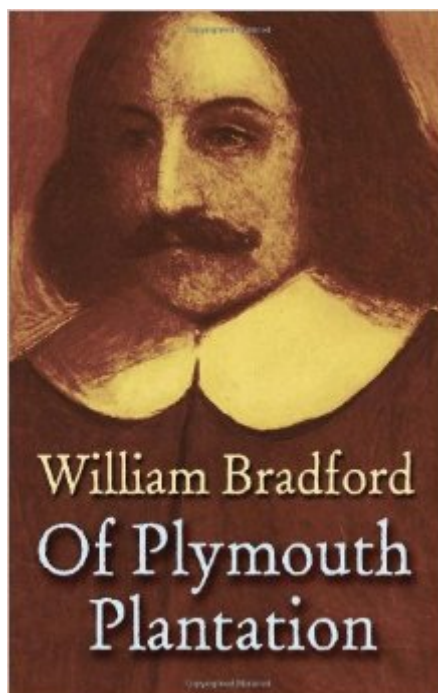


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Of Plymouth Plantation (Dover Books On Americana)



Synopsis

The most important and influential source of information about the Pilgrims and Plymouth Colony, this landmark account was written between 1630 and 1647. It vividly documents the Pilgrims' adventures: their first stop in Holland, the harrowing transatlantic crossing aboard the Mayflower, the first harsh winter in the new colony, and the help from friendly Native Americans that saved their lives. No one was better equipped to report on the affairs of the Plymouth community than William Bradford. Revered for his patience, wisdom, and courage, Bradford was elected to the office of governor in 1621, and he continued to serve in that position for more than three decades. His memoirs of the colony remained virtually unknown until the nineteenth century. Lost during the American Revolution, they were discovered years later in London and published after a protracted legal battle. The current edition rendered into modern English and with an introduction by Harold Paget, remains among the most readable books from seventeenth-century America.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I purchased this book to learn more about the first settlements of New England. Bradford's narrative is a testament to the hardship and perseverance these newcomers faced as they overcame great adversity to eventually become a beacon of hope to a new generation of future Englishmen and women. I recommend everyone read and not forget the sacrifices made by these brave, yet resolute Pioneers of colonial America.

William Bradford is my direct ancestor and therefore I was raised knowing some things about him and the Pilgrims who traveled here on the Mayflower. Yet it wasn't until many years later that I read his own account "Of Plymouth Plantation" which was written during the years 1620 - 1642. The sense of adventure and human drama found in this book are very gripping despite the often florid style of language used at the time. One can't help get caught up in these people's struggles and imagine how difficult it must have been for them in so many ways before during and after their treacherous 2 1/2 month sea voyage. I'd recommend this book to anyone interested in history as it was written concurrent with what was happening and by someone who was instrumental in creating this history. One does not have to be directly descended from the Pilgrims to find this story compelling. Also look up Cotton Mather's biography of William Bradford written in 1702 and "William Bradford: Plymouth's Faithful Pilgrim" by Gary D. Schmidt.

Gov. Bradford wrote the story of the Pilgrims as a journal for his family, to be passed down through the generations. (It's own history of how it got out of the family, was lost for many decades, where it was found and how restored to Plymouth is a fascinating story in itself.) Bradford was one of my 7th great-great grandfathers, Elder Wm. Brewster, my 8th g-g grandfather, John & Priscilla another set of 7th g-g grandparents, (one of their daughters (in my line) married Alexander Standish, son Capt. Myles, etc... So I have been familiar with their story all my life. I am intent on seeing that each member of my family have a copy of this book - my most treasured volume I got on eBay for \$5...when it came in the mail, I was astounded to find it is the 1898 edition!...titled; "Bradford's History." Last year, The History Channel put out a new movie: "The Desperate Crossing" - Using Shakespearean actors, the scenery, photography, adventure - well, if you liked the movie Master and Commander, this story - finally the WHOLE story of that intrepid band who sailed on the Mayflower - is every bit as spectacular. I have waited all my life for such a true and complete movie of the Pilgrims of Plymouth. It's available in DVD here at . I just bought 3 more...to give to my children and their kids for Thanksgiving...and it will be shown here after our VERY traditional Thanksgiving dinner. We all benefit from the sacrifices and perseverance of the Pilgrims. Surely, Governor Bradford's hope, expressed in his Journal, came to pass in a greater manner than even he could have envisioned when he wrote, at the end: "Thus out of small beginnings ... AS ONE SMALL CANDLE MAY LIGHT A THOUSAND, SO THE LIGHT HERE KINDLED HATH SHONE UNTO MANY, yea in some sort to our whole nation;"

William Bradford's original was written in Old English. It was modernized in 1901, and it is this 1901 version you are reading. That's a good thing. You need to be prepared to pick and choose what you read here. The lengthy accounts of the disputes between the New Plymouth Colony and the investors (the adventurers) become tedious. So too the disputes with their business agents and others who defrauded the colonists. I would suggest skimming over these. I read with interest the relations with the Pequots and other Indian tribes, the starvation, the abandonment of socialism, and the relation with the Dutch, the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and the colonization of the Connecticut River Valley. Overall I'm more well educated for having read this book, but I have to confess that I found it hard.

This book contains the story of the Pilgrims as they were establishing themselves in America in the Cape Cod area. The book consists of notes, diary entries, written records, legal briefs, etc., gathered and compiled by William Bradford, the elected leader of the Pilgrims. There are many themes in these accounts: among them religion, indian-Pilgrim relations, capitalism, exploitation, greed and poverty. The Pilgrims saw God's will in all things - in good or in misfortune, alike. The Pilgrims were lucky to encounter one local indian (Squanto), who knew enough English to communicate with them and help them in their early relations with the locals (like Sacagawea helped Louis and Clark, and "Doña Marina", Cortes) Squanto, however, was dishonest and later became a problem. Others - ship captains, English merchants, investors, later immigrants, investors, etc. - also caused difficulties for the Pilgrims. Capital punishment had to be adopted. The British, French and the Dutch were all vying for advantages in the New World and the Pilgrims became entangled in their squabbles. Much in this book is admittedly dry, but it is history and I found much in the book that was both entertaining and instructive. R. Amos, Severn, MD.

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