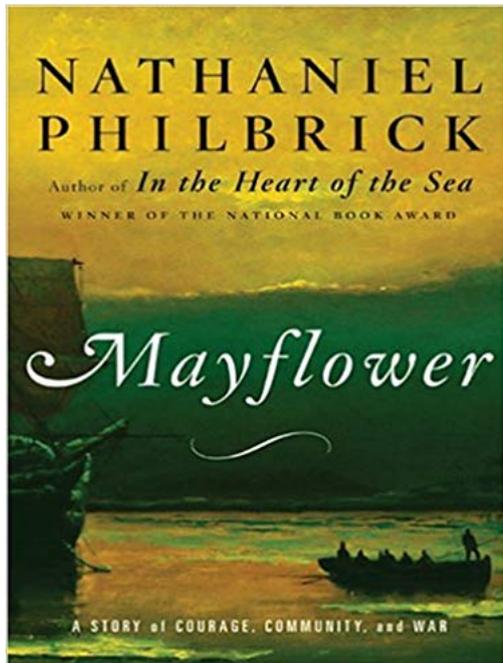


Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War *by* Nathaniel Philbrick



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Author: Nathaniel Philbrick

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The startling story of the Plymouth Colony, from the flight to religious freedom to the war that ravaged New England, from the bestselling author of *In the Heart of the Sea*. **Unabridged CDs** - 14 CDs, 11 hours



Reviews of the **Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War** *by* Nathaniel Philbrick

Zepavitta

A good read for sure but the title is a little misleading. This book is centered around two specific events and the transition between the two is rather rough. The first 150 pages are about the Mayflower voyage, the first Puritan settlement in Plymouth, Massachusetts and their symbiotic relationship with the Pokanoket tribe. The focus of the second half of the book is the Puritan vs. Indian conflict known as King Philip's War. This involves all of New England and happened about 65

years after the Plymouth settlement is established. Frankly, I was a little lost during the transition and it was a hard to follow for a few pages. I think that a more appropriate title would have helped. Something like the "Mayflower and King Phillip's War" or "The Puritans in the New World 1610-1676" would have been more accurate.

The settlement in Plymouth would not have survived the first year if it were not for their relationship with the Pokanoket Indians. The New England tribes were decimated by European diseases which they had no resistance to. Historians surmise that it was the plague that struck them in the first decade of the 17th century. The plague killed up to 90% of the Indians that had inhabited New England. The area where the pilgrims would eventually establish the first settlement of Plymouth had contained thousands of Indians just a few years prior to Mayflower's arrival. When the Pilgrims arrived it was unoccupied.

The Pokanoket tribe was hit especially hard by the plague and they were weakened more so than several of the neighboring tribes. These tribes, such as the Narrangassetts, took advantage of their weakened neighbors. The Pokanoket chief, Massasoit, leveraged his relationship with the Pilgrims to survive against the Narrangassetts. The two groups more than co-existed. The two groups had a symbiotic relationship. Unfortunately, the Pilgrim's ancestors had forgotten how critical the Pokanokets were to the survival of their forefathers. Subsequent generations of Puritans took advantage of the Indians. This led to a war with the Pokanokets that on a per capita basis was the bloodiest war in the history of North America.

The lessons gleaned from the pages of this book have been repeated over and over again throughout history. Bad policy started King Phillip's war. It could have been easy to avoid. Revenge was taken by the frustrated Puritans who could not catch the warring factions so they conveniently took revenge against praying and neutral tribes. On the other side, allies of Pokanoket sachem King Phillip killed the relatives of Plymouth descendants of whom King Phillip considered friends. The conflict spiraled out of control.

The war was not going well for the Puritans until Mayflower descendant Benjamin Church recruited a strike force of Puritans and Indians from friendly tribes. He was able to convince warring Indians to change sides and join Church's party. Church granted them amnesty and these Indians in-turn taught Church their tactics. They taught the Puritans how to move without being detected and how to avoid ambushes and how to set them. Church and his combined strike force used these tactics to hunt down King Phillip and to end the war.

The book gives Benjamin Church his due as one of the first great early American Indian fighters that you never heard of. Like the pilgrims, Church would not have been successful without his reliance on friendly Native Americans.

Enjoy the book.

Ginaun

As an amateur genealogist, I have managed to trace my family to the Mayflower. I read about the Plymouth settlements and the ships in high school, but I think we ignored this part of history in college. This book is so easy to read and so factual that I couldn't put it down. I have both the paperback and the kindle versions - I've found this is the best way to read any book I want to retain and understand fully.

krot

If you think the popular history of the pilgrims is an accurate and sufficient depiction of the actual events then you owe it to yourself to indulge in this fascinating book which is "lean" enough with the details to keep the reader moving along in this frank and vivid account of the origins of much of this

country's history. The fact that 35 million of today's citizens are descendants from that small colony of early settlers is reason enough to warrant your time and attention.

Thofyn

The book was quite interesting. It certainly varies from what I learned in grade school back in the '50s. The clash of cultures combined with the human tendencies on both sides brings closer to reality what happened back in the early Plymouth colony and the other Massachusetts and surrounding colonies. It is certainly worth a read. You don't have to be a history buff to enjoy it.

White gold

Excellent! The only criticism I have is that I wish it lasted longer. Very readable, and although I taught history at one time there are events brought to light that I did not know like: French fisherman brought the plague to the East Coast. I mean I knew about the diseases brought by earlier explorers to North & South America but I did not know about the plague coming to the North East the year before the Pilgrims arrived. The implications are fascinating.

Ese

This was a highly detailed and historically accurate reporting of the specific period of time surrounding the Plymouth landing. It was a slow read for me because of so many names to try to keep track of (some familiar and some not), and the heavy accent on who did what when and where. The essence of the story is clear however, and the great difference between this historically correct accounting and what I remember learning in elementary school is stunning. For that reason alone, I would highly recommend this book. I would also say that the read got easier for me as I became engaged in the plight of the native Indians and the unfortunate decisions made by leadership on both sides.

Missing, and disappointing for me, was the exploration of the women in the group of original and first generation of those who landed at Plymouth. This is likely due to the limited information and recording by those women. There was also limited character development, again likely due to the limited information available.

I loved learning of the female Indian leaders, and the efforts and struggles on the part of all the Indian leaders to build relationships and co-exist with the new arrivals. Again, that perspective makes this book a worthwhile read.

Insanity

Not just a well written book on one of the most famous ships in history, but very informative on the people who decided to cross to unknown lands and what drove them to make such life altering decisions. What little you knew - or thought you knew - about the "Pilgrims" and the indigenous people who took them in is greatly revealed and explained, with much sympathy to the relationships and bonds that were sorely tested in future generations.

Nathan Philbrick does a great job of introducing familiar historical facts and then expanding on them and making this old story new. Highly recommend.

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