a Bible. One of the Indians that came from Medfield fight, had brought some plunder, came to me, and asked me, if I would have a Bible, he had got one in his basket. I was glad of it, and asked him, whether he thought the Indians would let me read?

He answered, yes. So I took the Bible, and in that melancholy time, it came into my mind to read first the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, which I did, and when I had read it, my dark heart wrought on this manner: that there was no mercy for me, that the blessings were gone, and the curses come in their room, and that I had lost my opportunity. But the Lord helped me still to go on reading till I came to Chap. 30, the seven first verses, where I found, there was mercy promised again, if we would return to Him by repentance; and though we were scattered from one end of the earth to the other, yet the Lord would gather us together, and turn all those curses upon our enemies. I do not desire to live to forget this Scripture, and what comfort it was to me.

Now the Indians began to talk of removing from this place, some one way, and some another. There were now besides myself nine English captives in this place (all of them children, except one woman). I got an opportunity to go and take my leave of them. They being to go one way, and I another, I asked them whether they were earnest with God for deliverance. They told me they did as they were able, and it was some comfort to me, that the Lord stirred up children to look to Him. The woman, viz. goodwife Joslin, told me she should never see me again, and that she could find in her heart to run away. I wished her not to run away by any means, for we were near thirty miles from any English town, and she very big with child, and had but one week to reckon, and another child in her arms, two years old, and bad rivers there were to go over, and we were feeble, with our poor and coarse entertainment. I had my Bible with me, I pulled it out, and asked her whether she would read. We opened the Bible and lighted on Psalm 27, in which Psalm we especially took notice of that, ver. ult., "Wait on the Lord, Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine Heart, wait I say on the Lord."

[text omitted]

[Resources for Pilgrims, Puritans and Opponents](#)

Cotton Mather (1663-1728)

[image] Cotton Mather was born in Boston and educated at Harvard University. He is known as America's greatest theologian before Jonathan Edwards. Like his father, Increase Mather, he was a staunch defender of the excesses of Puritanism. His book, *The Wonders of the Invisible World* (1693), defended many of the court's procedures used in the Salem Witch Trials. Though he wrote hundreds of books, his most important work is considered *Magnalia Christi Americana*, written in 1702. These related seven books incorporate historical narratives and biographical sketches illustrating the importance of early New England culture and thought to later generations. Though a social conservative, Mather was also one of the first American writers illustrating ideas of the European enlightenment and he was an early scientific experimenter on crop hybrids and a proponent of controversial smallpox inoculations.

Mather, Cotton and Increase Mather. *The Wonders of the Invisible World. Being An Account of the Tryals of Several Witches Lately Executed in New-England.* London: John Russell Smith, 1862.

source of electronic text: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/28513>

"A People of God in the Devil's Territories"

The New-Englanders are a People of God settled in those, which were once the Devil's Territories; and it may easily be supposed that the Devil was exceedingly disturbed, when he perceived such a People here accomplishing the Promise of old made unto our Blessed Jesus, That He should have the Utmost parts of the Earth for his Possession. There was not a greater Uproar among the Ephesians, when the Gospel was first brought among them, than there was among, The Powers of the Air (after whom those Ephesians walked) when first the Silver Trumpets of the Gospel here made the Joyful Sound. The Devil thus Irritated, immediately try'd all sorts of Methods to overturn this poor Plantation: and so much of the Church, as was Fled into this Wilderness, immediately found, The Serpent cast out of his Mouth a Flood for the carrying of it away.

I believe, that never were more Satanical Devices used for the Unsettling of any People under the Sun, than what have been Employ'd for the Extirpation of the Vine which God has here Planted, Casting out the Heathen, and preparing a Room before it, and causing it to take deep Root, and fill the Land, so that it sent its Boughs unto the Atlantic Sea Eastward, and its Branches unto the Connecticut River Westward, and the Hills were covered with the shadow thereof. But, All those Attempts of Hell, have hitherto been Abortive, many an Ebenezer has been Erected unto the Praise of God, by his Poor People here; and, Having obtained Help from God, we continue to this Day.

Wherefore the Devil is now making one Attempt more upon us; an Attempt more Difficult, more Surprizing, more snarl'd with unintelligible Circumstances than any that we have hitherto Encountred; an Attempt so Critical, that if we get well through, we shall soon Enjoy Halcyon Days with all the Vultures of Hell Trodden under our Feet. He has wanted his Incarnate Legions to Persecute us, as the People of God have in the other Hemisphere been Persecuted: he has therefore drawn forth his more Spiritual ones to make an Attack upon us. We have been advised by some Credible Christians yet alive, that a Malefactor, accused of Witchcraft as well as Murder, and Executed in this place more than Forty Years ago, did then give Notice of, An Horrible Plot against the Country by Witchcraft, and a Foundation of Witchcraft then laid, which if it were not seasonally discovered, would probably Blow up, and pull down all the Churches in the Country.

And we have now with Horror seen the Discovery of such a Witchcraft! An Army of Devils is horribly broke in upon the place which is the Center, and after a sort, the First-born of our English Settlements: and the Houses of the Good People there are fill'd with the doleful

Shrieks of their Children and Servants, Tormented by Invisible Hands, with Tortures altogether preternatural. After the Mischiefs there Endeavoured, and since in part Conquered, the terrible Plague, of Evil Angels, hath made its Progress into some other places, where other Persons have been in like manner Diabolically handled. These our poor Afflicted Neighbours, quickly after they become Infected and Infested with these Dæmons, arrive to a Capacity of Discerning those which they conceive the Shapes of their Troublers; and notwithstanding the Great and Just Suspicion, that the Dæmons might Impose the Shapes of Innocent Persons in their Spectral Exhibitions upon the Sufferers, (which may perhaps prove no small part of the Witch-Plot in the issue) yet many of the Persons thus Represented, being Examined, several of them have been Convicted of a very Damnable Witchcraft: yea, more than One Twenty have Confessed, that they have Signed unto a Book, which the Devil show'd them, and Engaged in his Hellish Design of Bewitching, and Ruining our Land.

We know not, at least I know not, how far the Delusions of Satan may be Interwoven into some Circumstances of the Confessions; but one would think, all the Rules of Understanding Humane Affairs are at an end, if after so many most Voluntary Harmonious Confessions, made by Intelligent Persons of all Ages, in sundry Towns, at several Times, we must not Believe the main strokes wherein those Confessions all agree: especially when we have a thousand preternatural Things every day before our eyes, wherein the Confessors do acknowledge their Concernment, and give Demonstration of their being so Concerned. If the Devils now can strike the minds of men with any Poisons of so fine a Composition and Operation, that Scores of Innocent People shall Unite, in Confessions of a Crime, which we see actually committed, it is a thing prodigious, beyond the Wonders of the former Ages, and it threatens no less than a sort of a Dissolution upon the World. Now, by these Confessions 'tis Agreed, That the Devil has made a dreadful Knot of Witches in the Country, and by the help of Witches has dreadfully increased that Knot: That these Witches have driven a Trade of Commissioning their Confederate Spirits, to do all sorts of Mischiefs to the Neighbours, whereupon there have ensued such Mischievous consequences upon the Bodies and Estates of the Neighbourhood, as could not otherwise be accounted for: yea, That at prodigious Witch-Meetings, the Wretches have proceeded so far, as to Concert and Consult the Methods of Rooting out the Christian Religion from this Country, and setting up instead of it, perhaps a more gross Diabolsm, than ever the World saw before. And yet it will be a thing little short of Miracle, if in so spread a Business as this, the Devil should not get in some of his Juggles, to confound the Discovery of all the rest.

Illustration: ["Captain Alden Denounced" by Alfred Fredericks, Designer: A. Bobbett, Engraver, 1878](#), from "A Popular History of the United States", Vol. 2 by William Cullen Bryant, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1878. Page 463.

"The Trial of Martha Carrier, at the Court of Oyer and Terminer, Held by Adjournment at Salem, August 2, 1692"

I.

Martha Carrier was Indicted for the bewitching certain Persons, according to the Form usual in such Cases, pleading Not Guilty, to her Indictment; there were first brought in a considerable number of the bewitched Persons; who not only made the Court sensible of an horrid Witchcraft committed upon them, but also deposed, That it was Martha Carrier, or her Shape, that grievously tormented them, by Biting, Pricking, Pinching and Choaking of them. It was further deposed, That while this Carrier was on her Examination, before the Magistrates, the Poor People were so tortured that every one expected their Death upon the very spot, but that upon the binding of Carrier they were eased. Moreover the Look of Carrier then laid the Afflicted People for dead; and her Touch, if her Eye at the same time were off them, raised them again: Which Things were also now seen upon her Tryal. And it was testified, That upon the mention of some having their Necks twisted almost round, by the Shape of this Carrier, she replied, Its no matter though their Necks had been twisted quite off.

II. Before the Trial of this Prisoner, several of her own Children had frankly and fully confessed, not only that they were Witches themselves, but that this their Mother had made them so. This Confession they made with great Shews of Repentance, and with much Demonstration of Truth. They related Place, Time, Occasion; they gave an account of Journeys, Meetings and Mischiefs by them performed, and were very credible in what they said. Nevertheless, this Evidence was not produced against the Prisoner at the Bar, inasmuch as there was other Evidence enough to proceed upon.

III. Benjamin Abbot gave his Testimony, That last March was a twelvemonth, this Carrier was very angry with him, upon laying out some Land, near her Husband's: Her Expressions in this Anger, were, That she would stick as close to Abbot as the Bark stuck to the Tree; and that he should repent of it afore seven Years came to an End, so as Doctor Prescott should never cure him. These Words were heard by others besides Abbot himself; who also heard her say, She would hold his Nose as close to the Grindstone as ever it was held since his Name was Abbot. Presently after this, he was taken with a Swelling in his Foot, and then with a Pain in his Side, and exceedingly tormented. It bred into a Sore, which was launced by Doctor Prescott, and several Gallons of Corruption ran out of it. For six Weeks it continued very bad, and then another Sore bred in the Groin, which was also lanced by Doctor Prescott. Another Sore then bred in his Groin, which was likewise cut, and put him to very great Misery: He was brought unto Death's Door, and so remained until Carrier was taken, and carried away by the Constable, from which very Day he began to mend, and so grew better every Day, and is well ever since.

Sarah Abbot also, his Wife, testified, That her Husband was not only all this while Afflicted in his Body, but also that strange extraordinary and unaccountable Calamities befel his Cattel; their Death being such as they could guess at no Natural Reason for.

IV. Allin Toothaker testify'd, That Richard, the son of Martha Carrier, having some difference

with him, pull'd him down by the Hair of the Head. When he Rose again, he was going to strike at Richard Carrier; but fell down flat on his Back to the ground, and had not power to stir hand or foot, until he told Carrier he yielded; and then he saw the shape of Martha Carrier, go off his breast.

This Toothaker, had Received a wound in the Wars; and he now testify'd, that Martha Carrier told him, He should never be Cured. Just afore the Apprehending of Carrier, he could thrust a knitting Needle into his wound, four inches deep; but presently after her being siezed, he was throughly healed.

He further testify'd, that when Carrier and he some times were at variance, she would clap her hands at him, and say, He should get nothing by it; whereupon he several times lost his Cattle, by strange Deaths, whereof no natural causes could be given.

V. John Rogger also testified, That upon the threatenng words of this malicious Carrier, his Cattle would be strangely bewitched; as was more particularly then described.

VI. Samuel Preston testify'd, that about two years ago, having some difference with Martha Carrier, he lost a Cow in a strange Preternatural unusual manner; and about a month after this, the said Carrier, having again some difference with him, she told him; He had lately lost a Cow, and it should not be long before he lost another; which accordingly came to pass; for he had a thriving and well-kept Cow, which without any known cause quickly fell down and dy'd.

VII. Phebe Chandler testify'd, that about a Fortnight before the apprehension of Martha Carrier, on a Lords-day, while the Psalm was singing in the Church, this Carrier then took her by the shoulder and shaking her, asked her, where she lived: she made her no Answer, although as Carrier, who lived next door to her Fathers House, could not in reason but know who she was. Quickly after this, as she was at several times crossing the Fields, she heard a voice, that she took to be Martha Carriers, and it seem'd as if it was over her head. The voice told her, she should within two or three days be poisoned. Accordingly, within such a little time, one half of her right hand, became greatly swollen, and very painful; as also part of her Face; whereof she can give no account how it came. It continued very bad for some dayes; and several times since, she has had a great pain in her breast; and been so siezed on her leggs, that she has hardly been able to go. She added, that lately, going well to the House of God, Richard, the son of Martha Carrier, look'd very earnestly upon her, and immediately her hand, which had formerly been poisoned, as is abovesaid, began to pain her greatly, and she had a strange Burning at her stomach; but was then struck deaf, so that she could not hear any of the prayer, or singing, till the two or three last words of the Psalm.

VIII. One Foster, who confessed her own share in the Witchcraft for which the Prisoner stood indicted, affirm'd, that she had seen the prisoner at some of their Witch-meetings, and that it was this Carrier, who perswaded her to be a Witch. She confessed, that the Devil carry'd them on a pole, to a Witch-meeting; but the pole broke, and she hanging about Carriers neck, they both fell down, and she then received an hurt by the Fall, whereof she was not at this

very time recovered.

IX. One Lacy, who likewise confessed her share in this Witchcraft, now testify'd, that she and the prisoner were once Bodily present at a Witch-meeting in Salem Village; and that she knew the prisoner to be a Witch, and to have been at a Diabolical sacrament, and that the prisoner was the undoing of her, and her Children, by enticing them into the snare of the Devil.

X. Another Lacy, who also confessed her share in this Witchcraft, now testify'd, that the prisoner was at the Witch-meeting, in Salem Village, where they had Bread and Wine Administred unto them.

XI. In the time of this prisoners Trial, one Susanna Sheldon, in open Court had her hands Unaccountably ty'd together with a Wheel-band, so fast that without cutting, it could not be loosed: It was done by a Spectre; and the Sufferer affirm'd, it was the Prisoners.

Memorandum. This Rampant Hag, Martha Carrier, was the person, of whom the Confessions of the Witches, and of her own Children among the rest, agreed, That the Devil had promised her, she should be Queen of Heb.

Editor's note: Carrier was hanged for being a witch on August 19, 1692. Also executed by hanging on that day were George Jacobs, Sr., the Reverend George Burroughs, John Proctor, and John Willard. One person, Giles Cory, was "pressed" to death, with heavy stones, in an attempt to get him to enter a plea. In total, 20 people were executed during the Salem Witch Trials.

[Resources for Pilgrims, Puritans and Opponents](#)

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)

[[image](#)] Jonathan Edwards was born on October 5, 1703 in East Windsor, Connecticut, into an evangelical Puritan household. He attended Yale College and become well versed in theology, philosophy, and the natural sciences, well aware of the religious debates of the day in the midst of Enlightenment thought. In 1726, Edwards became pastor of his grandfather's church in Northampton, Massachusetts. He is associated with a religious revival movement in New England called the Great Awakening. His writings defended proponents of this movement, combining deft rhetorical skills in sparking emotional responses in his audiences. His most well-known work, "Sinners on the Hands of an Angry God," (1741) may be one of the most famous sermons in American culture. Later in life, Edwards served at a mission outpost on the western border of Massachusetts, working to convert native tribes there. Edwards died on March 22, 1758, from complications of a smallpox inoculation, and is buried in Princeton Cemetery. Students can turn to George M. Marsden's *Jonathan Edwards: A Life*, Princeton, NJ: Yale University Press, 2004, for biographical information and to *The*

Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards, edited by Stephen J. Stein Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, for selected criticism.

Illustration: [Cover of "Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God, A Sermon Preached at Enfield, July 8, 1741," by Rev. Jonathan Edwards, Printed by S. Kneeland and T. Green, Boston, 1741.](#)

from Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God

Edwards, Jonathan. *Selected Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*. Edited by H. Norman Gardiner. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1904.

source of electronic text: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/34632>

[text omitted]

Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards hell; and if God should let you go, you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf, and your healthy constitution, and your own care and prudence, and best contrivance, and all your righteousness, would have no more influence to uphold you and keep you out of hell than a spider's web would have to stop a falling rock. Were it not that so is the sovereign pleasure of God, the earth would not bear you one moment; for you are a burden to it; the creation groans with you; the creature is made subject to the bondage of your corruption, not willingly; the sun don't willingly shine upon you to give you light to serve sin and Satan; the earth don't willingly yield her increase to satisfy your lusts; nor is it willingly a stage for your wickedness to be acted upon; the air don't willingly serve you for breath to maintain the flame of life in your vitals, while you spend your life in the service of God's enemies. God's creatures are good, and were made for men to serve God with, and don't willingly subserve to any other purpose, and groan when they are abused to purposes so directly contrary to their nature and end. And the world would spew you out, were it not for the sovereign hand of him who hath subjected it in hope. There are the black clouds of God's wrath now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm, and big with thunder; and were it not for the restraining hand of God, it would immediately burst forth upon you. The sovereign pleasure of God, for the present, stays his rough wind; otherwise it would come with fury, and your destruction would come like a whirlwind, and you would be like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.

The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course, when once it is let loose. 'Tis true, that judgment against your evil work has not been executed hitherto; the floods of God's vengeance have been withheld; but your guilt in the mean time is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath; the waters are continually rising, and waxing

more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the mere pleasure of God that holds the waters back, that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to go forward. If God should only withdraw his hand from the floodgate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power; and if your strength were ten thousand times greater than it is, yea, ten thousand times greater than the strength of the stoutest, sturdiest devil in hell, it would be nothing to withstand or endure it.

The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood.

Thus are all you that never passed under a great change of heart by the mighty power of the Spirit of God upon your souls; all that were never born again, and made new creatures, and raised from being dead in sin to a state of new and before altogether unexperienced light and life, (however you may have reformed your life in many things, and may have had religious affections, and may keep up a form of religion in your families and closets, and in the house of God, and may be strict in it), you are thus in the hands of an angry God; 'tis nothing but his mere pleasure that keeps you from being this moment swallowed up in everlasting destruction.

However unconvinced you may now be of the truth of what you hear, by and by you will be fully convinced of it. Those that are gone from being in the like circumstances with you see that it was so with them; for destruction came suddenly upon most of them; when they expected nothing of it, and while they were saying, Peace and safety: now they see, that those things that they depended on for peace and safety were nothing but thin air and empty shadows.

The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes, as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince: and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. 'Tis ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you was suffered to awake again in this world after you closed your eyes to sleep; and there is no other reason to be given why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you han't gone to hell since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you don't this very moment drop down into hell.

O sinner! consider the fearful danger you are in. 'Tis a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment.

[text omitted]

DALA: Digital American Literature Anthology

Edited by Dr. Michael O'Conner, Millikin University

Unit 3: Pilgrims, Puritans and Opponents

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