

Differences Between the Pilgrims and the Puritans

PILGRIMS

1- Of the 102 Mayflower passengers (later known as Pilgrims) 41 were early English Protestants, known as Separatists or Brownists, who wanted religious freedom and complete separation from the Church of England. The other passengers, referred to as "Strangers" were merchants, craftsmen, servants, and crew.

2- Settlers of "Plymouth Colony", Massachusetts in the early 1620's.

3- The Pilgrims were far more tolerant and fairer in their dealings with the Indians in Plymouth Colony and established solid diplomatic relationships with Massasoit, the chief of the Wampanoag people. The Pilgrims' festivity in 1621, to celebrate their autumn harvest, included venison, fowl, fish, and maybe turkey. The Native Americans weren't invited but showed up with deer.

4- The Pilgrim social structure was one of community.

5- The government of the Pilgrims was based on the rights of its citizens and members of government were from all social classes. The settlers drew up the Mayflower Compact, an agreement to cooperate, and deal with issues by voting, establishing laws and ruling by majority.

6- Pilgrims only wore black and gray clothing on Sundays, black dye and buckled shoes were too expensive. Other times clothing was probably very colorful, with blues, greens and orange colors made with dyes from berries, leaves, and roots. Historical records, such as Wills, included descriptions of pilgrim clothing. William Bradford's will in 1657 listed his clothing as a light-colored cloak, a violet cloak, green gown, red waistcoat, and a lead-colored cloth suit with silver buttons. Pilgrim William Brewster, in 1644, left behind green pants, a violet coat, and a blue suit.

PURITANS

1- Departed England to pursue religious freedom in America and a stricter version of the Anglican faith. The Puritans were English Protestants, sometimes called non-separating Puritans. They didn't want to leave the Church of England entirely, only to reform, or "purify" the church of Roman Catholic practices.

2- Settlers of the "Massachusetts Bay Colony" in Boston, in the early 1630's; arrived with more than 1,000 passengers, and with more resources and money to seek land in America.

3- The Puritans were a much more narrow-minded group of settlers and were not on good terms with the Indians. Anyone who opposed their religious beliefs were driven out or severely punished, e.g. Quakers hanged as heretics; the Great Witch Hunt of 1692.

4- The Puritan social structure was not one of equality.

5- The Puritan government was far more based and influenced upon religion.

6- Puritans believed in simplicity, usually wore brown or gray, and black on Sundays. Wealthier Puritans may have worn black hats, and could afford brightly colored cloth, lace, buckles, and other trimmings.

"Puritan" was a term in the 17th century which referred to many Protestant groups who rejected Roman Catholicism in the Church of England, some groups wanting to completely separate from the Church, others only to reform, or "purify" it.