



Today's story is taken from The Heath Readers, Sixth Reader, the story is by Edward Everett. Everyone of fifty years or above may be very familiar with the history of the pilgrims coming to America in order to practice their religion in freedom and peace; however, those of lesser age lack the same benefit we had of learning the glorious history of America from The courageous voyage of Columbus, till the Mayflower and other ships of Godly purpose sailed from Europe to the New World; nor will they have a good understanding of our Founding Fathers, the sacrifices made by principled men (both rich and poor) who won our Liberty on snow hardened battlefields. I submit this story as a step forward in reminding us of our Godly heritage.

Our land is permeated by great monuments to our Founders. Those who hate our Liberty and Freedoms guaranteed by the U.S. constitution would, like ISIS, attempt to destroy every memorial of our glorious past; but honor and reason compel us to REMEMBER!

Jerry L. Ogles

W*HEN your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever. (Josh 4:6-7)*

Pilgrims of 1620

Methinks I see one solitary, adventurous vessel, the "Mayflower" of a forlorn hope, freighted with the prospects of a future state, and bound across the unknown sea. I behold it pursuing, with a thousand misgivings, the uncertain, the tedious voyage. Suns rise and set, weeks and months pass, and winter surprises them on the deep, but

brings them not the sight of the wished-for shore. I see them now, scantily supplied with provisions, crowded almost to suffocation, in their ill-stored prison, delayed by calms, pursuing a circuitous route, — and now, driven in fury before the raging tempest, on the high and giddy waves.

The awful voice of the storm brawls through the rigging. The laboring masts seem straining from their base; the dismal sound of the pumps is heard; the ship leaps, as it were, madly, from billow to billow; the ocean breaks, and settles with engulfing floods over the floating deck, and beats against the staggering vessel.

I see them escape from these perils, pursuing their all but desperate undertaking, and landed at last, after a five months' passage, on the ice-clad rocks of Plymouth, — weak and weary from the voyage, poorly armed, scantily provisioned, without shelter, without means, surrounded by hostile tribes.

Shut now the volume of history, and tell me, on any principle of human probability, what shall be the fate of this handful of adventurers? Tell me, man of military science, in how many months were they all swept off by the thirty savage tribes, enumerated within the early limits of New England? Tell me, politician, how long did a shadow of a colony on which your conventions and treaties had not smiled, languish on the distant coast? Student of history, compare for me the baffled projects, the deserted settlements, the abandoned adventures of other times, and find the parallel of this.

Was it the winter's storm, beating upon the houseless heads of women and children? was it hard labor and spare meals? was it disease? was it the tomahawk? was it the deep malady of a blighted hope, a ruined enterprise, and a broken heart, aching in its last moments at the recollection of the loved and left, beyond the sea? was it some, or all of these united, that hurried this forsaken company to their melancholy fate?

And is it possible, that neither of these causes, that not all combined, were able to blast this bud of hope? Is it possible, that, from a beginning so feeble, so frail, so worthy not so much of admiration as of pity, there has gone forth a progress so steady, a growth so wonderful, an expansion so ample, a reality so important, a promise yet to be fulfilled, so glorious?

Edward Everett (1794-1865) was a distinguished American orator and statesman. He filled at various times the positions of President of Harvard College, Minister to England, and Secretary of State.

Postscript:

Unfortunately, the author failed to indicate the reason for the survival of that tiny host from Europe's sod who overcame tremendous dangers and obstacles in the founding of a colony — it was clearly the Hand of an overseeing Providence that laid the Ancient Landmark on these wilderness shores just as surely as that same Providence guided and protected Israel in the Wilderness Journey.

Jerry L. Ogles