

In 1620, a ship named the Mayflower sailed from Plymouth to the coast of what was the 'new world' for Europeans.

Amongst its passengers were a group of religious separatists, known sometimes as the 'Pilgrims', who would become part of the origin story of the United States. Many of these individuals were from Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire.

This exhibition explores how we can understand these individuals by tracing the history of religious dissent in Nottinghamshire. By examining how the faith of individuals and communities was controlled and monitored we can move beyond the Mayflower and understand the lives of religious separatists in Nottinghamshire.

We explore how children, women and men from Nottinghamshire were part of a history that is more than the Mayflower. The separatists who left the county for the 'new world' were one group amongst many. Across Nottinghamshire there were groups whose ideas were subject to surveillance and censure because they were different. By understanding the wider history of religious dissent, we can explore issues of equality and freedom.

By looking beyond the history of the Mayflower we can understand dissent, power and faith in the past and the present.

This exhibition has been jointly curated by Manuscripts and Special Collections and Professor Ross Wilson, Director of Liberal Arts at the University of Nottingham, with contributions by Dr Caleb Bailey and Rachel Carter.



American history - 1620

▶ 'The Mayflower at Sea' by Granville Perkins, 1876. Wallach Division Picture Collection, The New York Public Library. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e0-f37e-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>



▶ Map of Nottinghamshire by Richard Blome, [1673?]. Brettle Collection, Bre 5

▶ 'The Sailing of the Mayflower, Plymouth, Mass.', Detroit Publishing Company postcards, 1898-1931, Postcard series number DPC# 8745. Wallach Division Picture Collection, The New York Public Library. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47d9-a232-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

