

## Modern Translation of Edward Winslow's Letter

This is part of the letter written by Edward Winslow in 1621. The spelling and words have been changed to make it easier for people today to understand.

“Our harvest being gotten in, our Governor sent four men hunting wild fowl, so that we might have a special celebration together, after we had brought in our crops. Those four in one day killed as much wild fowl that it and some other food served the community almost a week. At that time, along with other recreations, we practiced shooting our muskets. Many of the Wampanoag came to the town including their leader Massasoit with about ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted. And they went out and killed five deer which they brought to the Plantation and presented to Governor Bradford and Captain Standish and others. Although food is not always so plentiful as it was at that time, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from starvation, that we often wish you could share our plenty.”

---

**Bestowed:** gave to; presented as a gift

**Captain:** military leader. The military leader at Plymouth was Captain Miles Standish. He was hired to train the colonists to protect themselves and the town.

**Company:** a group. “A company of men” is a small group of men.

**Exercised their arms:** practiced shooting their guns. Guns are sometimes called “arms.”

**Far from want:** not hungry. They did not want (need) food.

**Fowling:** hunting for birds such as geese, ducks, turkeys, pigeons, or swans. These kinds of birds are called “fowl.”

**Fruit of our labors:** the result of our work; the harvest

**Governor:** the elected leader of Plymouth Colony. William Bradford was the governor of Plymouth Colony at the time of the 1621 harvest celebration.

**Harvest:** grains, vegetables, and fruits gathered from fields or gardens at the end of the growing season

**Massasoit:** the Sachem, or leader, of the Wampanoag people at Sowams (today's Bristol, RI). Massasoit means “great leader.” Massasoit's real name was Ousamequin, which means “yellow feather.”

**Partakers of our plenty:** people who could share, or take part of, the plentiful supply of food

**Plantation:** a place of planting. The colonists at Plymouth (and other colonies such as Jamestown) were farmers. They called their settlements plantations. They sometimes called themselves “planters.”