

# Why Pilgrims Went to Amsterdam

## *Separatist Pilgrims went to Amsterdam before Coming to America for Religious Reasons*

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The pilgrims who went to Amsterdam before coming to the New World did so because at that time they needed immediate refuge. Local authorities rewarded spies and informers who helped locate and capture these separatists for practicing their religion. Despite the dangers of discovery, the pilgrims continued their religious meetings. Eventually the authorities caught, imprisoned, and or killed members of the group.

In 1608, separatists (pilgrims) decided to come to the New World because they wanted to get away from a government run church that captured, killed, and imprisoned citizens it could not influence and control. To the pilgrims, giving up their worship meant going against their conscience and Jesus their supreme master. They were adamant about not giving up their religion or going against their beliefs.

Separatists Christians lived in northern and southern areas of England. A group of the northern separatists, living in a place called Scrooby, was some of whom went to Amsterdam prior to coming to America. Some of the Scrooby separatists pilgrims were later named "Pilgrim Fathers".

Amsterdam was but a stepping-stone to safety and freedom to worship Jesus as they pleased. At that time, Amsterdam was a best bet for those seeking freedom of religion. Amsterdam housed Catholics, Roman Catholics, Jews, Turks, Moslems,

Anabaptists, Protestants and more.

Northern, Scrooby, pilgrims had tried to go to Boston but English catchpoles – employed by the sheriff – captured them, robbed them, and hauled them off to prison. Sadly, no separatist pilgrim had immunity from the sheriff's minions. Catchpoles took men, women, and children worshipers during their raids.

Following their capture, the Lords of Council committed the separatist pilgrims to prison where they stayed for a month. When the guards finally set free all but seven pilgrims, they released the falsely imprisoned citizens without food, water, or any type of assistance, to find their way home. Lest not forget, the captors robbed the pilgrims prior to jailing them. Therefore, when released, the pilgrims had nothing more than clothes on their backs. Men, women, and children had to beg for food in order to survive their way back home.

The freed pilgrims tried to make way for Holland via Boston and places called Hull and Grimsby. Their intent was to travel together on a large boat. After their efforts failed more than once, they resorted to traveling separately in smaller boats and finally made it to Amsterdam. In addition, at a later date, other members captured in Scrooby made their way to Amsterdam.