

It's right and proper to be thankful for all your blessings, and even to celebrate that fact routinely!

On the cover of this piece you see the famous First Thanksgiving picture by the American artist named Louisa Adams. She portrays the native "Indians" as below the Pilgrims in every way, including being "invited" to the Pilgrim's dinner.

If you're like me, most modern Americans have been taught a version of the first Thanksgiving in "New England" in 1621 that is completely erroneous. It's almost like a cartoon or a Sunday morning children's flannel graph presentation in a local church. And it's a deliberate suppression of the facts. We've been led to believe that the black-clad, buckle-shoed Pilgrims were helping save the stoic "Indians."

The truth is that the history of the Indigenous Americans, the native "Indians," and the so-called Pilgrims and other European explorers like them, was far more complex, harrowing, and murderous.

The real story begins much earlier



The story really begins years earlier before Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492. These intruders primarily came for gold and other riches, and to take the land and it's riches away from the Natives. One English investor declared, "The ends of

this voyage are these: 1, to plant the Christian religion; 2, To trafficke; 3, To conquer; Or, to do all three." True religion was never a goal for most, just a covering for evil. But the land they completely conquered over time was already quite settled.

When Columbus initially landed in the Caribbean, more than 3,000,000 indigenous people lived on the island of Haiti alone. Forty years later, fewer than 300 remained. The later exploits of Spanish conquistadors Cortes and Coronado are infamously well known in their murderous rampages of the Natives. The first permanent immigrants, or "settlers," in the United States were Africans in South Carolina who rose up and killed their cruel Spanish masters. So the Jamestown, Virginia inhabitants or other Europeans weren't "settlers."

When the Pilgrims landed in the winter of 1620, there were Indigenous Americans in all 50 states, Latinos in Florida, New Mexico and Puerto Rico, Blacks in Virginia and Puerto Rico, Asians in California, and other Whites in Virginia and New York. If "Indians" had not already established New England, many Europeans there would have had their own holocaust of death. The English King James knew this fact and in a macabre and false use of religion declared thanks to God for "the wonderful plague among the savages" that ravished the area from 1616-1619. The colonists ironically called the plague "Indian fever."

Indigenous Americans were, according to a historian's

assessment "a remarkable healthy race" before Columbus. The infamous Black Plague in Europe had wiped out 30% of the population. But the imported European plagues like small pox and influenza killed 90-96% of the native American inhabitants in a few short years. This was a death rate unknown in all previous human history.

How did this holocaust happen?

How did this happen before the Mayflower Pilgrims showed up in Cape Cod Massachusetts? British fishermen had been fishing for "cod" in the area for decades. When the ships were full they would land for firewood, fresh water, and to capture some "Indians" to sell into slavery in Europe. Squanto, the famous "Indian" of the first Thanksgiving, was captured in 1605 and sold in England, then a second time in Spain. He only returned permanently fourteen long years later in 1619. No doubt, these expeditions transmitted the diseases to the people they met.

The societies of the Indigenous Americans lay devastated. The few survivors, unable to cope with so many corpses, fled to other tribes carrying the infestation with them. The Pilgrims in the summer after they landed found scenes of absolute havoc. Every native village lay in ruins and the skulls and bones of the dead were strewn everywhere. They helped themselves to the well-tended corn fields and called the villages by new names: Marshfield, Springfield, Deerfield... all ending in "field." They also raided and desecrated many "Indian" graves for helpful items they desired, usually reburying the person after their theft. One Pilgrim recounted, "...We took several of the prettiest things to carry away with us, and covered the body up again."

Trying to save his people from total destruction

Ironically, the earlier plague that wiped out the Natives was the main reason for the friendly reception from the Wampanoags (wamp-a-NO-ag; "Easterners"), a loose confederation of local tribes in southeast Massachusetts. Massasoit (MAE-suh-soy-uh), the paramount chief (sachem of sachems), was a political and military leader and in a terrible bind. He desperately hoped to ally with the "strong" Pilgrims because the plague had so weakened his people that he feared extinction due to the Narragansett ("people of the little points and bays") people far to the west in what is now Rhode Island. The Narragansett people avoided the plague since they traded primarily with the Dutch.

The Europeans were immersed in the booming Fur Trade, and the "Indians" refused to see the future danger. But by now the Indigenous Americans way of life had been totally disrupted and those few who did not die of disease or war were set against each other by the Europeans and others for the sake of money. So, Massasoit gambled and let the Pilgrims live, hoping to save his people and their way of life.

Remember Squanto who was twice kidnapped and sold into

European slavery? His real name was Tisquantum, and he was a Patuxet "Indian." His new English master was a merchant who later financed the Mayflower expedition! Perhaps Squanto told him of his homeland as he learned English. Perhaps he learned the conniving and hypocritical ways of his captors. In any event, he made his way back to America and in only a year was captured once again by a British slave trader along with two dozen other "Indians" and sold in Spain. Eventually, he escaped and permanently returned again to Cape Cod in 1619.

The Pilgrims arrive and squat

The Pilgrims were persecuted in Europe but had the bizarre idea that Biblical Armageddon was imminent. Thus, they needed the New World to bring in the "Kingdom of God" foretold in the book of Revelation. After an arduous voyage and some exploring upon arrival, the Pilgrims chose the land around a harbor for their "settlement" in Cape Cod. Fortunately for them but unfortunately for the Indigenous Americans, Squanto's Patuxet "Indian" village had been depopulated in the plague. The Pilgrims squatted there naming it New Plymouth. Historian Charles Mann commented the general area was like a giant cemetery 200 miles long and 40 miles deep.



First deadly winter

The winter of 1620 was brutal and many Pilgrims died since they were extremely ill prepared. The "Indians" waited and watched as the Pilgrims died by the dozens. Of the 102 souls who arrived on the Mayflower, 45 died that first winter.

The historian Charles Mann also comments that the Indigenous Americans observed that the squatters were shorter than them, oddly dressed, often unbearably dirty, irritating talkative about unimportant matters, untrustworthy, and surprisingly incompetent in basic tasks. But they had useful and beautiful tools: copper kettles, glittering colored glass, steel knives and hatchets - unlike anything else in their homeland. And, most importantly, the Pilgrims were willing to trade for cheap furs. It was akin to swapping used socks for fancy electronic goods. So, it was somewhat easy to overlook the idiosyncrasies of the foreigners...at least at first.

Squanto's real role

Squanto presented himself to Massasoit when he returned permanently since he had nowhere else to go. But even when the chief didn't trust him, he could use him. He sent one of his trusted leaders named Samoset who was familiar with the English along with the English speaking Squanto for the first contact in March 1621. Both sides were wary. The Natives were fearful of the loud European muskets and their full body armor.

Massasoit eventually met with the Pilgrim leaders and after this historic meeting, some negotiations and an alliance agreement or peace treaty, the "Indians" gave them food and

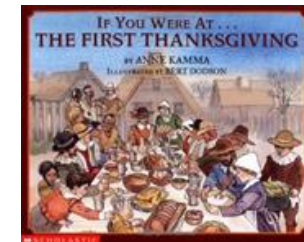
continued to help them survive. The chief left Squanto with the Pilgrims for 20 months as a sort of spy and to teach them to plant corn in the frontier. His help insured their survival in the first two years. One record shows, "Wee have found the Indians very faithfull in their Covenant of Peace with us; very loving and readie to pleasure us..."



Samoset arrives

The first Thanksgiving...for the Pilgrims at least

The Indigenous Americans had celebrated a fall harvest "thanksgiving" for centuries before the arrival of the foreigners. Historian Chuck Larsen rightly states that the Wampanoag were actually invited to that Thanksgiving feast for the purpose of negotiating a new one-sided treaty that would secure the lands of the Plymouth Plantation for the Pilgrims. This was a political gathering pure and simple. It should also be noted, he says (along with others), that the "Indians," possibly out of a sense of charity toward their hosts, ended up bringing the majority of the food for the feast. Finally, he comments that the friendship was guarded and not always sincere, and the peace was very soon abused by the white man.



School Propaganda

The two wary sides joined together that fall for three days. Chief Massasoit brought 90 of his men and offered five deer for the meeting-celebration in addition to corn, squash, and sweet potatoes. The Pilgrims, probably numbering no more than 30 adult men, brought mostly water fowl like ducks and geese plus some

corn since the peas and barley that fall were pitiful. No turkeys were certain to be a part of the meals that week although the wild variety could have been available in scarce number. There is no record of the Pilgrim women's participation probably due to the tentative and dangerous nature of the meeting, but little doubt they had a role.

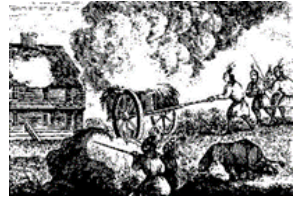
It was reported the English brought their muskets and during the gathering made sure they "exercised arms" to remind the Natives who was really in charge, and who had the real fire power. Centuries later, protesting against the "holy-day," the United American Indians of New England have held a "National Day of Mourning" at Plymouth Rock since 1970.

Their troubles and persecution escalate

Squanto, considered by some as a born-again baptized Christian, hatched a plot against Massasoit the next year since he felt he would be a better chief of the nation and wanted to reestablish the Patuxet tribe. The plot entailed turning the Pilgrims against Massasoit saying the chief was going to double cross them and lead a joint attack against

them with the Narragansets. The plot was discovered and Massasoit demanded the Pilgrims fork over both the head and hands of Squanto. When they refused, the chief cut off all contact for some time and the Pilgrims suffered terribly for years afterward.

One historian recounts that as word spread in England about the paradise to be found in the New World, religious zealots called Puritans began arriving by the boat load. Finding no fences around the land, they considered it to be in the public domain. Joined by other British settlers, they seized land,



Natives fight back

capturing strong young Natives for slaves and killing the rest. But the Pequot Nation in western Massachusetts had not agreed to the peace treaty Massasoit had negotiated and they fought back.

The Narragansets, with initial hopes of booty and glory, left their Puritan allies in disgust saying the English were “too furious” and “slay(ed) too many men.” The Pequot War was one of the bloodiest Indian wars ever fought.

This historian continues by saying in 1637 less than 20 years after the Mayflower landed and near present day Groton, Connecticut, over 700 men, women and children of the Pequot Tribe had gathered for their annual Green Corn Festival which is our Thanksgiving celebration. In the predawn hours the sleeping Indians were surrounded by English and Dutch mercenaries who ordered them to come outside.

Those who came out were shot or clubbed to death while the terrified women and children who huddled inside the longhouse were burned alive. The next day the governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, John Winthrop, declared "A Day Of Thanksgiving" because 700 unarmed men, women and children had been murdered. This is the origin of our modern phrase, "Thanksgiving Day."

Cheered by their "victory," the brave colonists and their turncoat "Indian" allies attacked village after village. Women and children over 14 were sold into slavery while the rest were murdered. Boats loaded with as many as 500 slaves regularly left the ports of New England. Bounties were paid for Indian scalps to encourage as many deaths as possible.

Massasoit's sons assume leadership

Upon his death in 1662, Chief Massasoit's son Wamsutta assumed leadership as paramount chief. However, in less than two years he mysteriously died after visiting the later Puritans to discuss growing tensions. The second son, Metacomet, called King Phillip by the Europeans, ascended to the top next. The English demanded the "Indians" surrender their guns, and some were hanged after murdering an "Indian" interpreter that revealed a planned attack by the new coalition of tribes King Phillip had developed. Tensions increased more.

The English and other Europeans now numbered over 150,000 and continued to confiscate and encroach on Indigenous Americans land. Murders continued unabated with even larger bounties offered for the scalps of the "Indian" dead. The "Indians" fought back in a hit-and-run guerrilla fashion. But the English recruited more traitorous "Indians" as scouts and the first ranger force was created to wipe out the remaining resistance. It worked exceedingly well. King Phillip, along with thousands, was killed at age 38 in 1678 during the King Phillip War.



King Phillip wants peace

Historians have noted this English quote, "...it was with God's help...for how else could we have done it?" But the true and real God of the Bible who works through His Son Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit commands one to love their enemy and not resist him who is evil.

Cotton Mather, a famous New England leader and elder praised God for destroying "chiefly young men and children, the very seeds of increase, thus clearing the forests to make way for a better growth", i.e., the Pilgrims.

Final comments on the real history
Historian John Grenier relates, "Successive generations of Americans, both soldiers and civilians, made the killing of Indian men, women, and children a defining element of their first military tradition and thereby part of a shared American identity..." The scalps of the Indigenous Americans, men, women and children, was big business in recruiting soldiers. It also served well for whipping up frenzied opposition in the citizenry for the final genocide of the few Natives who still held on to their lands.

Final comments on the real history

Dunbar-Ortiz calls the false historical account "an insidious smoke screen meant to obscure the fact that the very existence of the country is a result of the looting of an entire continent and its resources." And the wholesale murder of its Natives.

In the 1970 speech by Frank James, a Wampanoag descent, commemorating the 350th anniversary of the Pilgrim's landing, he stated, "...it is not a time of celebrating for me. It is with a heavy heart that I look back upon what happened to my people...The Pilgrims had hardly explored the shores of Cape Cod four days before they had robbed the graves of my ancestors, and stolen their corn, wheat, and beans...Massasoit...knew these facts, yet he and his people welcomed and befriended the settlers...little knowing that...before 50 years were to pass,



Wampanoag people

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(we and other Indian tribes) living near the settlers would be killed by their guns or dead from diseases that we caught from them..."

Howard Zinn states on Page 12 in his epic work *The People's History of the United States*, "These were the violent beginnings of an intricate system of technology, business, politics, and culture that would dominate the world..."

So, who were the real "savages?"

What about today?

And it continues unabated today, dear one. It's said that "history is written by the victors, not the vanquished." My intent here in utilizing many resources has been to revise the deliberate historical error and tell a bit of the whole story, the true truth.

What if a foreign nation, say the Russians, came to invade America and began stealing coveted resources, killing the native people including women and children, and taking all the American land for their own demented use? What would modern Americans do? I think we know the answer. Obviously, there would be no First Thanksgiving for the Russians under any circumstances.

Does anyone still want to "make America great again?"

Again we declare confidently it's right and proper to be thankful for all your blessings, and even to celebrate that fact routinely! The real and true "little Christ," the Biblical Christian, is commanded to give both thanksgiving and the sacrifice of praise without ceasing to the Almighty Creator God of the universe.

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Written by Marc White, Executive Director

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Ephesians 2:8-10 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

“Oh, we invited the Indians to share our food.”

(Or did they?)



**The Truth About
The First
Thanksgiving**

