

**From *Magna Carta* to the *Mayflower Compact* to the
General Fundamentals and the American Revolution,
Plymouth Played Important Roles in the
800-Year History of Anglo-American Law**



**General Society of Mayflower Descendants
David A. Furlow
August 13, 2026**



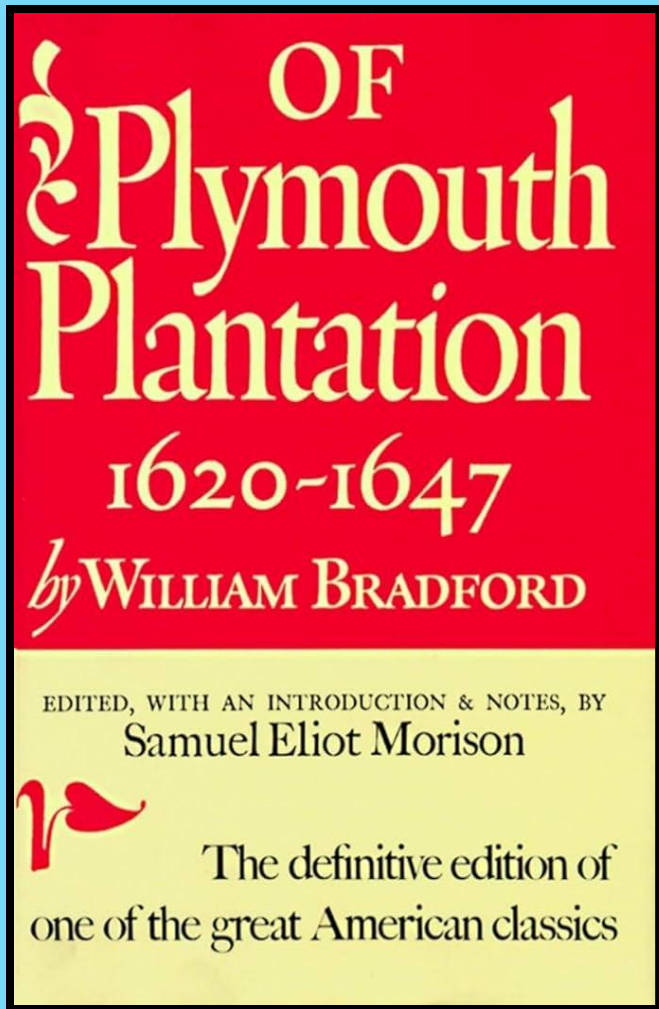
**Why so glum, Pilgrim?
Feeling uninfluential?
Living in a backwater?**

Some say the Pilgrims lived and died in a *small, uninfluential, backwater colony...*

“[Plymouth Colony was a] **backwater, its** people quiet and basically conservative...” Darret Rutman, *Husbandmen of Plymouth: Farms and Villages in the Old Colony* (Boston: Plimoth Plantation, 1967), 63-64.

“[S]imple folk who had few ambitions other than to survive and worship in their own fashion” comprised Plymouth’s “**small, uninfluential colony.**” Richard Middleton, *Colonial America, A History 1607-1760* (Cambridge, Ma.: Blackwell, 1992), 50.

Samuel Eliot Morison, editor of William Bradford's *Of Plimoth Plantation*, called Plymouth “insignificant”



“The *insignificance* of Plymouth Colony in the colonial era, is one upon which almost all American historians are now agreed....Massachusetts Bay, rather than Plymouth Colony, was the seedbed of New England.” *The Pilgrim Fathers: Their Significance in History* (article, Sept. 13, 1951).

Counter-Proposition: Plymouth played vital and creative roles in the long history of Anglo-American law and constitutionalism

Now, 406 years separate us from the Pilgrims who signed the *Mayflower Compact* in 1620. Another 405 years separated the Pilgrims from the Barons who compelled King John to seal *Magna Carta* at Runnymede in 1215.

A creative colony that set lasting precedent and inspired emulation, Plymouth Americanized England's *Magna Carta*, England's rule of law, and constitutionalism, paving paths that led to the American Revolution and U.S. Constitution.

Where did royal power lie?

Power resided in the **crown**—and in **royal charters**. Kings granted charters to **cities** (London 1060); **boroughs** (*e.g.*, Cambridge 1207); **universities** (Cambridge 1231); **guilds** (London Weavers 1155); and **trading companies** (East India 1600) in return for (1) payment of taxes higher than royal agents could collect and (2) loyal administration.

Royal charters made boroughs into “**civil bodies politic**,” with (1) perpetual existence; (2) a seal; (3) corporate power to sue and be sued; (4) trade privileges and immunities from taxes; and (5) limited self-government, including elections of mayors, bailiffs, judges, and aldermen/councils.



The Pilgrims sought to preserve their rights and privileges under *Magna Carta Libertatum*, the “Great Charter of Liberties.” Selfied at Runnymede on June 15, 2025.

**MAGNA CARTA
LIBERTATUM, the
*Great Charter of
Liberties*, arose in
1215 A.D. during a
rebellion by
England's barons
against a cowardly
and tyrannical ruler,
King John,
“Lackland,” a/k/a
“Soft-Sword.”**



MAGNA CARTA resulted from King John's greed, lust, and cruelty

King John's *ira et malevolentia*, “anger and malice,” made him **hated** by his barons, churchmen, and people.

He twice lost wars against the French.

He raised taxes on knights, stole forests, usurped borough rights, and extorted huge sums from widows and orphans while administering their wardships and inheritances.

He murdered his 16-year-old nephew Arthur in 1203. He imprisoned the wife and son of his best friend William DeBraose, then starved them to death in a dungeon.

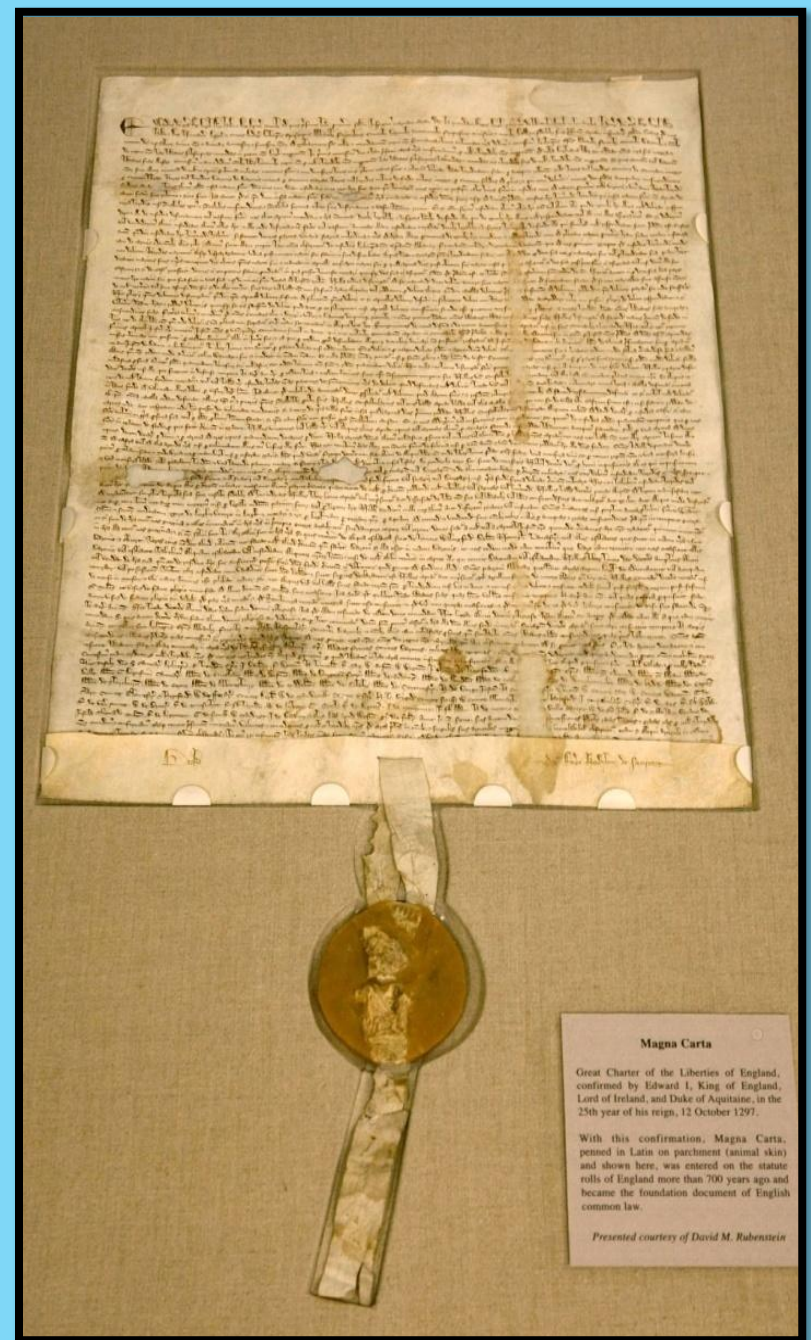
He raped 12-year-old girls, widows, and married women—and fathered 5 children through adultery.

He openly scoffed at Jesus's Resurrection.

Runnymede June 15, 1215

Rebellious barons, knights, boroughs, and the Archbishop of Canterbury Stephen Langton compelled King John to *seal* MAGNA CARTA by threat of force.

The Barons published MAGNA CARTA as their “Great Charter of Liberty,” to justify their revolt and preserve their hard-won new liberties.



Magna Carta

Great Charter of the Liberties of England, confirmed by Edward I, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine, in the 25th year of his reign, 12 October 1297.

With this confirmation, Magna Carta, penned in Latin on parchment (animal skin) and shown here, was entered on the statute rolls of England more than 700 years ago and became the foundation document of English common law.

Presented courtesy of David M. Rubenstein



**The bloody First
Barons War
(1215-1216)
erupted after King
John convinced
Pope Innocent III
to nullify **MAGNA
CARTA** as a
violation of the
rights of anointed
kings.**

Then King John died...and Henry III reissued *MAGNA CARTA* to win his nobles' support



Oct. 16, 1216: King John died in Worcester, leaving his 9-year-old son Henry III under the protection of England's greatest knight, William Marshall.



1216, 1217 & 1225: William Marshall defeated invading French forces and Henry III voluntarily reissued amended versions of *MAGNA CARTA* to win the support of his barons and churchmen.

What is the heart of *Magna Carta* (1215)?

Chapter 38: “[N]o bailiff will put anyone on trial by his [the bailiff’s] own unsupported allegation, without bringing credible witnesses to the charge...”

Chapter 39: “No free man will be taken or imprisoned or disseised or outlawed or exiled or in any way ruined, nor shall we go or send against him, *save by the lawful judgment of his peers and by the law of the land.*”

Chapter 40: “To no one shall we sell, to no one shall we deny or delay right or justice.”

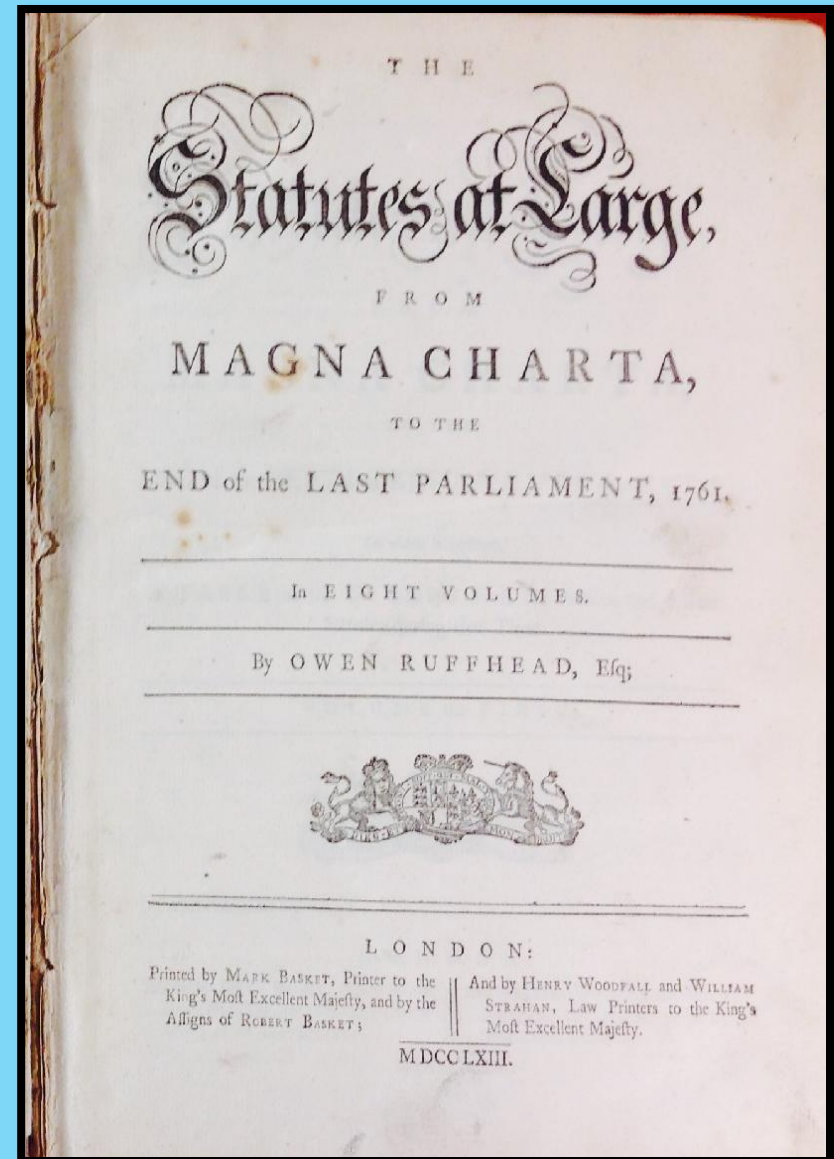
M.C. commenced England's Rule of Law

1. **MAGNA CARTA** precluded the king from interfering with the freedom of England's church (abbeys, monasteries, etc.).
2. It required kings to grant **Due Process** under the **Law of the Land**. The writ of **Habeas Corpus** precluded imprisonment without valid reason.
3. No king could raise taxes before consulting with England's nobles (later, parliament).
4. Kings had to respect the established liberties and privileges of **London, boroughs, and ports**.
5. **MAGNA CARTA** required that **everyone**—even the king—had to obey the law.

England's first law of the land 1297-1826

1297: King Edward re-issued an amended version of the 1225 **MAGNA CARTA** in 1297 to grant his reign more legitimacy.

Edward I's 1297 MAGNA CARTA became the first law of the land in England's **Statutes at Large**. Parliament re-enacted **MAGNA CARTA** over 30 times by 1600.

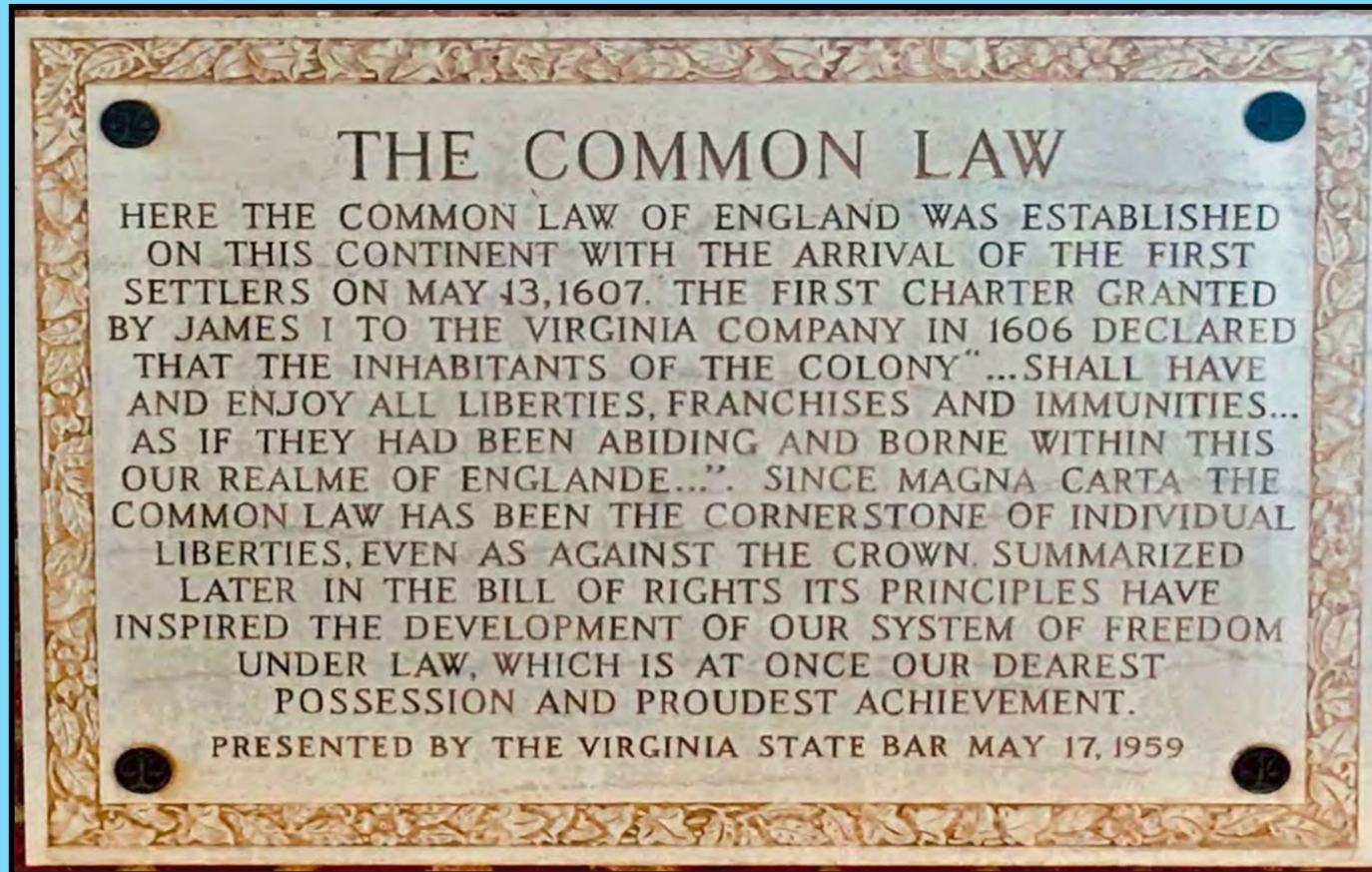


Spanish and French kings appointed governors in the New World—and acted without *MAGNA CARTA* restraints on their power at home or abroad.



King James incorporated *Magna Carta* rights into the Virginia Company's charters

The *1st Virginia Company Charter of 1606* declared that colonists were entitled to all “liberties, franchises, and immunities” English subjects enjoyed in England.



The Virginia Company experimented with limited self-government in the Chartered Colony of Virginia

- **1606**: The Virginia Company Charter of 1606, drafted by Sir Edward Coke, granted colonists “liberties, franchises and immunities” and explicitly recognized their *Magna Carta* rights.
- **1618**: Gov. George Yeardley took a 1612 “Charter of Grants and Liberties” to Virginia to permit planters to elect a law-making general assembly—*subject to the King and Company’s review and approval*.
- **July 30 to August 5, 1619**: Virginia’s first General Assembly met in the Jamestown church to enact laws and ordinances—*then did so*. The session ended when a representative died of heat stroke.



1st Virginia General Assembly, by Sidney King (1955)

Ther haue been Pattent^e graunted this yeare for Perticular Plan-
tacons.

1 To m ^r Wincopp	
2 To m ^r Heath Recorder of London.....	
3 To Doctor Bohunn	
4 To m ^r Delbridge.....	Who have vndertaken
5 To m ^r Tracie.....	to Transporte to Vir-
6 To m ^r Peirce.....	ginia great multitudes
7 To m ^r Poynte.....	of People w th store of
8 To m ^r Barkley	Cattle.
9 To Southampton Hundred	
10 To Captaine Bargaue	
11 To Captaine Warde	[112]

Meanwhile, in 1617-1618, King James denied the Leiden Separatists' request for a colonial charter. But in 1619 James, through the Virginia Company, granted patents to "Particular Plantations."

The Virginia Company made a land grant from the to the Leiden Separatists in the name of John Wincop in 1619. One year later, the First Pierce Patent replaced the Wincop Patent.

**Plymouth's constitutional history began in
Provincetown Harbor, on Cape Cod, on
November 11, 1620 (Old Style)...**





Edward Percy Moran, *The Signing of the Mayflower Compact* (1900) in Pilgrim Hall.

The Plymouth Combination (Mayflower Compact) **granted Plymouth sovereign self-government**

Problem: The *Mayflower* landed 60 miles north of the English patent that authorized settlement.

Solution: To avoid dissent, the Pilgrims drafted an “**Association and Agreement**” to memorialize their “**Combination**” into a “**Civil Body Politic.**”

Result: The ***first*** democratic election of a ***governor by the governed*** in North America occurred. John Carver was elected by all freemen and 3 servants (41 signers, including the servants—85%).

Consequences: Democratic elections of leaders began in Plymouth, **an unchartered civil body politic.**

The Combination/Compact's 4 Components

First, it declared that the signers were loyal subjects of King James.

Second, it described their voyage as an undertaking for the glory of God and the honor of king and country.

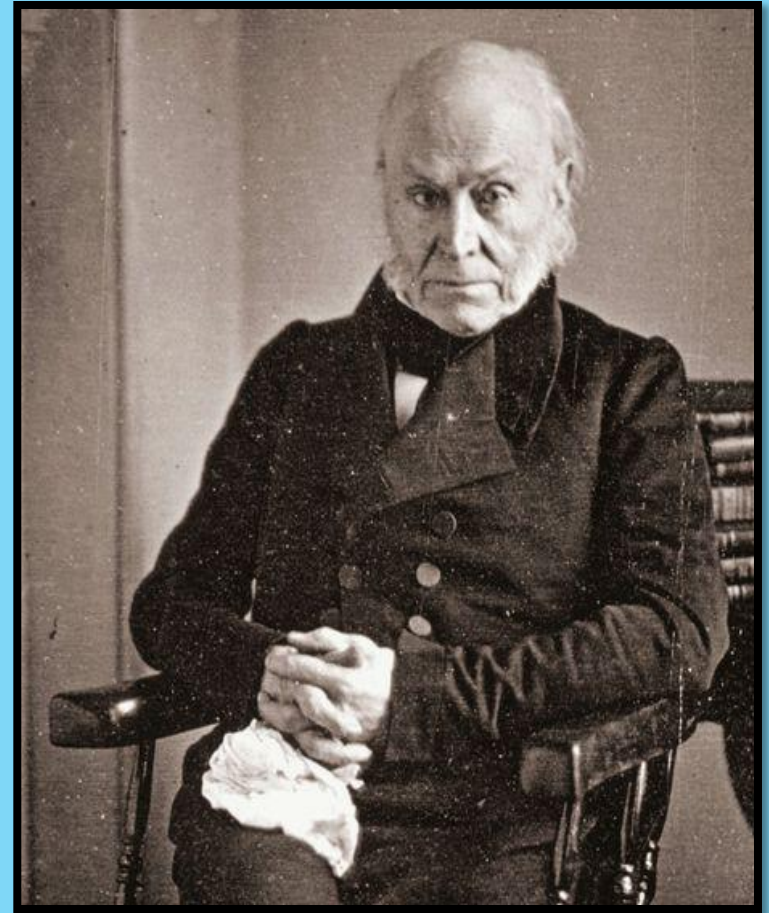
Third, the signers “solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant[ed] and combine[d] ourselves...in a civil body politic...”

Fourth, the signers agreed “by vertue hereof to enact laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, & offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet...for the general good of the Colony...”

John Quincy Adams re-labeled the *Combination* a “[social] *compact*” on Forefathers Day in 1802

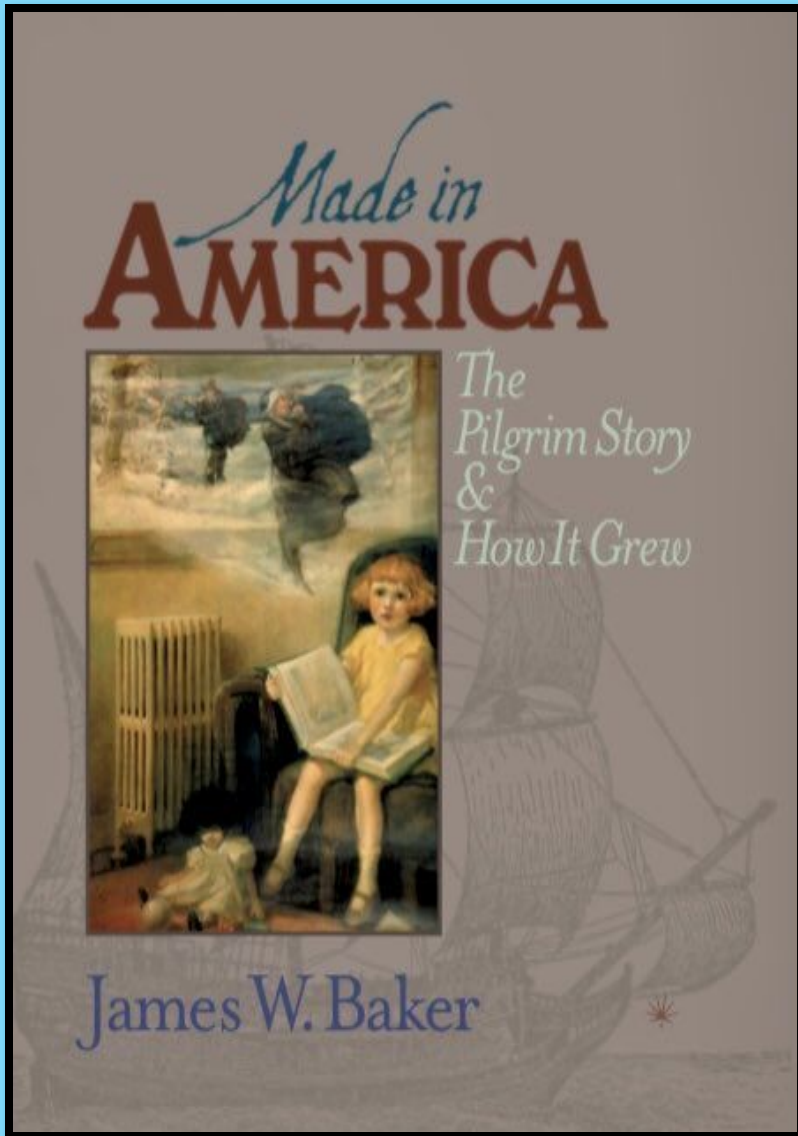
John Quincy Adams:

“This is perhaps the only instance in human history of that **positive, original social compact**, which speculative philosophers have imagined as the only legitimate source of government...by which they became a nation.”



Was Adams exaggerating—or accurate?

James W. Baker's view of the COMPACT



In *Made in America: The Pilgrim Story and How It Grew* (2020), Jim Baker stated that the *Combination/Compact* was “not a constitution, nor yet a charter; nor yet in a true sense a social compact...**The agreement was not a revolutionary departure from English precedent but a pragmatic application of it.**” *Ibid.* at 413.

What made *Mayflower* passengers so bold as to take the law into their own hands?

- 1. Each Pilgrim's grammar school education included years of Latin including Roman law and politics.**
- 2. Ecclesiastical courts (persecution).**
- 3. Most took part in Rev. Robinson's covenanted, self-governing Separatist congregation in Leiden.**
- 4. William Brewster went to Cambridge U. and served Elizabeth I's Secretary of State William Davison.**
- 5. William Brewster, John Carver, and William Mullins had experience as manorial court administrators.**
- 6. Isaac Allerton and Edward Winslow had been indentured servants in chartered London guilds.**

The passengers knew about civil bodies politic

A civil body politic usually meant a chartered, self-governing borough with elections, ordinances, officials, tax immunities, and trading privileges.

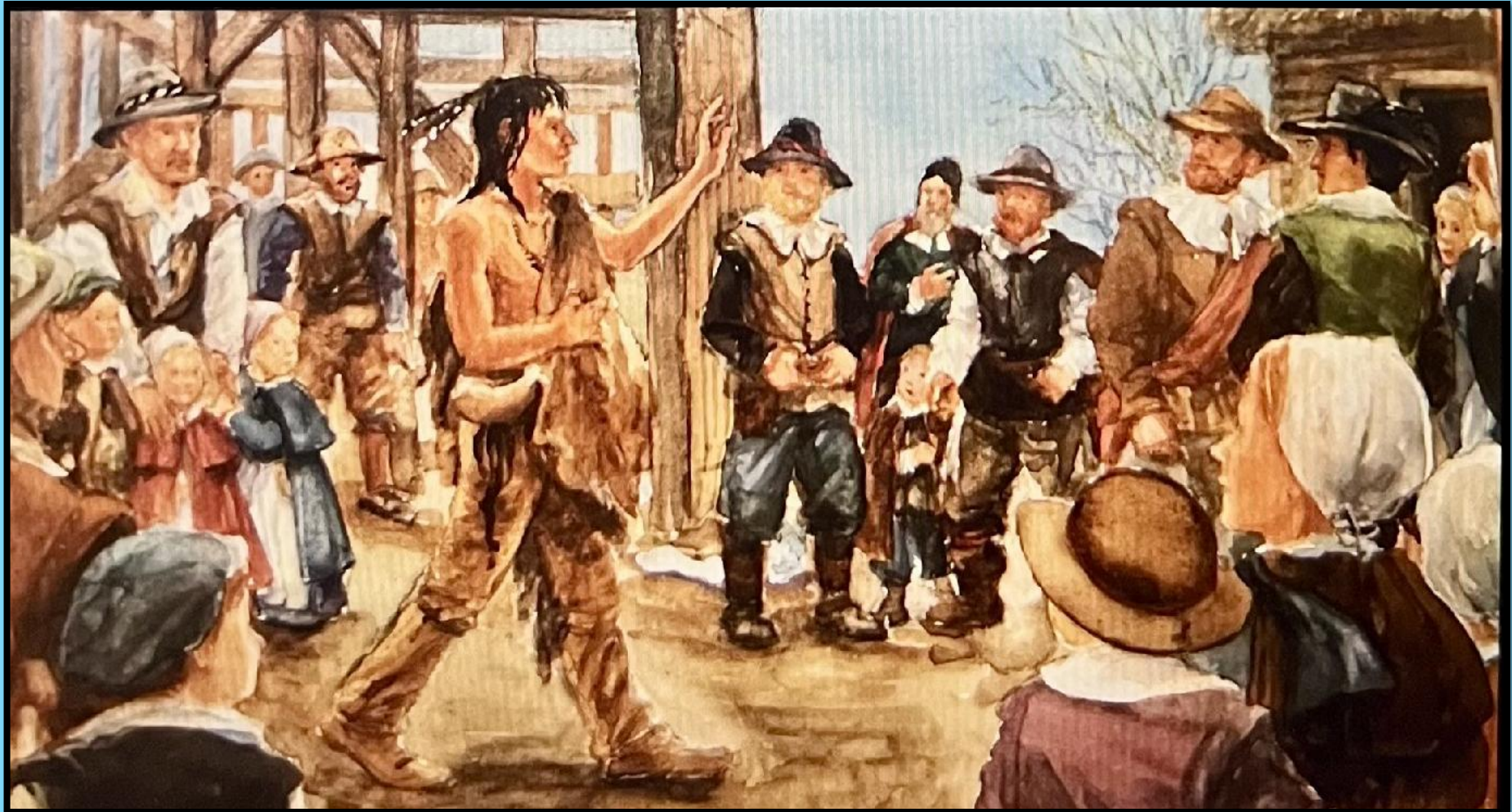
Rev. John Robinson urged the Pilgrims to create **a civil body politic** in Leyden in August 1620. He had earned his degrees in Cambridge (chartered 1102), preached in Norwich (chartered 1158), and ministered in Leyden (chartered 1266)—all civil bodies politic.

The Pilgrims lived in or near civil bodies politic. **Ipswich**, chartered in 1200, was 6 miles from **John Carver's Great Bealings** and 9 miles from **Isaac Allerton's East Bergholt**. Nearby **Colchester's** charter dated to 1199. Nearby **Harwich** received its 1st charter in 1318 and a new one in 1604.

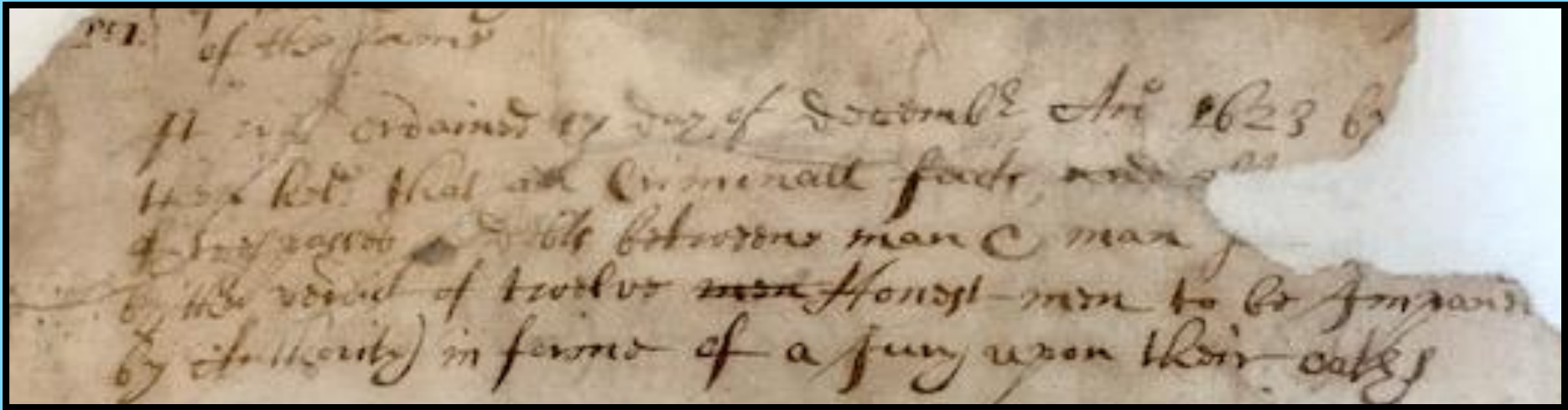


February 1621: The U.S. Army traces its origins to Plymouth's organization of a civilian militia and its election of a militia captain.

March 1621: The Pilgrims exercised sovereignty by entering into a treaty of mutual defense with Pokanoket sachem Ousamequin Massasoit. The *Combination* expanded to include an alliance.



On December 17, 1623, Plymouthers enacted America's oldest jury trial law



“IT was ordained 17 day of [December] Ano 1623 by [the Plymouth General Court] then held that all Criminall facts, and also all [matters] of trespasses and debts betweene man [and] man should [be tried] by the verdict of twelve ~~men~~ *Honest men* to be Impanelled by Authority in forme of a Jury upon their oath.”

Other laws soon followed.... [Plymouth Deed Registry]

America's First Leveraged Buyout

1626: Isaac Allerton, as Plymouth's agent, completed negotiations with the "London Adventurers" in 1626 to keep the merchants from foreclosing on the colony.

In the *Undertakers agreement*, the London merchants sold their interest to Plymouth's 8 "Undertakers," who collectively received **a joint monopoly** on the fur trade and **undertook** to repay their debt to Adventurers from fur-trade profits.

Until Allerton's agreement, all land in the colony was property of an English joint-stock company owned by merchants *and* settlers. In 1626 the Plymouth settlers *took control of their colony's economy—and its future.*

Plymouthans exercised sovereignty by reforming English probate law along biblical lines

1633-1634: Many colonists died in a smallpox epidemic.

Plymouth lawmakers enacted America's first laws to protect destitute widows and orphans, based on Exodus 22:22: "Ye shall not trouble the any widowe, nor fatherless childe."



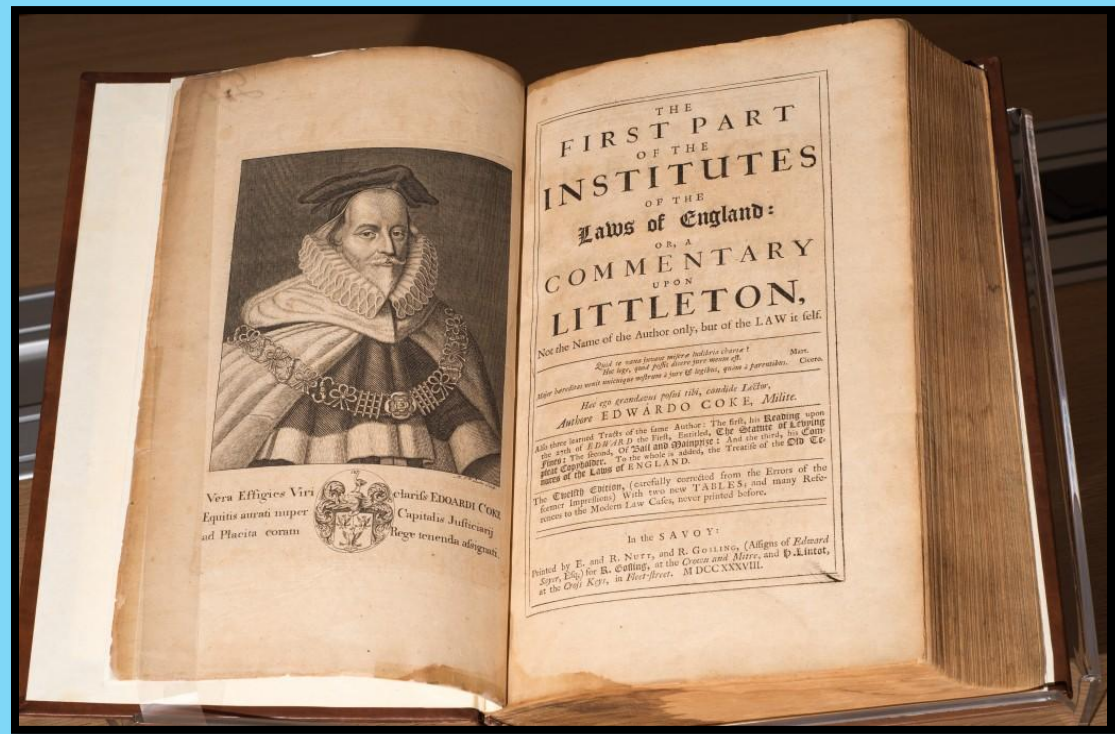
Plymouth lawmakers provided the first pensions for militiamen maimed in military service.

The Pilgrims confronted a tyrannous Charles I

The Pilgrims regarded Charles I as a tyrant because he:

- (1) declared himself king by divine right;**
- (2) ruled without Parliament for eleven years,**
- (3) levied illegal taxes (ship money),**
- (4) limited traditional jury trial rights,**
- (5) limited chartered borough self-government,**
- (6) compelled High-Church Arminian rituals that subverted the Protestant Reformation,**
- (7) married a Catholic princess, and**
- (8) suppressed Calvinist preaching.**

Sir Edward Coke
reinterpreted
MAGNA CARTA as a
limit on the
Stuarts' royal
power in the
Petition of Right.



“**MAGNA CARTA** is such a fellow, that he will have no
‘sovereign.’” Edward Coke, *The Petition of Right* in
Parliament, 17 May 1628, and in *Institutes of the Laws*
of England (London: Parliament, 1642).

While in London, Isaac Allerton and Edward Winslow
witnessed the growing Puritan conflict with Charles I.

**In 1636, King
Plymouth Colony
Governor Edward
Winslow appointed
eight Plymouth
representatives—fo
ur from Plymouth,
two from Duxbury,
and two from
Scituate—to review
the colony's laws.**

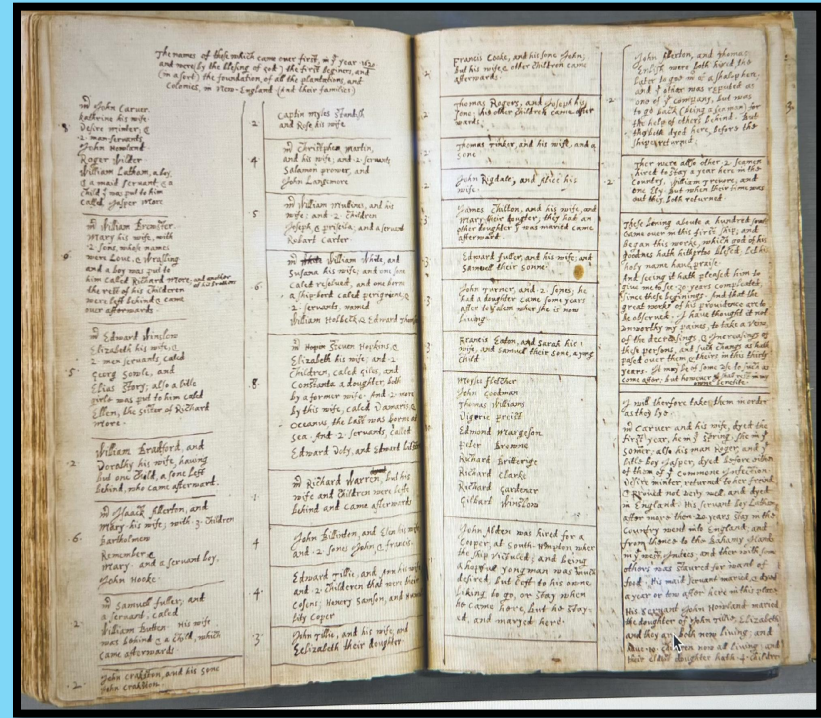




Winslow's Committee drafted the *General Fundamentals* on Burial Hill at the Colony's Meetinghouse and First Fort.

Winslow's committee started by reading aloud the *Combination/Compact*, "which they hailed as solemn and binding..." Then they read the *Warwick/Bradford Patent* (January 1630).

Plymouth's General Court enacted the *General Fundamentals* into law with the approval of Plymouth's voters on November 15, 1636.



André's father, right, is superintendent of Veterans, Detention & Parole of the Nation, in Glen and Grant Land, Va.

John Hancock in the other part; being thereunto depured by the said Merchants, and the said Adversurers as aforesaid; as appeareth by a Deed, bearing Date the first day in the third Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George, by the Grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, &c. Anno Dom. 1697. Be it Known therefore unto all Men by these presents, that according to our first Intents, for the better settling the glory of God, the enlargement of the Dominions of our said Sovereign Lord the King, and the General good of His Subjects; by virtue as well of our Commission aforesaid, as also the several Grants by us prepared in the Names of *John Pellos* and *William Bradford*, their Heirs, and Assigns; together with our lawful Rights, in respect of Vacancy, Donation or Purche of the Names, and our full Purchase of the Adversurers before expressed; have given unto, Allowed, Affirmed and Granted to all and every person or persons, whose Name or Names shall follow upon this publick Record, such proportion or proportions of Grounds, with all and singular the prerogatives therein belonging, as aforesaid, to him or them, his or their Heirs, and Assigns successively for ever; to be Holden of His Majesty of England, His Heirs and Successors, as of His Manor of *East Greenwich*, in the County of *Kent* in free and common Socage, and not in Capite, viz. by Knights Service; yielding and paying to our said Sovereign Lord the King, His Heirs and Successors for ever, one fifth part of the Ore of the Mines of Gold and Silver; and one other fifth part to the President and Council, which shall be had, possessed and obtained as aforesaid. And whatsoever Lands are or shall be granted to any by the said *William Bradford*, *Edward Tupper*, *William Brewster*, *Jacob Norton*, their Heirs or Assigns as aforesaid; being as aforesaid in publick Court, and brought to the publick Records of the several Intergovernors of the Subjects of our Sovereign Lord the King, within this Government; it shall be lawful for the Governour of New-England aforesaid, from time to time successively, to give under the common Seal of the Government a Copy of the said Grants so Recorded; Confirming the said Lands to him or them, his or their Heirs and Assigns for ever; with the several bounds and Limits of the same, which shall be sufficient Evidence in Law from time to time, and at all times, for the said party or parties, his or their Heirs or Assigns; to Have and so Hold the said portion of Land so Granted, bounded and Recorded as aforesaid; with all and singular the Appurtenances thereunto belonging, to the only proper use and behoof of the said party or parties, his or their Heirs and Assigns for ever.

The Copy being Imperfect most of these Errata's following happened thereby.

[illegible]

1



The General

Fundamentals.

Ann. 1676. and Revised 1671.

1. **W** *It is the Associates of the Colony of New Plymouth, among others as free born Subjects of the Kingdom of England, Endowed with all and singular the Privileges belonging to such Being Abroad.*

Do Enact, Ordain and Constitute that no Act, Imposement, Law or Ordinance be Made or Imposed upon us at present or to come, but such as shall be Enacted by consent of the body of Freemen, or Aldermen, or their Representatives legally assembled; which is according to the free Liberties of the free born People of England.

Is to be
made by the
Foreign
Office
after
consultation
with the
Treasury.

3. And for the well Governing this Colony: It is also Relieved and Ordered, that there be a free Election annually, of Governour, Deputy Governour and Assitants, by the Vote of the Freemen of this Corporation.

Available also
under the name
"Mars."

3. It is also Enacted, that Justice and Right be equally and impartially Administered unto all, not sold, denied or causably deferred unto any.

Justice to be
equally and
speedily admin-
istered.

4. It is also Enacted, that no person in this Government shall suffer, or be indamaged, in respect of Life, Limb, Liberty, Good Name or Estate, under colour of Law, or countenance, Authority, but by Justice or Equity in the formation of Law, or the General Court of this Colony, for the good and equitable Laws of our Nations, suitable for us, in matters which are of a civil nature (as by the Court here hath been accustomed) wherein we have no particular Law of our own. And that none shall suffer as aforesaid, without being brought to answer by due course and process of Law.

Name: Robert
 Date: 11/11/11
 Class: 10th
 Teacher: Mr. Lee

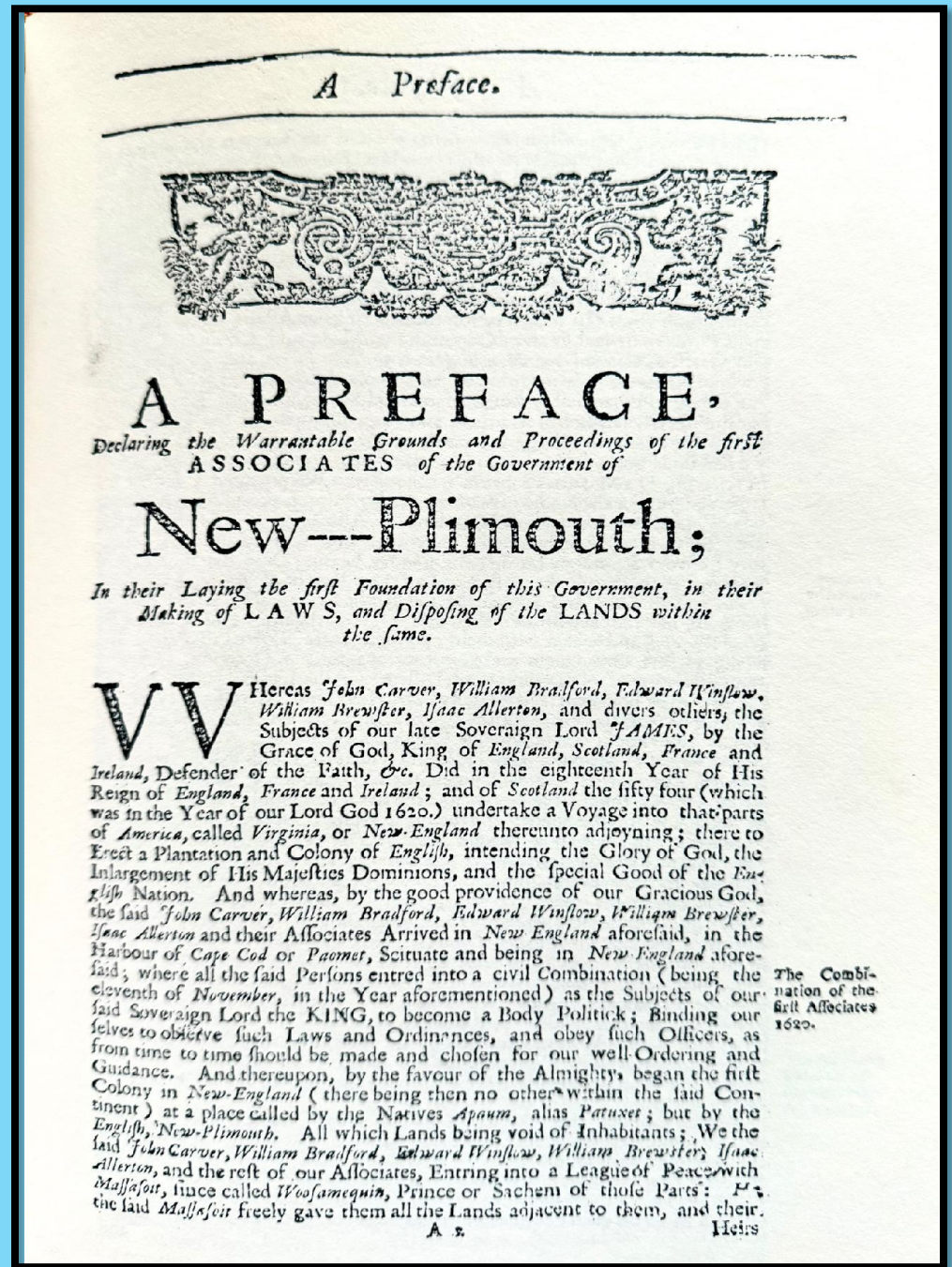
5. And that all Cases, whether Capital, Criminal, or between man and

14

The Book of the General Laws of the Inhabitants of the Jurisdiction of New-Plimouth (1685, Library of Congress).

In 1636,
Plymouthans voted
to adopt *the*
General
Fundamentals of
New-Plimouth.

It was America's
first constitution,
bill of rights, and
law code, according
to Samuel Eliot
Morison.



In 1636 (and 1658, 1672, and 1685), the Pilgrims reasserted their rights as *free-born Englishmen*

“We the Associates of the Colony of New-Plimouth, coming hither as free born Subjects of the Kingdom of England, endowed with all and singular the Privileges belonging to such: Being Assembled...” (11/15/1636)

In England before Charles I's reign, the Pilgrims possessed the privileges of free men under *Magna Carta* and their rights under their borough charters.

In each new version of the *General Fundamentals*, the *Mayflower Compact* was the touchstone of authority.

The *General Fundamentals* codified and reasserted Plymouthans' *Magna Carta* rights

“We the Associates of the Colony of New-Plimouth, coming hither as *free born Subjects of the Kingdom of England, endowed with all and singular the [MAGNA CARTA] Privileges belonging to such: Being Assembled...*

1. “Do Enact, Ordain and Constitute; that no Act Imposition, Law or Ordinance be Made or Imposed upon us at present or to come, but *such as shall be Enacted by consent of the body of Freemen or Associates...according to the free Liberties of the free born People of England....*” (1636)

G.F. Clauses 2 and 3 memorialized Plymouth's election process and commitment to equal justice

2. “And for the well Governing this Colony: It is also Resolved and Ordered, that **there be a free Election annually, of Governor, Deputy Governor and Assistants, by the Vote of the Freemen of this Corporation.**” That’s self-government.

3. “It is also Enacted, that **Justice and Right be equally and impartially Administered unto all, not sold, denied or causelessly deferred unto any...**” That echoed *Magna Carta* (1215) Chapter 38; *Magna Carta* (1297), Chapter 29.

G.F. Clause 4 preserved Due Process rights

4. “It is also Enacted, that *no person in this Government shall suffer or be indamaged [sic], in respect of Life, Limb, Liberty, Good Name or Estate, under colour of Law...but by Virtue or Equity of some express Law of the General Court of this Colony, or the good and equitable Laws of our Nation...in matters which are of a civil nature...And that no one shall suffer...without being brought to answer by *due course and process of Law.*”*

Clause 4 (1672) echoes *Magna Carta* Chapters 39-40 (1215) & *Magna Carta* Chapter 29 (1225/1297).

The General Fundamentals codified law

Established a church and provided for ministers.

Declared blasphemy, treason, witchcraft, murder, and bestiality punishable by death.

Authorized a General Court, a Court of Assistants, marshals, and constables.

Structured government, specified oaths, detailed procedure, and regulated trade.

Regulated marriages, wills, and estates.

Provided for education of children.

Magna Carta and the General Fundamentals *inspired the Bay Colony and Rhode Island*

1635: The first statutory law committee in the Massachusetts Bay Colony organized to “frame a body of grounds of laws, *in resemblance to a Magna Carta*,” as Governor John Winthrop recorded. The result was the Bay Colony’s *Body of Liberties (1641)*, its first legal code, six years after Plymouth’s *General Fundamentals*.

1644: Sir Edward Coke’s former law clerk, Roger Williams, a Plymouthean in 1631-32, enshrined *Magna Carta* in the *Charter of Rhode Island and Providence Plantation*, enacted with Parliament’s approval. It made the colony a chartered “civil body politic.”

New England's chartered colonies absorbed smaller, unchartered ones

1630-1665: The Connecticut Colony expanded into the territories of its unchartered neighbors Plymouth and New Haven.

1662-1665: The Connecticut Colony absorbed the New Haven Colony between 1662 and 1665.

1691-1692: The Massachusetts Bay Colony merged Plymouth Colony into the Province of Massachusetts Bay under a new royal charter that William and Mary issued on October 7, 1691.

1692-1763: Colonial self-government thrived in America.

Magna Carta inspired the Revolution

- **1763-1775**: Patriots James Otis, Jr., James and Mercy Otis Warren joined with Sam, John and Abigail Adams, Paul Revere, and John Hancock to oppose Parliament's Stamp Act and later laws.
- **May 12, 1766**: Sam Adams and John Hancock hailed Plymouth's "ardent love of religion and liberty."
- **Dec. 22, 1769**: Seven educated young men of Plymouth organized the Old Colony Club.
- **1774-1774**: Massachusetts Bay's Patriots inspired Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Ben Franklin, and other colonies' leaders to defend the colonists' endangered *Magna Carta* rights.



Polarization! Differences over *Magna Carta* rights, the Rule of Law, and the right to self-government divided Old Colony Club Patriots from Tories by 1773.

Plymouth challenged Parliament

Plymouthers quoted Sir Edward Coke's 1609-1628 arguments that *Magna Carta* rights trumped a parliament's prerogative to impose taxes without the consent of the governed—then applied that rule to King George III:

“When an act of parliament is against common right or reason, or repugnant, or impossible to be performed, the common law will control it and adjudge such an act void.”

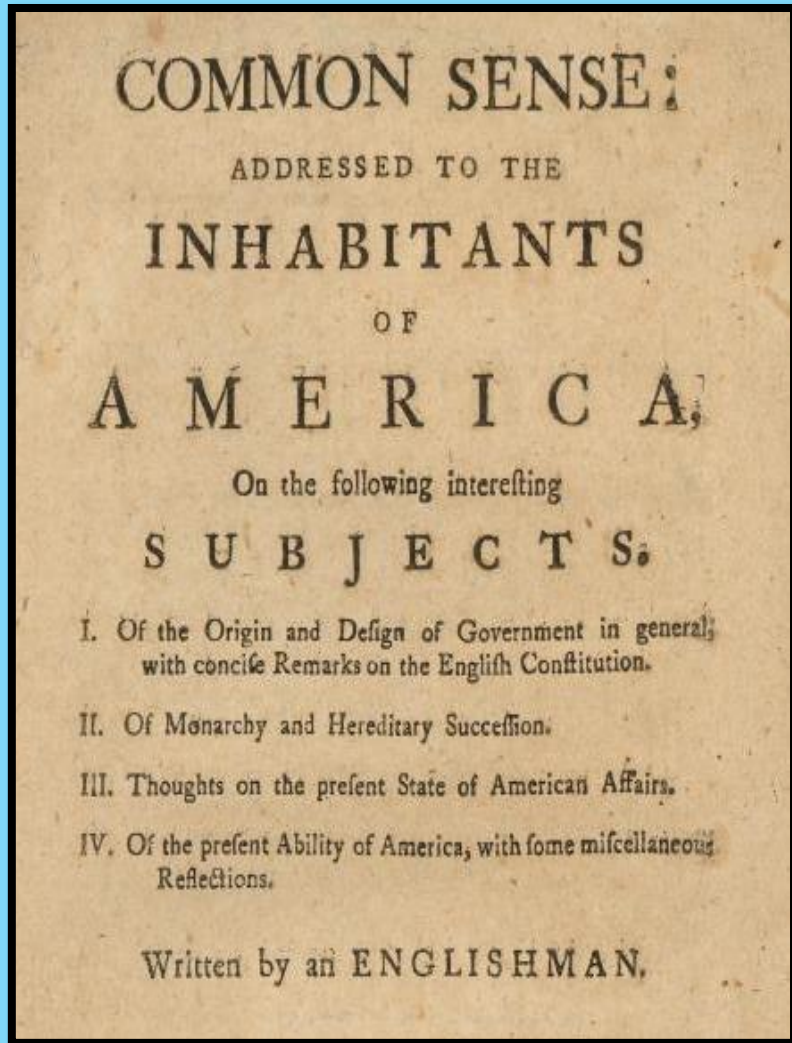
1774: “Animated by the glorious spirit of liberty,” Plymouth's Patriots dragged Plymouth Rock to Town Square and set it up next to the liberty pole.

1775: After Lexington and Concord, the Massachusetts Assembly declared the *Townshend Duties Acts* “against the *Magna Carta* and the natural rights of Englishmen, and therefore, according to Lord Coke, null and void.”

Paul Revere engraved a new seal after Lexington & Concord (1775-1780).



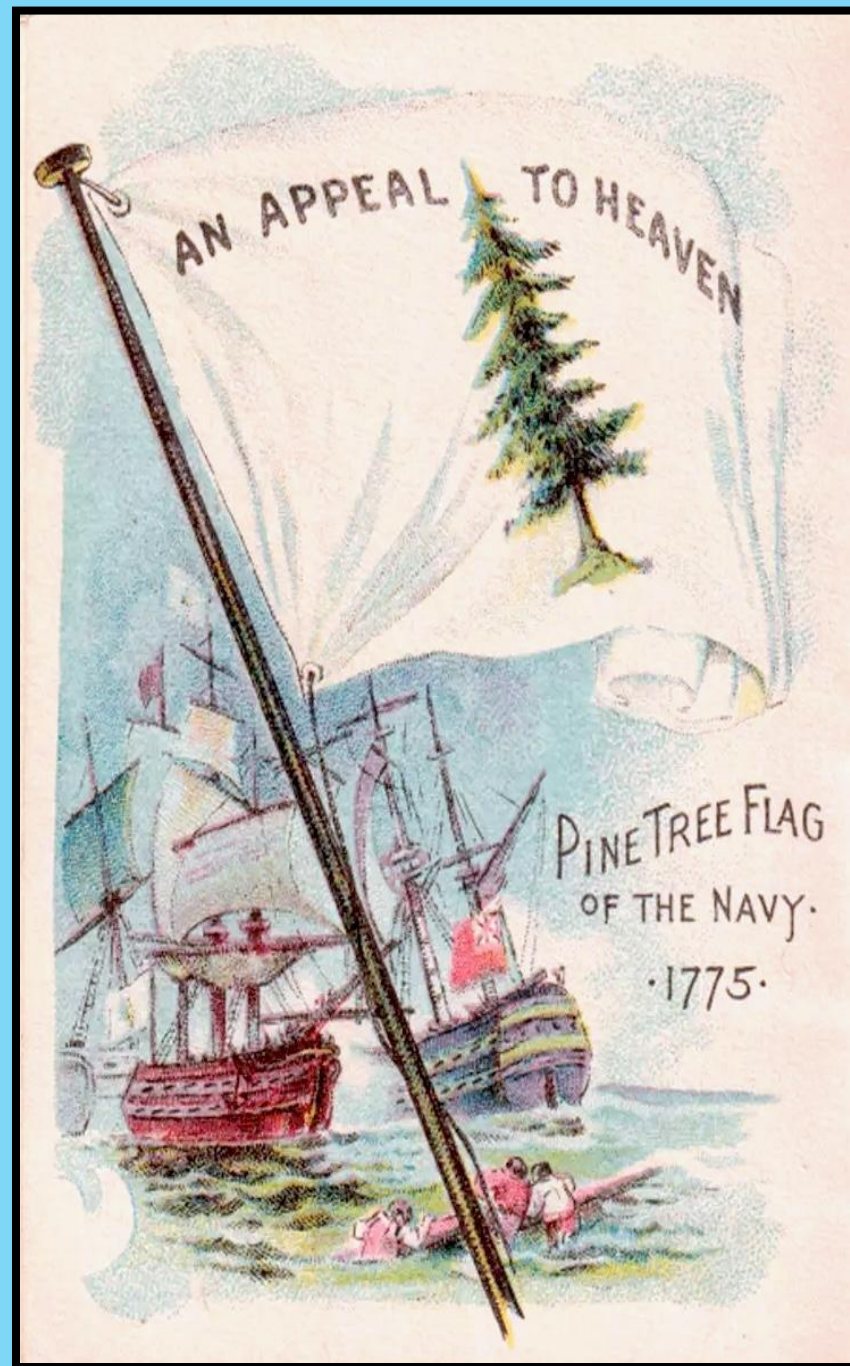
In *Common Sense*, Thomas Paine called for an American *Magna Carta*—a national constitution



In January 1776, Paine advocated a “Continental Conference...empowered by the People,” with “legal authority to draw up a Charter...answering to what is called the *Magna Carta* of England.” It “would grant freedom and property to men,” liberty of conscience, and “such other matter...for a charter...”

When pleas, petitions, and remonstrances to Parliament and King George III failed, Americans made “**an appeal to heaven.**”

Plymouth’s Patriots defended their rights on land and at sea. Their appeal culminated in the **Declaration of Independence, the American Revolution, the Peace of Paris, and the birth of the United States.**



A *Mayflower* Edward Doty descendant and Plymouthean, Mercy Otis Warren revered Pilgrims and Patriot legacies. She referred to the “**sacred sanction of compacts**” as the basis for the natural rights British tyranny threatened.



In her 1788 anti-Federalist pamphlet *Observations on the New Constitution*, Mercy hailed *Magna Carta* as a fundamental compact and a “stipulation between kings and their subjects” wrested from royal hands and preserved as an essential safeguard against tyranny..

The Constitution Americanized *Magna Carta* in the Supremacy Clause, the Privileges and Immunities Clause, *Habeas Corpus* relief, and Bill of Rights' 5th, 6th, and 7th Amendments.



Plymouth Colony's Pilgrims and Patriots paved paths that led to the American Revolution, the U.S. Constitution, and America's Bill of Rights.