



Freedom's Highway of 1620

Story Four

Religious persecution in England sent the first successful colonizers on freedom's highway to America during the fall of 1620. On November 9, the Pilgrims first sighted land. They originally intended to land on the coast of Virginia, where they had a land patent from England. But because of violent storms, which proved to be Providential, they were driven off course and compelled to enter Cape Cod Bay (Massachusetts).

Two days later, before leaving the Mayflower, they drafted the Mayflower Compact. "The Mayflower Compact was our first American document of self-government with unity. It was the mustard seed transplanted to the shores of America . . . It was the seed of American Federalism, of voluntary principles of government derived from the Word of God, and with the consent of the governed."

It began,

"In ye name of God Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyall subjects of our dread Sovereigne Lord King James by ye grace of God, of Great Britaine, Franc, & Ireland king, defender of ye faith, &c. Haveing undertaken,

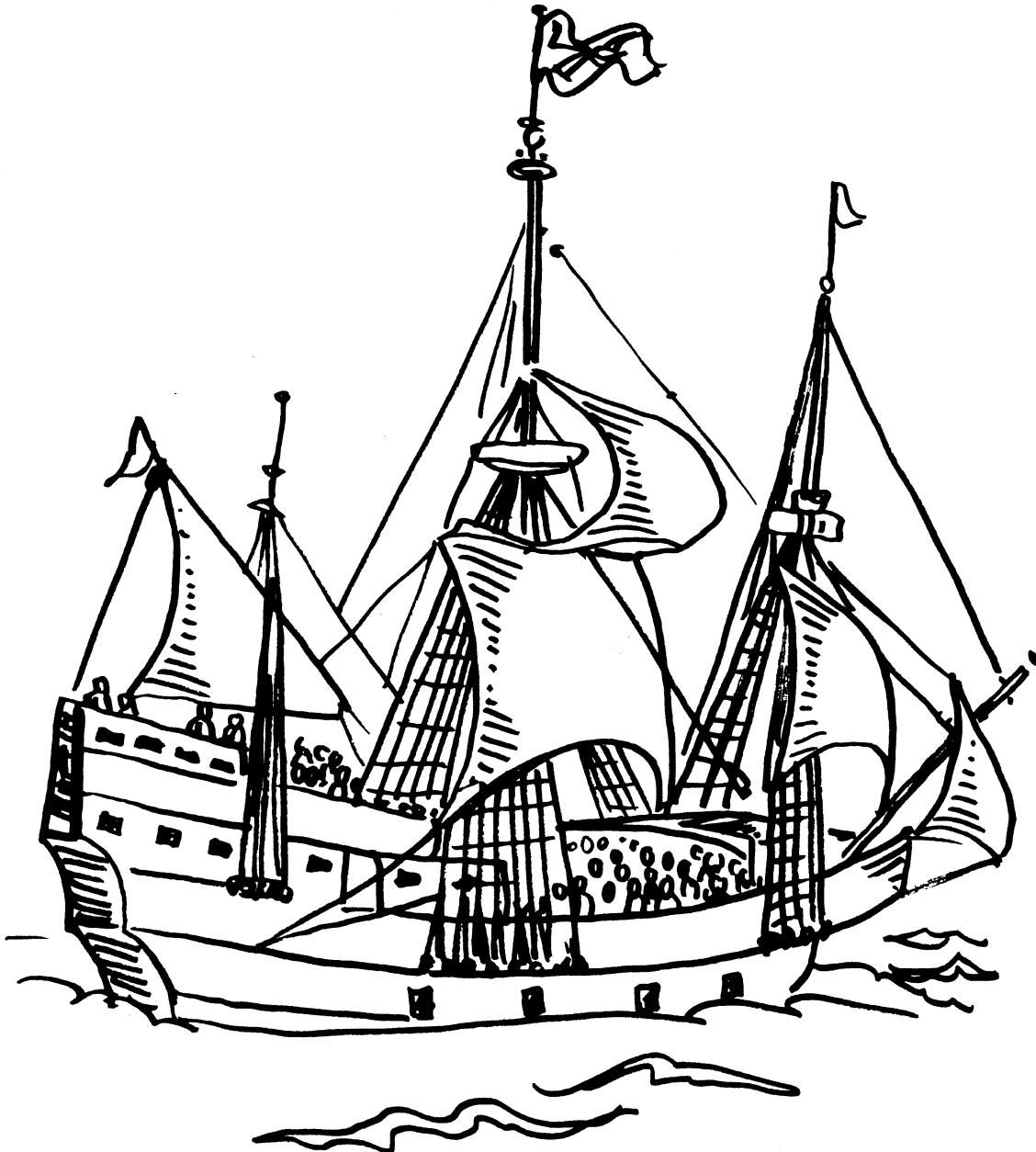
for ye glories of God, and advancemente of ye Christian faith . . . Doe by these presents solemnly & mutually in ye presence of god, and one of another, covenant, & combine ourselves together into a civill body politic; for our better ordering, & preservation & furtherance of ye ends aforesaid . . ."

Immediately upon setting foot on land, the Pilgrims fell to their knees and blessed the God of Heaven who had safely brought them there. To their amazement, as they explored their new home, they discovered the land had been cleared, leveled, and was ready for planting. There were sweet water wells and a large kettle filled with corn. You can imagine their surprise.

It wasn't until March of the next year they discovered the answer to this riddle. Samoset, an Indian brave, walked into camp and in the English language welcomed them—another miracle. He told them that four years before their arrival, a large tribe of hostile indians, the Patuxets, had settled there. During that time a mysterious plague occurred among the Indians and every one of them died. Since then, no other Indian tribe had dared to



GOD GOVERNS IN THE AFFAIRS OF MEN





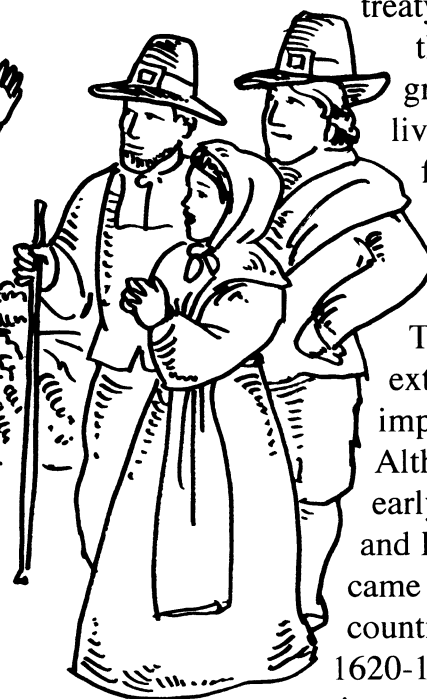
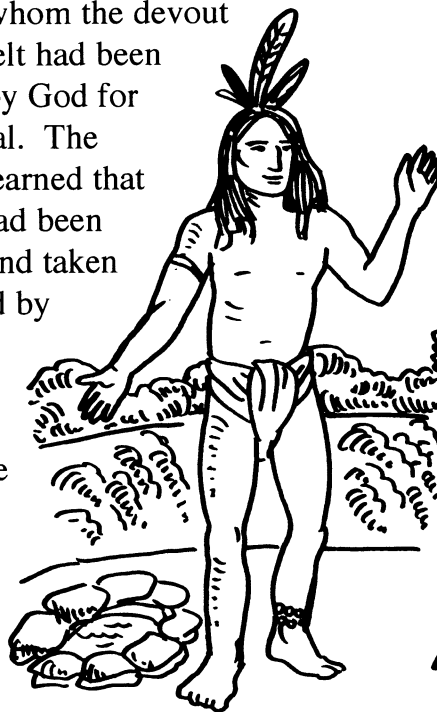
visit this location, which made it the safest possible place for the Pilgrims to settle and build their new homes.

Soon after this experience, Samoset brought to the new settlement another Indian named Squanto, whom the devout Pilgrims felt had been prepared by God for their arrival. The Pilgrims learned that Squanto had been captured and taken to England by British seamen. There, he learned the language and customs of the white man. After several years overseas, he was able to return to his native land—just six months before the coming of the Pilgrims.

Squanto taught the Pilgrims how to fish and hunt, how to plant corn and pumpkins, and many other skills essential to their survival in the unfamiliar American wilderness. He also introduced them to chief Massasoit of the Wampanoag Tribe,

perhaps the only chief on the northeast coast who could have welcomed the white man as a friend.

One of Squanto's most important contributions to the Pilgrims was his service as an interpreter in negotiating a treaty between them and the Wampanoag Indians—a



treaty allowing the two groups to live in peace for the next forty years.

This was extremely important. Although the early Pilgrims and Puritans came to this country between 1620-1640, it is not just a coincidence that they were allowed to expand and prosper for nearly fifty years without a major Indian War.

However, on the 15th of June 1675, King Phillips' war started in which over 4,000 Pilgrims and Puritans were killed. If any war had started earlier, our history may have read differently.



A great testament to us that God governs in the affairs of men.

Suggestions for Discussion

- What brought the Pilgrims to America?
- What was the name of the first ship?
- There were several things the Pilgrims did just after landing at Plymouth Rock. Can you name them?
- What was the Mayflower Compact? What significance does it have to our present day Constitution?
- Did they land in the area they were headed for?
- Who greeted them and helped them?
- What Providential help did you see in these stories? Name at least five?