Plymouth Talk

When our Pilgrim ancestors first saw dry land, they probably cheered. But if you’re expecting that they shouted words like “Chill,” or “Dude”, think again. In 1621, the Pilgrims spoke 17th century English, and this is what they would have said. Try it!

We say:

“How are you?”
“Good morrow”
“How now?”
“What cheer?”

“Congratulations!”
“Huzzah!”

“Excuse me”
“Pray pardon me”

“Goodbye”
“Fare thee well”
“Pray remember me”

Pilgrims said:

Fireplace = Hearth
Stew = Pottage
Pants = Breeches
Backward = Arsy varsy
Cat = Mouser
Skirt = Petticoat
Tic tac toe = Naughts and crosses
Cloth rag dolls = Poppets
Jokes = Jests
Tongue twisters = Giffes

As we all know, the Pilgrims also would have perished without the help of local Native American tribes. Here are a few important Wampanoag terms:

Weachimin = Corn
Tuppaquamash = Beans
Nokehig = A fine corn flour
Mishoon = Wampanoag dugout canoes, large logs burned and then scraped out
Patuxet = The Wampanoag Indian term for the area the settlers named Plymouth
Samp = A thick porridge made from ground Indian corn, sometimes with nuts and berries added