



A reenactment of preparation for a Thanksgiving feast. Why would the Pilgrims need Native Americans' help in order to survive?

opinions. Eventually the Separatists approached the Virginia Company and gained permission to settle in America. Because this group of Separatists traveled far to gain religious freedom, they later became known as the **Pilgrims**. A pilgrim is a person who goes on a religious journey.

**The Pilgrims Found Plymouth** On a cold November day in 1620, the Pilgrims, traveling on a ship called the *Mayflower*, arrived off Cape Cod on the Massachusetts coast. Blown north off its course, the *Mayflower* landed in an area that John Smith had mapped and called New England. The Pilgrims settled on the site of an abandoned Native American village. They called their settlement Plymouth.

Because the Pilgrims landed beyond the limits of the Virginia Company, their charter did not apply. They were far from government authority and the laws of England. So most of the men aboard the *Mayflower* signed an agreement called the **Mayflower Compact**. The Mayflower Compact helped establish the practice of self-government and majority rule. (See Reading Primary Sources, page 74.)

Like the settlers at Jamestown, the Pilgrims at Plymouth endured a “starving time.” Half the group died during the first winter. However, they were saved by Native Americans who had learned to speak English. Squanto, a Native American, taught the Pilgrims how to plant native crops.

Sometime in the fall of 1621 the Plymouth settlement celebrated a good harvest by holding a three-day feast. It was the first Thanksgiving in New England. This Thanksgiving came to represent the peace that existed at that time between the Native Americans and Pilgrims.

▲ **CAUSES AND EFFECTS** Explain why the Pilgrims settled in America.

## The Puritans Come to Massachusetts Bay

▼ **KEY QUESTION** What kind of society did the Puritans hope to create?

By the late 1620s, England was troubled by religious and political conflict. Many groups of dissenters were speaking out against the king and the Church of England. The **Puritans** were one such group. Unlike the Separatists, who wanted to break away from the English church, the Puritans wanted to reform, or “purify” its practices. The Puritans faced increasing persecution in England. Many decided to leave and set up a Puritan society in America.

**The Great Migration** In 1629, the Massachusetts Bay Company, a joint-stock company owned by Puritan merchants, received a royal charter to settle New England. The charter also gave the colony freedom to govern itself. In 1630, 11 ships carried about 1,000 passengers to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. There the Puritans founded Boston, which became the most important town in New England. Between 1630 and 1640 about 20,000 more settlers crossed the Atlantic Ocean in what is known as the **Great Migration**.