

## A Description of New England

John Smith from the Jamestown colony in Virginia explored the coast of what is now Massachusetts. In 1616 Smith published a book *A Description of New England* in which he told of the rich land and called for the establishment of additional colonies in North America. In the book he wrote of how people could quickly grow rich in America.

### Primary Source

... My purpose is not to persuade children from their parents; men from their wives; nor servants from their masters: only, such as with free consent may be spared: But that each parish, or village, in City, or Country, that will but [send] their fatherless children, of thirteen or fourteen years of age, or young married people . . . here by their labor may live exceeding well: provided always that first there be a sufficient power to command them, houses to receive them, means to defend them . . . and sufficient masters (as, Carpenters, Masons, Fishers, . . . and such like) to take ten, twelve, or twenty . . . for Apprentices. The Masters by this may quickly grow rich; these may learn their trades themselves, to do the like to a general and an incredible benefit, for King, and Country, Master, and Servant. . . .



John Smith

### Contemporary English

My purpose in writing this is not to persuade children to leave their parents; men to leave their wives; or, servants to leave their masters. People should be willing to come to this land. Each parish church or village, in the city or countryside, should send thirteen or fourteen year old orphan children and young married people to New England. Here they can work and make out very well provided that

there are leaders to govern them. There should also be houses for them and means to defend them. They should be assigned to work as servants for carpenters, brick masons, fishermen, and other skilled men so that they will learn a trade. These skilled masters can each take ten, twelve, or twenty young people to work for them and in this way they will quickly grow rich. The workers will also learn a trade and will, in time, also grow rich. This will help the King, England, the masters, and also the servants. Everyone will benefit.

Source: Peter Mancall, ed., *Envisioning America* (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1995), p. 140.

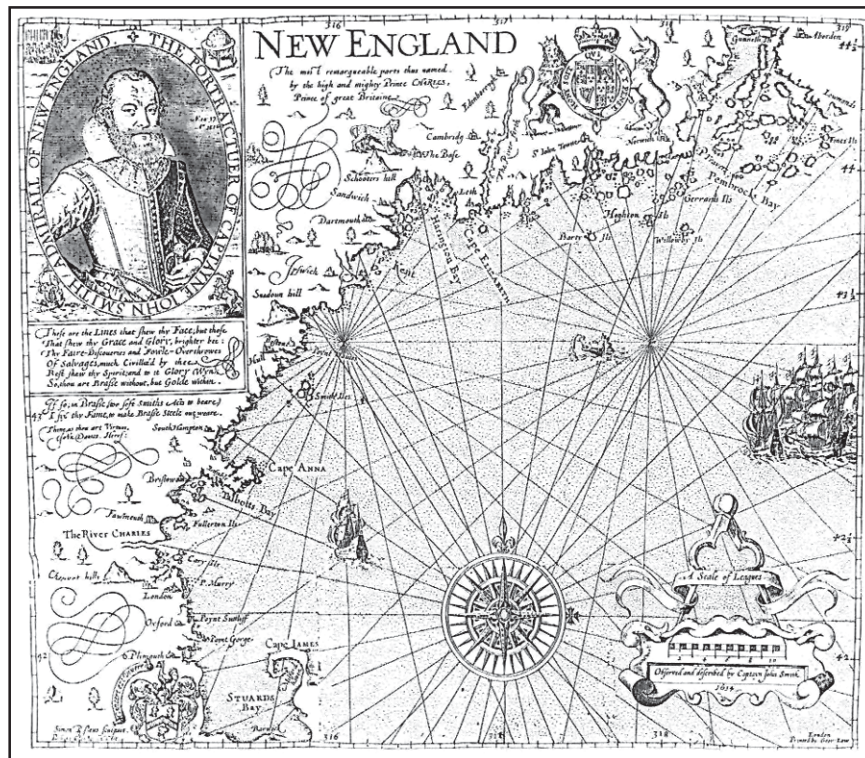
## Questions

1. Why would John Smith want “fatherless children” and young married couples to settle in America?
2. How would they be helping King and country by leaving England for America?
3. What can people expect when they come to America?
4. Do you think that John Smith was exaggerating the benefits or was he being truthful? How do you know?

## Vocabulary

apprentice

learner; trainee; some one assigned to work for a master to learn a trade



Captain John Smith, “Map of New England”

## Mayflower Compact

Before the Pilgrims left England they obtained a license from the Virginia Company to settle in Virginia. In November 1620, after storms in the Atlantic Ocean, they landed at Cape Cod (Massachusetts) far north of Virginia. Since they were not under the control of the Virginia colony, the men on board the *Mayflower* agreed to sign an agreement, or compact, to govern them until they could arrange for a charter for their new colony.

### Primary Source

This day, before we came into harbor, observing some not well affected to unity and concord, but gave some appearance of faction, it was thought good there should be an association and agreement that we should combine together in one body, and to submit to such government and governors as we should be common consent agree to make and choose, and set our hands to this that follows word for word.

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign lord, King James. . . .

Having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith and honor of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these present, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic . . . ; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, offices from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. . . .

### Contemporary English

On the day we came into harbor some of our people are upset that we have not landed in Virginia. Since they may cause trouble we thought it would be good for all to agree that we should vote for our leaders and to make laws to govern us. We agree to the following, word for word.

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are signed below, all loyal subjects of our respected and admired lord, King James. . . .

Having made this voyage to set up a colony in Northern Virginia for the glory of God, and the spread of the Christian faith and honor of our king and country. We do all agree in the presence of God and one of another, promise to work together to set up a government to make laws for the good of all. We will elect persons from time to time to run the colony for the good of us all. We promise to follow the laws that are made for the good of the colony.

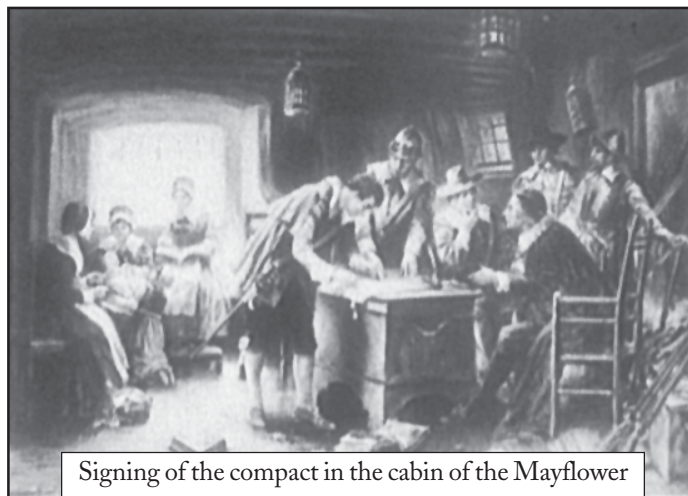
Source: *Annals of America*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1976), p. 64.

## Questions

1. Why did the Pilgrims believe that the Mayflower Compact was necessary?
2. By signing the Mayflower Compact what were the Pilgrims agreeing to do?
3. If you had been one of the Pilgrims on the *Mayflower* would you have signed the agreement? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary

body politic	government
charter	contract; license; legal agreement
constitute	make up
covenant	agreement; promise
dread	inspiring admiration or great respect
frame	make
mutually	in cooperation; together
solemnly	seriously; strictly
sovereign	king; ruler
submission	observance; agreement



## A Letter Home

William Hilton arrived at Plymouth in 1621 and wrote a letter asking that his wife and children be sent over to join him in a land of great promise. The letter to his cousin describes the abundance of food to be found in New England and the friendliness of the Indians.

### Primary Source

Loving Cousin,

At our arrival at new Plymouth, in New England, we found all our friends and planters in good health. . . . The Indians round about us peaceable and friendly; the country very pleasant and temperate, yielding naturally, of itself, great store of fruits. . . . Timber of all sorts you have in England doth cover the land, that affords beast of divers sorts, and great flocks of turkeys, quails, pigeons and partridges; many great lakes abounding with fish, fowl, beavers, and otters. The sea affords us great plenty of all excellent sorts of sea-fish. . . . We are all freeholders. . . . Our company are, for the most part, very religious, honest people; the word of God sincerely taught us every Sabbath; so that I know not any thing a contented mind can here want. I desire your friendly care to send my wife and children to me. . . .

Your loving kinsman,

William Hilton

### Contemporary English

Dear Cousin,

When we arrived at new Plymouth, in New England, we found all our friends who had come before us to be in good health. The Indians who live around us are peaceable and friendly. The climate here is mild and good for planting. There are many fruits that grow here naturally. Trees like those in England cover the land. The forests are full of animals of all sorts. There are great flocks of wild turkeys, quails, pigeons and partridges. There are many great lakes filled with fish, water birds, beavers, and otters. The sea provides us with plenty of all kinds of excellent fish. We all own land here. Most of the settlers here are very religious and honest people. We have church services every Sunday. We have everything a person needs to be happy here. Please send my wife and children to be with me here.

Your loving relative,

William Hilton

## Questions

1. How does William Hilton describe New England?
2. Why do you think he left his wife and children behind with his cousin in England?
3. If you read this letter do you think that you would be willing to leave your home and settle in New England? Why or why not.

## Vocabulary

<b>divers</b>	different; various
<b>freeholder</b>	landowner

# Separation



7 In addition to the hardships of settling a new and unknown land, many colonists suffered from the separation of family and loved ones left behind in Europe. The loss was felt on both sides of the ocean.

8 **SONG: "MY BONNIE LIES OVER THE OCEAN"**  
(FIRST THREE VERSES)

9 **JOHN WINTHROP WROTE FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS BAY COLONY:**

*My dear wife:*

*... be sure to be warm clothed and to have store of fresh provisions ... and be sure they be bestowed in the ship where they may be readily come by ... Thou must be sure to bring no more company than so many as shall have full provision for a year and a half, for though the earth here be very fertile, yet there must be time and means to raise it ... In due time (we) will ... see the faces of each other again to our great comfort. I kiss and embrace thee, my dear wife. I kiss and bless you all, my dear children, Forth, Mary, Dean, Sam and the other ... Once again, farewell, my dear wife.*

*Thy faithful husband,*

*John Winthrop*

10 **SONG: "MY BONNIE LIES OVER THE OCEAN"**  
(LAST VERSE)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1) Why did the singer's "Bonnie" leave? What fears does the singer have?

2) Why do you think families would choose to be separated like this?

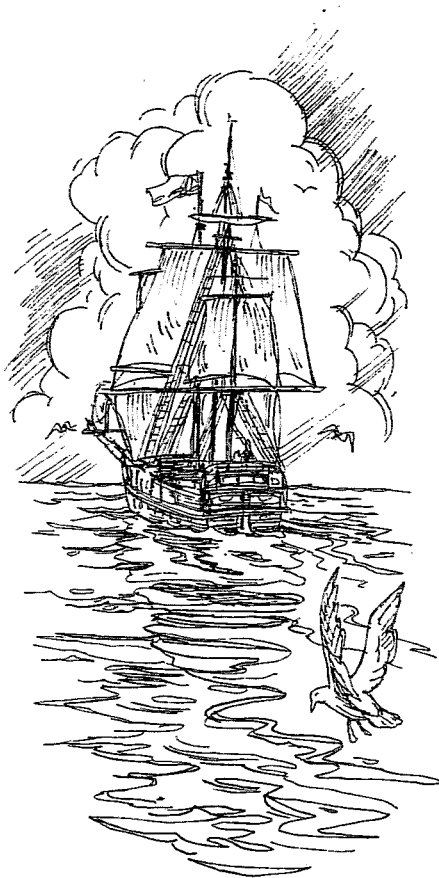
3) According to John Winthrop's letter, provisions were needed for a year and a half. Why would this be?

## VOCABULARY

- ★ **bonnie:** a Scottish term of endearment
- ★ **provisions:** necessary supplies, especially food
- ★ **bestowed:** stowed, stored in a neat and compact way

# My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean

ADAPTED BY STEVEN TRAUGH



My Bonnie lies over the ocean,  
My Bonnie lies over the sea,  
My Bonnie lies over the ocean,  
Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me.

*Refrain:*

*Bring back, bring back,  
Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me, to me.  
Bring back, bring back,  
Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me.*

My Bonnie set sail for the New World,  
The New World far over the sea,  
To seek out his freedom and fortune,  
Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me.

*(Refrain)*

My Bonnie said his was a true love,  
Forever I'll be true to thee.  
I pray that he won't find a new love,  
Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me.

*(Refrain)*

My Bonnie has sent me a letter,  
A letter from over the sea.  
He says to sail over and join him  
And together we always will be.

*Final Refrain:*

*Sailing, sailing,  
Yes, sailing across to thee, to thee.  
Sailing, sailing,  
Together we always will be.  
Together we always will be.*

