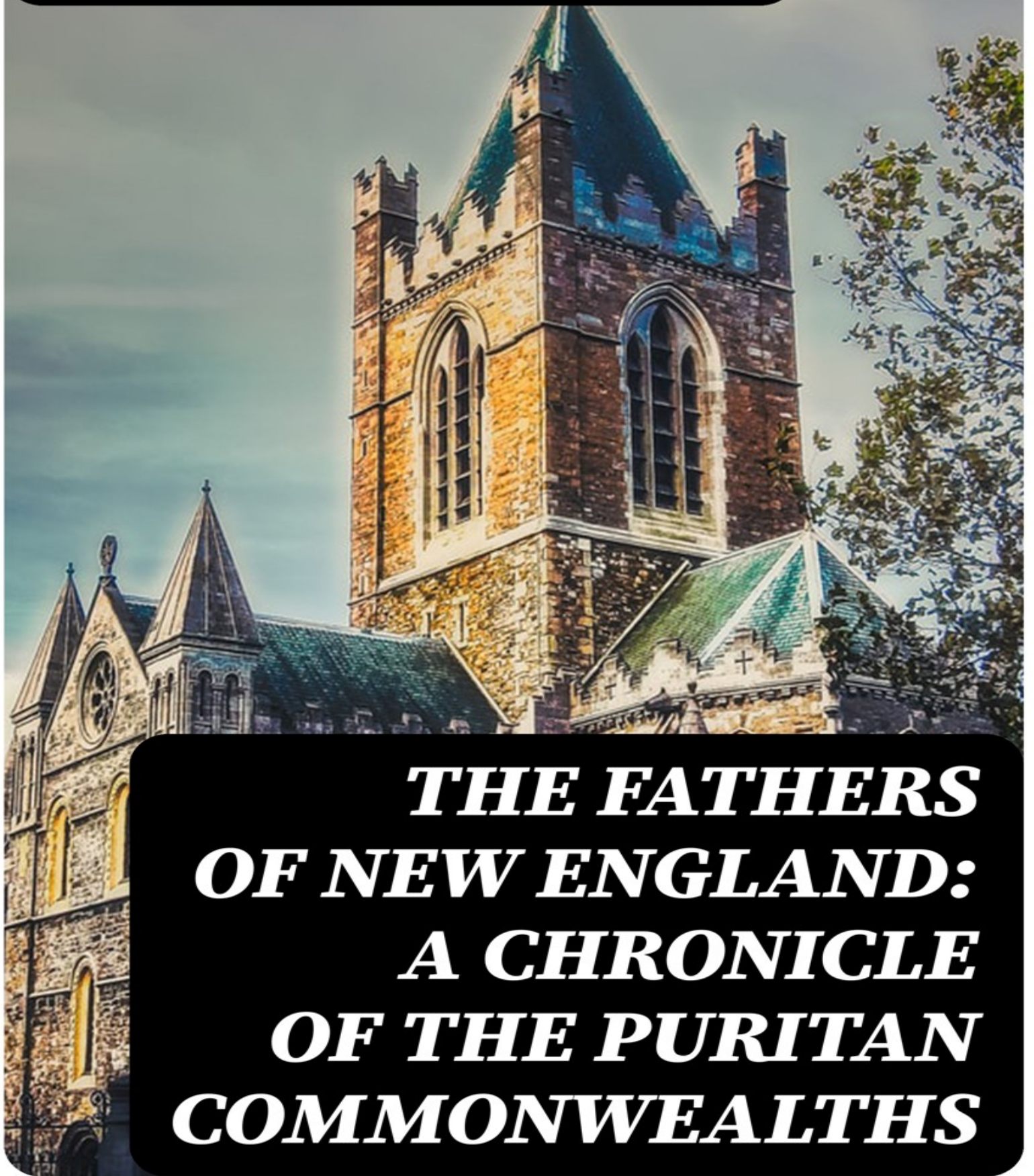


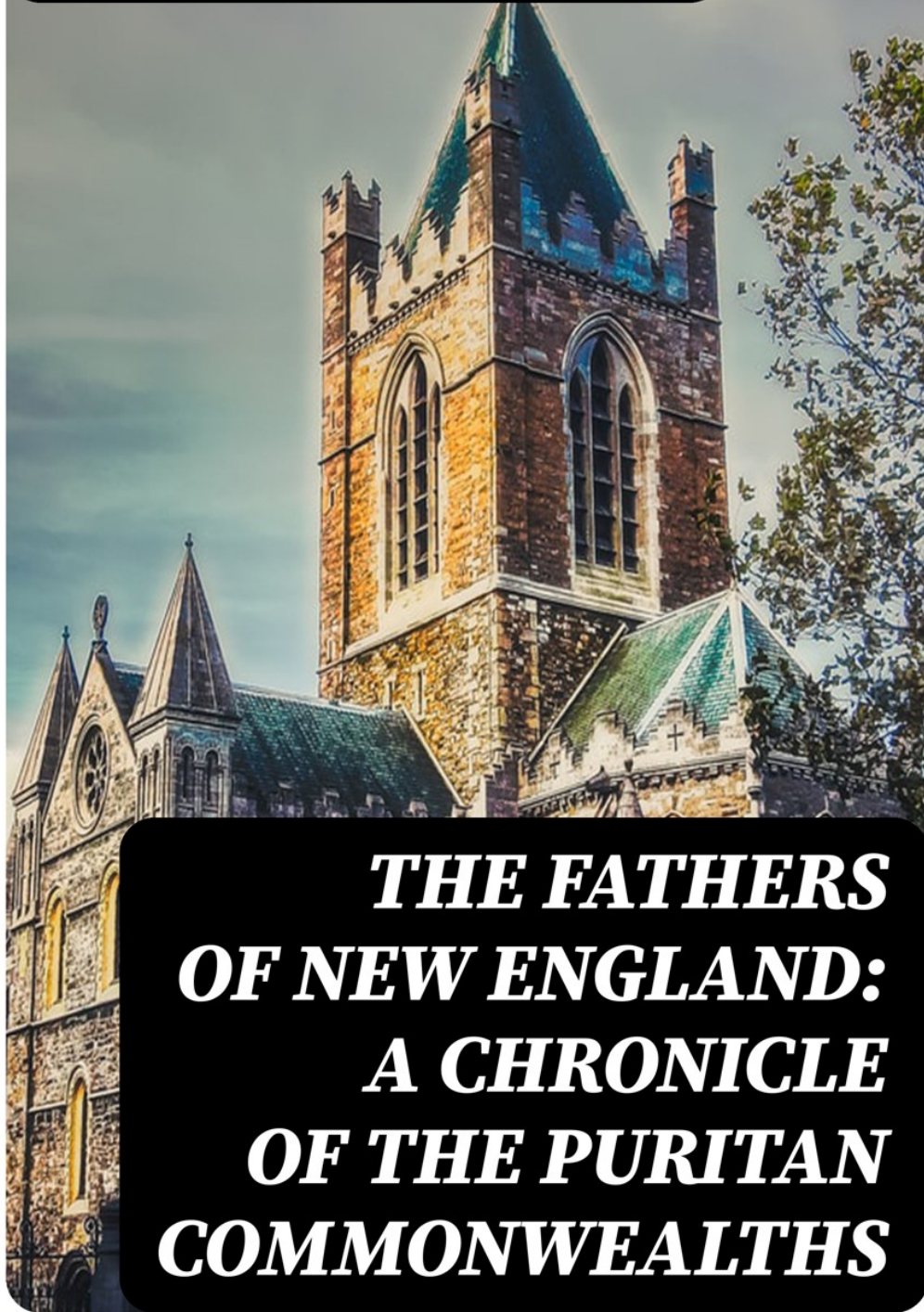
***CHARLES MCLEAN  
ANDREWS***



***THE FATHERS  
OF NEW ENGLAND:  
A CHRONICLE  
OF THE PURITAN  
COMMONWEALTHS***



***CHARLES MCLEAN  
ANDREWS***



***THE FATHERS  
OF NEW ENGLAND:  
A CHRONICLE  
OF THE PURITAN  
COMMONWEALTHS***

**Charles McLean Andrews**

# **The Fathers of New England: A Chronicle of the Puritan Commonwealths**

EAN 8596547017745

DigiCat, 2022

Contact: [DigiCat@okpublishing.info](mailto:DigiCat@okpublishing.info)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE FATHERS OF NEW ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

THE COMING OF THE PILGRIMS

CHAPTER II

THE BAY COLONY

CHAPTER III

COMPLETING THE WORK OF SETTLEMENT

CHAPTER IV

EARLY NEW ENGLAND LIFE

CHAPTER V

AN ATTEMPT AT COLONIAL UNION

CHAPTER VI

WINNING THE CHARTERS

CHAPTER VII

MASSACHUSETTS DEFIANT

CHAPTER VIII

WARS WITH THE INDIANS

CHAPTER IX

THE BAY COLONY DISCIPLINED

CHAPTER X

THE ANDROS RÉGIME IN NEW ENGLAND

CHAPTER XI

THE END OF AN ERA

INDEX

# THE FATHERS OF NEW ENGLAND

[Table of Contents](#)



# CHAPTER I

## THE COMING OF THE PILGRIMS

### [Table of Contents](#)

The Pilgrims and Puritans, whose migration to the New World marks the beginning of permanent settlement in New England, were children of the same age as the enterprising and adventurous pioneers of England in Virginia, Bermuda, and the Caribbean. It was the age in which the foundations of the British Empire were being laid in the Western Continent. The "spacious times of great Elizabeth" had passed, but the new national spirit born of those times stirred within the English people. The Kingdom had enjoyed sixty years of domestic peace and prosperity, and Englishmen were eager to enter the lists for a share in the advantages which the New World offered to those who would venture therein. Both landowning and landholding classes, gentry and tenant farmers alike, were clamoring, the one for an increase of their landed estates, the other for freedom from the feudal restraints which still legally bound them. The land-hunger of neither class could be satisfied in a narrow island where the law and the lawgivers were in favor of the maintenance of feudal rights. The expectations of all were aroused by visions of wealth from the El Dorados of the West, or of profit from commercial enterprises which appealed to the cupidity of capitalists and led to investments that promised speedy and ample returns. A desire to improve social conditions and to solve the problem

of the poor and the vagrant, which had become acute since the dissolution of the monasteries, was arousing the authorities to deal with the pauper and to dispose of the criminal in such a way as to yield a profitable service to the kingdom. England was full of resolute men, sea-dogs and soldiers of fortune, captains on the land as well as the sea, who in times of peace were seeking employment and profit and who needed an outlet for their energies. Some of these continued in the service of kings and princes in Europe; others conducted enterprises against the Spaniards in the West Indies and along the Spanish Main; while still others, such as John Smith and Miles Standish, became pioneers in the work of English colonization.

But more important than the promptings of land-hunger and the desire for wealth and adventure was the call made by a social and religious movement which was but a phase of the general restlessness and popular discontent. The Reformation, in which this movement had its origin, was more than a revolt from the organization and doctrines of the mediæval church; it voiced the yearning of the middle classes for a position commensurate with their growing prominence in the national life. Though the feudal tenantry, given over to agriculture and bound by the conventions of feudal law, were still perpetuating many of the old customs, the towns were emancipating themselves from feudal control, and by means of their wealth and industrial activities were winning recognition as independent and largely self-sufficing units. The gild, a closely compacted brotherhood, existing partly for religious and educational purposes and partly for the control of handicrafts and the

exchange of goods, became the center of middle-class energy, and in thousands of instances hedged in the lives of the humbler artisans. Thus it was largely from those who knew no wider world than the fields which they cultivated and the guilds which governed their standards and output that the early settlers of New England were recruited.

Equally important with the social changes were those which concerned men's faith and religious organization. The Peace of Augsburg, which in 1555 had closed for the moment the warfare resulting from the Reformation, not only recognized the right of Protestantism to exist, but also handed over to each state, whether kingdom, duchy, or principality, full power to control the creed within its borders. Whoever ruled the state could determine the religion of his subjects, a dictum which denied the right of individuals or groups of individuals to depart from the established faith. Hence arose a second revolt, not against the mediæval church and empire but against the authority of the state and its creed, whether Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, or Calvinist, a revolt in which Huguenot in France battled for his right to believe as he wished, and Puritan in England refused to conform to a manner of worship which retained much of the mediæval liturgy and ceremonial. Just as all great revolutionary movements in church or state give rise to men who repudiate tradition and all accretions due to human experience, and base their political and religious ideals upon the law of nature, the rights of man, the inner light, or the Word of God; so, too, in England under Elizabeth and James I, leaders appeared who demanded radical changes in faith and practice, and



advocated complete separation from the Anglican Church and isolation from the religious world about them. Of such were the Separatists, who rejected the Anglican and other creeds, severed all bonds with a national church system, cast aside form, ceremony, liturgy, and a hierarchy of church orders, and sought for the true faith and form of worship in the Word of God. For these men the Bible was the only test of religious truth.

The Separatists organized themselves into small religious groups, as independent communities or companies of Christians, covenanted with God and keeping the Divine Law in a Holy Communion. They consisted in the main of men and women in the humbler walks of life—artisans, tenant farmers, with some middle-class gentry. Sufficient to themselves and knit together in the fashion of a gild or brotherhood, they believed in a church system of the simplest form and followed the Bible, Old and New Testaments alike, as the guide of their lives. Desiring to withdraw from the world as it was that they might commune together in direct relations with God, they accepted persecution as the test of their faith and welcomed hardship, banishment, and even death as proofs of righteousness and truth. Convinced of the scriptural soundness of what they believed and what they practised, and confident of salvation through unyielding submission to God's will as they interpreted it, they became conspicuous because of their radical thought and peculiar forms of worship, and inevitably drew upon themselves the attention of the authorities, both secular and ecclesiastical.

The leading centers of Separatism were in London and Norfolk, but the seat of the little congregation that eventually led the way across the sea to New England was in Scrooby in Nottinghamshire. There—in Scrooby manor-house, where William Brewster, the father, was receiver and bailiff, and his son, the future elder of the Plymouth colony, was acting postmaster; where Richard Clayton preached and John Robinson prayed; and where the youthful William Bradford was one of its members—there was gathered a small Separatist congregation composed of humble folk of Nottinghamshire and adjoining counties. They were soon discovered worshipping in the manor-house chapel, by the ecclesiastical authorities of Yorkshire, and for more than a year were subjected to persecution, some being "taken and clapt up in prison," others having "their houses besett and watcht night and day and hardly escaped their hands." At length they determined to leave England for Holland. During 1607 and 1608 they escaped secretly, some at one time, some at another, all with great loss and difficulty, until by the August of the latter year there were gathered at Amsterdam more than a hundred men, women, and children, "armed with faith and patience."

But Amsterdam proved a disappointing refuge. And in 1609 they moved to Leyden, "a fair and bewtifull citie," where for eleven years they remained, pursuing such trades as they could, chiefly weaving and the manufacture of cloth, "injoying much sweete and delightful societie and spiritual comfort together in the ways of God, under the able ministrie and prudente governmente of Mr. John Robinson and Mr. William Brewster." But at last new and imperative

reasons arose, demanding a third removal, not to another city in Holland, but this time to the New World called America. They were breaking under the great labor and hard fare; they feared to lose their language and saw no opportunity to educate their children; they disapproved of the lax Dutch observance of Sunday and saw in the temptations of the place a menace to the habits and morals of the younger members of the flock, and, in the influences of the world around them, a danger to the purity of their creed and their practice. They determined to go to a new country "devoyd of all civill inhabitants," where they might keep their names, their faith, and their nationality.

After many misgivings, the fateful decision was reached by the "major parte," and preparations for departure were made. But where to go became a troublesome problem. The merits of Guiana and other "wild coasts" were debated, but finally Virginia met with general approval, because there they might live as a private association, a distinct body by themselves, similar to other private companies already established there. To this end they sent two of their number to England to secure a patent from the Virginia Company of London. Under this patent and in bond of allegiance to King James, yet acting as a "body in the most strict and sacred bond and covenant of the Lord," an independent and absolute church, they became a civil community also, with governors chosen for the work from among themselves. But the dissensions in the London Company caused them to lose faith in that association, and, hearing of the reorganization of the Virginia Company of Plymouth,[\[1\]](#) which about this time obtained a new charter as the New England Council,

they turned from southern to northern Virginia—that is, to New England—and resolved to make their settlement where according to reports fishing might become a means of livelihood.

But their plans could not be executed without assistance; and, coming into touch with a London merchant, Thomas Weston, who promised to aid them, they entered into what proved to be a long and wearisome negotiation with a group of adventurers—gentlemen, merchants, and others, seventy in number—for an advance of money to finance the expedition. The Pilgrims entered into a partnership with the merchants to form a voluntary joint-stock company. It was understood that the merchants, who purchased shares, were to remain in England; that the colonists, who contributed their personal service at a fixed rating, were to go to America, there to labor at trade, trucking, and fishing for seven years; and that during this time all profits were to remain in a common stock and all lands to be left undivided. The conditions were hard and discouraging, but there was no alternative; and at last, embarking at Delfthaven in the *Speedwell*, a small ship bought and fitted in Holland, they came to Southampton, where another and larger vessel, the *Mayflower*, was in waiting. In August, 1620, the two vessels set sail, but the *Speedwell*, proving unseaworthy, put back after two attempts, and the *Mayflower* went on alone, bearing one hundred and two passengers, two-thirds of the whole, picked out as worthy and willing to undertake the voyage. The *Mayflower* reached the waters of New England on the 11th of November after a tedious course of sixty-five days from Plymouth to Cape Cod; but they did not decide on

their place of landing until the 21st of December. Four days later they erected on the site of the town of Plymouth their first building.

The coast of New England was no unknown shore. During the years from 1607 to 1620, while settlers were founding permanent colonies at Jamestown and in Bermuda, explorers and fishermen, both English and French, had skirted its headlands and penetrated its harbors. In 1614, John Smith, the famous Virginia pioneer, who had left the service of the London Company and was in the employ of certain London merchants, had explored the northern coast in an open boat and had given the region its name. These many voyages and ventures at trading and fishing served to arouse enthusiasm in England for a world of good rivers and harbors, rich soil, and wonderful fishing, and to spread widely a knowledge of the coasts from Newfoundland to the Hudson River. Of this knowledge the Pilgrims reaped the benefit, and the captain of the *Mayflower*, Christopher Jones, against whom any charge of treachery may be dismissed, guided them, it is true, to a region unoccupied by Englishmen but not to one unknown or poorly esteemed. The miseries that confronted the Pilgrims during their first year in Plymouth colony were not due to the inhospitality of the region, but to the time of year when they landed upon it; and insufficiently provisioned as they were before they left England, it is little wonder that suffering and death should have accompanied their first experience with a New England winter.

This little group of men and women landed on territory that had been granted to the New England Council and they

themselves had neither patent for their land nor royal authority to set up a government. But some form of government was absolutely necessary. Before starting from Southampton, they had followed Robinson's instructions to choose a governor and assistants for each ship "to order the people by the way"; and now that they were at the end of their long voyage, the men of the company met in the cabin of the *Mayflower*, and drew up a covenant in accordance with which they combined themselves together into a body politic for their better ordering and preservation. This compact, signed by forty-one members, of whom eleven bore the title of "Mister," was a plantation covenant, the political counterpart of the church covenant which bound together every Separatist community. It provided that the people should live together in a peaceable and orderly manner under civil authorities of their own choosing, and was the first of many such covenants entered into by New England towns, not defining a government but binding the settlers to unite politically as they had already done for religious worship. John Carver, who had been chosen governor on the *Mayflower*, was confirmed as governor of the settlement and given one assistant. After their goods had been set on shore and a few cottages built, the whole body "mette and consulted of lawes and orders, both for their civil and military governmente, still adding therunto as urgent occasion in severall times, and as cases did require."

Of this courageous but sorely stricken community more than half died before the first winter was over. But gradually the people became acclimated, new colonists came out, some from the community at Leyden, in the *Fortune*, the



*Anne*, the *Charity*, and the *Handmaid*, and the numbers steadily increased. The settlers were in the main a homogeneous body, both as to social class and to religious views and purpose. Among them were undesirable members—some were sent out by the English merchants and others came out of their own accord—who played stool-ball on Sunday, committed theft, or set the community by the ears, as did one notorious offender named Lyford. But their number was not great, for most of them remained but a short time, and then went to Virginia or elsewhere, or were shipped back to England by the Pilgrims as incorrigibles. The life of the people was predominantly agricultural, with fishing, salt-making, and trading with the Indians as allied interests. The partners in England sent overseas cattle, stock, and laborers, and, as their profits depended on the success of the settlement, did what they could to encourage its development. The position of the Pilgrims was that of sharers and partners with the merchants, from whom they received directions but not commands.

But under the agreement of 1620 with their partners in London, which remained in force for seven years, the Plymouth people could neither divide their land nor dispose of the products of their labor, and so burdensome became this arrangement that in 1623 temporary assignments of land were made which in 1624 became permanent. As Bradford said, and his comment is full of wisdom:

The experience that was had in this commone course and condition, tried sundrie years, and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanitie of that conceite of Platos and other ancients,

applauded by some of later times; that the taking away of propertie, and bringing in communitie into a comone wealth, would make them happy and flourishing; as if they were wiser then God. For this comunitie (so farr as it was) was found to breed much confusion and discontent, and retard much employment that would have been to their benefite and comferte. For the yong-men that were most able and fitte for labour and service did repine that they should spend their time and streingth to worke for other mens wives and children, with out any recompence. The strong, or man of parts, had no more in devission of victails and cloaths, than he that was weake and not able to doe a quarter the other could; this was thought injuestice. The aged and graver men to be ranked and equalised in labours, and victails, cloaths, etc., with the meaner and yonger sorte, thought it some indignitie and disrespect unto them. And for mens wives to be commanded to doe servise for other men, as dresing their meate, washing their cloaths, etc., they deemd it a kind of slaverie, neither could many husbands well brooke it.

During the two years that followed, so evident was the failure of the joint undertaking that efforts were made on both sides to bring it to an end; for the merchants, with no profit from the enterprise, were anxious to avoid further indebtedness; and the colonists, wearying of the dual control, wished to reap for themselves the full reward of their own efforts. Under the new arrangement of small private properties, the settlers began "to prise corne as

more pretious than silver, and those that had some to spare begane to trade one with another for small things, by the quart, pottle, and peck, etc., for money they had none." Later, finding "their corne, what they could spare from ther necessities, to be a commoditie, (for they sould it at 6s. a bushell) [they] used great dilligence in planting the same. And the Gov[erno]r and shuch as were designed to manage the trade, (for it was retained for the generall good, and none were to trade in particuler,) they followed it to the best advantage they could; and wanting trading goods, they understoode that a plantation which was at Monhigen, and belonged to some marchants of Plimoth [England] was to breake up, and diverse usefull goods was ther to be sould," the governor (Bradford himself) and Edward Winslow "tooke a boat and some hands and went thither.... With these goods, and their corne after harvest they gott good store of trade, so as they were enabled to pay their ingagements against the time, and to get some cloathing for the people, and had some comodities beforehand." Though conditions were hard and often discouraging, the Pilgrims gradually found themselves self-supporting and as soon as this fact became clear, they sent Isaac Allerton to England "to make a composition with the adventurers." As a result of the negotiations an "agreement or bargen" was made whereby eight leading members of the colony bought the shares of the merchants for £1800 and distributed the payment among the settlers, who at this time numbered altogether about three hundred. Each share carried with it a certain portion of land and livestock. The debt was not finally liquidated until 1642.