

# Mayflower on the Sea of Time

Libretto by Philip Groom with additional text by Philip Sawyers, Walt Whitman and Peter Sutton

## Dramatis Personae:



**Narrator** : Soprano (April Fredrick)

**Narrator** : Baritone (Thomas Humphreys)

**Captain Christopher Jones** : Master of the Mayflower (Thomas Humphreys)

**Susanna White** : Pilgrim Mother, mother of Peregrine, widow of William, second wife of Edward Winslow (April Fredrick)

**Edward Winslow** : Pilgrim Father and citizen of Worcester City (April Fredrick)

**Samoset** : Native American, first contact with the Pilgrims (Thomas Humphreys)

**Oceanus** : The boy born at sea (Brittany King)

**Peregrine** : Son of Susanna and William, first born on shore (Amelia Jones)

**Squanto** : Native American interpreter for the Pilgrims (Thomas Humphreys)

**Chorus** (ESO Chorus)

**Pilgrim Chorus** (ESO Chorus)

**Native Chorus** (ESO Chorus)

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## **Section One: Persecution and Journey**

**(Chorus)** *The Mayflower sailed in sixteen-twenty,  
Packed with flinty Christian pilgrims  
Seeking Eden, godly plenty  
For a hundred chosen people,  
Free from princes, kings and bishops,  
Free from occult incantation,  
Space to delve and spin and worship,  
Space to build a newfound nation. (text: Peter Sutton)*

*The sea.... the sea.... the sea....*

**(Captain Jones)** *I am Captain Christopher Jones,  
Master of the Mayflower.  
We carry over a hundred souls  
Pilgrims, servants, hired hands,  
Farmers and animals, many provisions.*

**(Chorus)** *But oh! .... but oh! .... but oh!  
Oh the pity, pity, pity,*

*Unwanted children forced to come,  
Orphans,  
Foundlings,  
Taken from the homes of the poor.*

### **Escape to Holland and Beyond**

**(Chorus)** *We're going to the continent  
To avoid the punishment that  
King and his country bestow  
On those who have come to know  
God, God in words of scripture,  
God so clear and certain,  
God who speaks to those who listen  
To the words of scripture.*

*We have to travel further now,  
Too hard for us in the Low Country,  
A new community  
Across the sea  
Beckons.  
We will set sail*

*For New England!  
The King says he will no longer harry us,  
The Merchant Company will carry us,  
To form community,  
To be free  
In the New Land  
In New England*

### **....and we are Leaving Leiden tomorrow?**

**(Chorus)** *And we are leaving Leiden tomorrow?  
And we are leaving Leiden tomorrow?  
And we are leaving Leiden today  
Hooray!  
Hooray!  
Hooray!  
First to Holland from England,  
then to England from Holland.  
Now to the New World over the Atlantic,  
New life with the old God (who knows right from wrong).  
Simply,  
Clearly,  
Without ceremonial  
A good God  
A fair God  
A strict God.  
And we are the God-Fearing Pilgrims,  
And we are the God-Fearing Pilgrims,  
Who are leaving Leiden tomorrow?  
And we are leaving Leiden tomorrow?  
And we are leaving Leiden today!*

### **....tiny on the mighty ocean**

**(Soprano)** *Green, blue: and white and grey,  
Black star spattered night,  
Brutal glare of fierce day-light,  
Mist and rain and wind and endless, endless moving.  
In the day, in the night, gently, violently,  
Endlessly moving,  
The rhythm of illness, of sickness and someone's dying.*

**(Chorus)** *STORM at Sea*

**(Chorus)** *Out of the depths we call to you Oh God,*

*Our only hope and our salvation;  
Hear our distress  
And  
Save your faithful people.  
Out of the darkness we call to you Oh God,  
Our only hope in time of trouble.  
See our distress  
And  
Save your faithful people.  
In the deafening raging storm,  
Become for us again the voice of calm,  
Lord be our salvation in our time of greatest need,  
In this our time of greatest trouble  
Save your faithful people.*

**(Baritone)** *Oh Lord, why have you forsaken us?*

**(Chorus)** *Oh Lord, why have you forsaken us?*

*Tiny Pilgrim Ship in your mighty sea*

*We cling to you.... our only hope,*

*And illness comes, and sickness comes, and hunger comes and death arrives!*

**(Soprano and baritone)** *Oh Lord why have you forsaken us?*

**(Soloists and chorus)** *Oh Lord why have you forsaken us?*

## **Section Two: Arrival in New World**

### **Cape Cod, thank God ....**

**(Chorus)** *Arriving at Cape Cod,*

*Thank God*

*Who brought us safely over*

*The vast and furious ocean.*

*Sailing on a sea of troubles,*

*Arriving at Cape Cod,*

*Thank God.*

*To leave us in this wilderness,*

*Of wild beasts and wild men*

*As bitter cold descends,*

*And winter winds pierce us.*

*Did we survive the ocean*

*To die in this treacherous land?*

*Pierced by arrows, pierced by cold*

*And we have arrived at Cape Cod,*

*Thank God.*

## **And the children go around....**

**(Chorus)** *And the children go around and about; and up and down and in and out,  
Peregrine and Patience and Deborah and Love,*

*And the one born at sea was:*

*Oceanus Hopkins .... See that Ocea was the only one to be born on the sea*

**(Oceanus)** *OCEANUS, That's me!*

**(Chorus)** *And the children go around and about; and up and down and in and out,  
Jonathan and Josiah and Resolved and Fear,*

*And the first one born on shore was*

*Peregrine,*

**(Peregrine)** *You HEAR what I say,*

*The first land boy was Peregrine,*

*Let's drink to ME,*

*Beer and wine please*

*And down on your knees*

*And give thanks.*

**(Chorus)** *And the children go round and about; up and down and in and out,  
Priscilla and Thomas and Elizabeth and Mary.*

*Until they stop, one by one,*

*Until they drop, one by one,*

*Until some are gone....*

## **Samoset's Song**

**(Samoset)** *I'm Speaking English to the English,*

**(Chorus)** *He's speaking English to us English,*

**(Samoset)** *See their eyes pop*

*And their jaws drop*

*And hear them gasp*

**(Chorus)** *He isn't wearing any clothes!*

*Apart from a little leather thong*

*And that isn't very long!*

**(Samoset)** *But here I am, 6ft 4*

**(Chorus)** *And we are shorter by a foot and more*

**(Samoset)** *I'm speaking English to the English*

*But S..quan..to*

*Speaks better English than I do*

*And Hobbamock has a word or two*

*But S..quan..to*

*Speaks better English than we do*

**(Chorus)** *... .Better English than they do*

**(Samoset)** *And history thinks my name is 'Somerset'*

*But the Pilgrims didn't quite get it yet*

*Because I don't pronounce*

*As they do*

**(Chorus, sung in over emphasised diction)** *Because he doesn't pronounce as we do*

**(Samoset)** *But S..quan..to*

*Speaks English better than I do*

**(Chorus)** *'cos he*

*Was kidnapped*

*To London and now is back*

*And hangs around with Hobbamock*

**(Chorus)** *If we don't help these helpless folks*

*They won't survive the winter,*

*If we don't help these helpless folks*

*They won't survive the winter.*

## **They won't go away: We are going to stay**

**(Native Chorus)** *Why have you come?*

*What are you staying for?*

*Why have you come, move on!*

*You're not wanted here.*

*These people have come to stay....*

**(Pilgrim Chorus)** *We are not going away.*

*We are people of peace with muskets and cannon*

*(For our protection)*

*And the Good News of the True God travels with us,*

*And we bring you the Good News.*

*We have come to stay....*

**(Native Chorus)** *They are not going away*

**(Chorus)** *How tentatively we meet each other,  
Fearfully step forward and speedily step back,  
Our dance of fear; defence and attack,  
Coming towards, retreating back.*

*Afraid of what we might find face to face,  
Afraid of who we might find face to face,  
Afraid of who we might meet face to face,  
Afraid of each other, potential sister and brother....*

*A sky full of arrows and musket balls fly,  
Arrows and musket balls polluting the sky,  
Some wounds done to fragile bodies.*

**(Native Chorus)** *These people have come to stay*

**(Pilgrim Chorus)** *We are not going away*

### **We want to trade**

**(Chorus)** *We want to trade,  
We want to trade,  
We want furs and fish and sarsaparilla  
For our creditors at home who demand to be paid,  
We depend on Squanto, he is our mouth piece,  
He is our words to you,  
Your words to us....  
The negotiator of our peace.*

### **Squanto our mouth piece, our treaty of peace**

**(Squanto)** *And I am playing a double game, a treble game, a four times game at least,  
Our treaty of peace:  
Not to hurt but to help:  
To suit us, to suit the Pilgrims,  
The Plymouth Compact  
Between the Pilgrims and the Pokonoket*

- 1. No injury or hurt each to the other*
- 2. If hurt should occur there should be just retribution*
- 3. All that is stolen should be returned*
- 4. We will aid, each the other, if either is threatened*
- 5. It shall be made known we stand together*
- 6. We will not carry bows and arrows, we will not carry muskets when we join together*



**(Native Chorus)** *These people have come to stay,  
They won't go away*

**(Pilgrim Chorus)** *We are not going away, we are here to stay*

**(Native Chorus)** *You are not wanted here  
So we make agreement*

**(Pilgrim Chorus)** *So we make agreement,  
Our treaty of peace  
Squanto our mouth piece*

## **Song of Edward and Susanna Winslow and Peregrine**

**(Edward)** *New land, new son, new wife, new life,  
Thy will be done....  
But how strange and far beyond the whit of me,  
(Edward Winslow of Worcester City)  
To comprehend.*

**(Chorus)** *And thy will be done....*

**(Susanna)** *Over the ocean;  
A torment of emotion,  
A son born (my Peregrine)  
A husband lost (my William)*

**(Chorus)** *Thy will be done....*

**(Susanna)** *How far beyond the understanding of Anna White,  
Mistress Susanna White Winslow now,  
The only wife and the only mother  
To survive this bitter winter,  
First bride and mother on New England's frozen soil.*

**(Chorus)** *And thy mysterious will be done....*

**(Susanna)** *And Resolved, my five year old  
With us as we first set sail  
And I'm mother of Peregrine's brother  
Who will be the governor,  
And his sister Elizabeth.  
Edward's away, day after day,  
Month after month, year after year.  
Will he return?*

**(Chorus)** *They will be done....*

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**(Susanna)** *But I understand none  
Of it!  
And Peregrine;  
What of him?*

**(Peregrine)** *I survive,  
God knows what for,  
Endure, and endure some more,  
The first baby born on New England's frozen shore.  
Endure and endure some more.*

**(Chorus)** *Thy will be done....*

**(Edward)** *History  
Please remember we three:*

*As I walked with Squanto  
We passed an up-rooted tree  
(Much like a people without history)  
He showed me  
Indentations in the soil  
Each hole, remembrance of an event long past,  
Held now within the sacred earth.*

*We were traversing a mystic land:  
So much for us to understand  
About New England.*

## **Section Three: Survival and Making our Community**

### **The Godly Community**

**(Chorus)** *The Godly community  
Who's not as good as they should be?  
And what about Desire Minter?....  
Shhhhh....don't tell on her,  
Shhhhh....don't tell on her.*

*And what about William Reynolds?  
Drunk under the table ... and on the Sabbath in Stephen's house!  
Not again....*

**(Female chorus)** *That's the trouble with men*

**(Male chorus)** *And not only men, what about Desire?*

**(Full chorus)** *Shhhh.... don't tell on her*

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## **Gathering the Fruit of our Labours**

**(Chorus)** *Fish and fowl*

*And corn and maize,*

*Gathering the fruit of our hard labours.*

*Deer and ducks*

*And wild turkeys,*

*We are gathering the fruits of our hard labours.*

*Hoe and plant*

*And harvest and store,*

*Gathering the fruit of our labours.*

*But the pea crop failed!*

*We are gathering the fruits of our hard won labours*

*With the help of our Native brothers.*

*(Natives) If we didn't help them, they wouldn't have survived the winter.*

## **Planting High Ideals**

**(Chorus)** *Planting High Ideals*

*Here*

*Along with the corn and peas*

*Here*

*In land new to us*

*Here*

*In New England.*

*The freedom and Justice we seek*

*Here*

*Need care and up-keep*

*Here*

*Because*

*If not tended day on day*

*High Ideals slip away.*

*And men and women are not angels*

*And women and men are not angels*

*And our high Ideals need constant care*

*Day by day and month by month and year by year.*

## **The land belongs to those who take it**

**(Pilgrim Chorus)** *The land belongs to those who take it!*

**(Native Chorus)** *How can anyone own this land?*

**(Pilgrim Chorus)** *The land belongs to those who hold it!*

**(Native Chorus)** *How can anyone own this sea?*

**(Pilgrim Chorus)** *The land belongs to those who buy it!*

**(Native Chorus)** *How can anyone own this sky?*

**(Pilgrim Chorus)** *We have guns and cannon!*

*We have some wealth,*

*And*

*We have*

*God.*

*How can we fail*

*To own this land?*

## **Section Four: Our New World**

### **Thanksgiving**

**(Chorus)** *We don't give in.*

*We celebrate*

*God's gracious bounty in*

*THANKSGIVING.*

*Year on year on year*

*And more and more,*

*Again last year*

*Again next year,*

*But*

*Outsiders become insiders,*

*Making*

*Outsiders of the insiders.*

*The glorious and the inglorious*

*Legacy of the time at sea*

*Of the family*

*Who came ashore from the*

*MAYFLOWER!*

## **New Hope Now, Our Hope Now**

**The Winslow Family; Edward, Susanna and Peregrine, remember, as does Squanto**

**(Edward)** Remembering that desperate;

*That wonderful time*

*'Good Newes from New England' written by me, Edward Winslow*

*Hardship built on hardship*

*And*

*Our ship*

*Made its mark on history*

*The Mayflower now long gone....*

*Speak to me of what you remember.*

*My place in history,*

*Sometimes safe,*

*And sometimes shaky*

*Depending on the side*

*From which you view me.*

*I left Plymouth Massachusetts*

*Intending to return;*

*Left Susanna on her own*

*Died at sea of fever in 1655.*

*What would Squanto say?*

*He died of fever too in 1622*

*What would Squanto say?*

**(Squanto)** *I would say:*

*Who will I be to the writers of History?*

*'Squanto, last of the Patuxet warriors'.*

*I will be more of a puzzle to them*

*Than I am a puzzle to me.*

*Who can I be without family?*

*Without friends,*

*Without country?*

*All dead, all gone.*

*Our villages full and healthy*

*When I was kidnapped*

*Into slavery,*

*Dry bones in the fields to greet*

*What should have been my great return.*

*I was the last of the Patuxet,*

*The loneliness of the last Patuxet warrior .*

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**(Peregrine)** *I endured : for a little pleasure and  
A little fun,*

**(Chorus)** *Thy will be done....*

**(Peregrine)** *But what was it for?*

*I grew old  
In New England.  
They said of me,  
(Dying at 83)  
That I died,  
'Hopefully';  
Like a barrel of wine  
I aged gracefully  
After I lived life a little  
Fully, disgracefully.*

**(Chorus)** *Thy will be done!....*

**(Susanna)** *Oh my dead dears:*

*Loss upon loss,  
Through these years;  
I needed the will to will  
And then to will some more  
And I'm still here....*

**(Chorus)** *Thy will be done....*

**(Susanna)** *Thy will?!*

*Thy will?!  
I am not the complacent matriarch  
I have been made out to be,  
How dare they?  
How dare they  
Do this to me?  
I am not who THEY need me to be,  
I am angry  
Angry with them  
Angry with God!  
And here they portray me contentedly  
Sipping tea,  
I am not who they need me to be.*

*No one sees the tears staining my face.*

*My will*

*My will....*

*The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord.*

*(Words and music from Tomkins' motet; 'We brought nothing into this world')*

### **The Sea of time ....**

**(Chorus)** *So much past .... so much future .... the sea of time*

*We have sailed the sea of our despair*

*Now sail the sea of mighty hope,*

*New World,*

*New Time,*

*Our World,*

*Our Time,*

*We sail the sea of our history*

*Inglorious....glorious*

*Sister, brother, mother, father, orphan, widow, daughter, son, everyone....*

*New World!*

*New Time!*

*Our World!*

*Our Time!*

*We sail the time-honoured longing:*

*Justice, freedom, compassion, fun, goodwill and nature's blessing*

*On us*

*On ALL!*

*The love that holds us ALL!*

*New World,*

*New Time,*

*Our World,*

*Our Time,*

**NOW!**

*Smile O voluptuous cool – breath'd earth!*

*Earth of the slumbering and liquid trees!*

*Earth of departed sunset – earth of the mountains misty – topt!*

*Earth of the vitreous pour of the full moon just tinged with blue!*

*Earth of shine and dark mottling the tide of the river!*

*Earth of the limped gray of clouds brighter and clearer for my sake!*

*Far – swooping elbow'd earth – rich apple – blossom'd earth!*

*Smile, for your lover comes.*

*Prodigal, you have given me love – therefore I to you give love!*

*O unspeakable passionate love.*

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*You sea! I resign myself to you also – I guess what you mean,  
I behold from the beach your crooked inviting fingers,  
I believe you refuse to go back without feeling of me,  
We must have a turn together, I undress, hurry me out of sight of the land,  
Cushion me soft, rock me in billowing drowse,  
Dash me with amorous wet, I can repay you.*

*Sea of stretch'd ground - swells,  
Sea breathing broad the convulsive breaths,  
Sea of the brine of life and the unshovell'd yet always ready graves,  
Howler and scooper of storms, capricious and dainty sea,  
I am integral with you, I too am of one phase and of all phases.  
Partaker of influx and efflux I, extoller of hate and conciliation,  
Extoller of armies and those that sleep in each others' arms.*

Walt Whitman , ( Song of Myself v.21 /22)

*We sail the Sea of Time  
My time  
Your time  
Our Time  
NOW  
My boat  
Your boat  
Our boat  
Together sailing  
NOW  
Storm and waves  
And squall and calm  
Sailing together  
NOW  
New destinies  
NOW  
History is how we see  
The prospect of our future  
Our history in the making  
Our GLORIOUS history in the making  
GLORIOUS  
NOW!*