

The Governor Bradford Inn

By Claire Pavlik Purgus for Holden & Associates Advertising, Inc.

Lapping the shores of historic Plymouth, Massachusetts, the ocean gurgles and churns, whispering centuries-old tales of the land and sea that was home to America's earliest settlers. The settlers, now known as the Pilgrims, sailed to the new land in 1620 on the *Mayflower*. Originally bound for Virginia, they landed instead in the sheltered waters of Plymouth Harbor. Several days of surveying led the settlers to the site known today as Plymouth's Harbor District, where they disembarked for the first time on what one can assume was a blustery, cold December day.

The settlers, led by Separatist John Carver, set about planning the new settlement and building homes and communal buildings. It was a treacherous first winter and many fell fatally ill. When John Carver died, months after their initial disembarkation, William Bradford was elected to replace him, and re-elected nearly every year thereafter until his death in 1657, at the age of 68.

William Bradford features prominently in early American history. He was lauded by his peers as an exemplary leader and well-regarded by the Pilgrims and Native Americans alike. The "First Thanksgiving" was celebrated in the fall of 1621, in gratitude and thanksgiving for the harvest and good fortunes of Plimouth Colony. When Chief Massasoit of the Wampanoags, his wife, and ninety men arrived at the colony, coincidentally on the same day as the feast, Bradford welcomed them to share in the banquet. An account of this occasion was written by William Bradford in his journal, which he kept during his thirty-year tenure at Plimouth Colony, and published in *Of Plymouth Plantation*.

Two years later in 1623 during the early years of his governance of Plimouth Colony, Governor Bradford married Alice Carpenter Southworth. Their wedding celebrations, which were attended by Massasoit and a large number of Wampanoags, included a marriage feast of turkey and venison reminiscent of the First Thanksgiving.

Plimouth Colony and other settlements in the area grew in strength and numbers as the years passed. Land became an issue of contention between the settlers and Native Americans. In 1686, the entire region was reorganized under a single government, only to be dissolved by the Revolution of 1688. Although Plimouth Colony returned to self-rule, its existence finally came to a close in 1691, when it was annexed to Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Much that makes up American tradition began in Plimouth Colony. Today, Plymouth is home to some 7,600 residents and remains a charming and popular destination for tourists seeking America's roots.

Overlooking the historic and beautiful Plymouth Harbor is the Governor Bradford Inn. Many of its ninety-one spacious rooms boast splendid views of the harbor and *The Mayflower II*. It is located within easy walking distance to waterfront activities and historical attractions,

including Plymouth Rock, *The Mayflower II*, and Pilgrim Hall Museum, as well as to numerous distinctive shops and restaurants. A special history package includes admission to the most popular attractions.

The Governor Bradford Inn caters to individuals and small or large groups, with amenities that include a heated outdoor swimming pool, complimentary continental breakfast, complimentary Internet, and business and fitness centers. 800-332-1620 | 98 Water Street, Plymouth, MA 02360