

## William Brewster

William Brewster was born at Scrooby, Nottinghamshire, England, probably between 1560 and 1566. As a young man, he attended Cambridge University but did not graduate. He then served as an assistant to William Davison, one of Queen Elizabeth I's secretaries of state, accompanying him on a diplomatic mission to Holland. After Davison fell from favor (due to the execution of Mary Queen of Scots), Brewster returned to Scrooby and served as postmaster.

William Brewster was one of the original members of the religious Separatist congregation at Scrooby that became the nucleus of the Pilgrim church. When the community first attempted to emigrate to Holland in 1607, Brewster and several others were jailed for a short time. He was released and successfully emigrated in 1608. After his arrival in Holland, Brewster served as Elder of the Pilgrim Separatist congregation.

To support his family, Brewster worked in Leiden as a printer in Leiden.

When Brewster and other members of the Pilgrim community emigrated to America in 1620 on the Mayflower, their pastor John Robinson remained behind in Leiden. In the absence of an ordained minister, Brewster was the much-loved and respected religious leader of Plymouth Colony.

Brewster's wife Mary was also a Mayflower passenger. She died in 1627. William and Mary Brewster had 6 children: Jonathan, Patience, Fear, Love, an unnamed child who died young, and Wrestling. Love and Wrestling Brewster arrived in Plymouth with their parents on the Mayflower. Jonathan, Fear, and Love Brewster also settled in Plymouth but emigrated slightly later.

William Brewster died in 1644. His inventory of several hundred books in both English and Latin attests to his scholarship, his deep love of learning and his spirituality.

William Brewster died without a will.