

Religious difference, dissent, violence and control are part of the Mayflower story.

Sailing from Southampton in September 1620, the Mayflower set anchor at modern-day Cape Cod, Massachusetts, in November. The 'pilgrims' had not moved to a 'new world'; they had arrived in a land settled for thousands of years by indigenous Americans.

They built a settlement, but their survival was regularly threatened by starvation in the first few years. The leader of the Wampanoag tribe, Massasoit (c.1600-1661), helped them adjust to the environment. Indeed, it was the gifts of food from the Wampanoag that contributed to the famous 'thanksgiving' feast in 1621.

However, within a few decades, the English settlers waged war against indigenous Americans for land, whilst the diseases and ideas brought by the colonists caused great destruction. Whereas Thanksgiving is celebrated annually by many in the United States, it is marked with a National Day of Mourning by some indigenous Americans. This is part of the Mayflower history and its legacy in the United States.

In England, religious turmoil continued in Nottinghamshire. Groups like the Puritans began to grow in influence around the county. In Attenborough, German and Jane Ireton were regularly brought in front of church courts throughout the early seventeenth century for their refusal to attend services, receive communion or for their 'irreverent' behaviour.

Their son, Henry Ireton (1611-1651), was reported in 1636 for refusing to come out of his pew to receive communion at the altar rails. Henry would join the Parliamentary Army at the outset of the Civil War (1642-1649), rising to become a General under the command of Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658). This was a war of religion, where fears of a Catholic resurgence under the reign of Charles I (1625-1649) brought conflict across the kingdom.

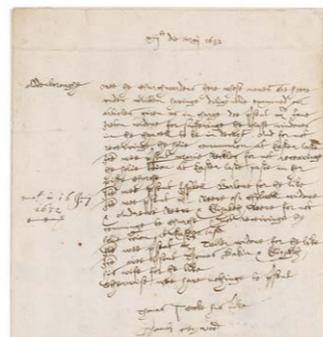
The victory of Parliament in the Civil War brought an end to the dominance of the Church of England but ensured violence and death in Catholic Ireland where English armies under Cromwell and Ireton enabled the dominance of a minority Protestant elite.



Exiled Nonconformists Landing in America.

'Exiled Nonconformists landing in America', from *Cassell's illustrated history of England* Vol III. (18--)-1864), p.373. East Midlands Special Collection Not 1.W8 HOW/W

Churchwarden presentment bill, parish of Attenborough, 14 May 1632. Archive of the Archdeaconry of Nottingham, AN/PB 303/760. Mrs Jane Ireton, widow, was presented for allowing the glass windows in the chancel to be in decay, and for not receiving holy communion last Easter



Cromwell taking Drogheda by Storm.

'Cromwell taking Drogheda by Storm', engraving by Barlow, 1649 (c), published, 1750 (c). Courtesy of the National Army Museum, NAM. 1993-06-136-1