

The Venture of 1620

Character Descriptions

FEMALE ONLY

MRS. GREENWOOD

Mrs. Greenwood is the wife of John Greenwood. Her husband has been in prison for nearly 6 years for reading the Bible in a friend's home. During her husband's time in prison, she has helped him and his friend Henry Barrow, by being a lookout, and by smuggling papers that they have written out of the prison. Towards the end of her scene she gets the news that her husband will be executed in a few hours. Choose one of your strongest actresses. Someone with maturity, who can show Mrs. Greenwood's grief with sincerity, and who can start the production off with strength.

MOTHER

The mother of William and Alice Bradford. Passes away at the beginning of the production. Choose an actress, who can look weak and sick. Must be able to speak loudly while still sounding sick.

YOUNG ALICE

A young Alice Bradford, the sister of William Bradford. She is concerned about her brother's health, and his involvement with the Separatist movement. Choose a younger looking actress who can still deliver lines with strength, weight, and seriousness. Should look similar to whoever is cast as ALICE. Should be shorter than whoever is cast as ALICE.

ALICE

Alice Bradford, the sister of William Bradford. Comes to warn her brother about the soldiers coming to arrest him. Wishes William would leave the Separatist movement to be with his family. Choose a strong actress who can show Alice's determination, and can also plead with William to come home. Should look similar to YOUNG ALICE. Should be taller than YOUNG ALICE.

JOHANNE

An unrefined housekeeper for the Bradford family. Prone to loud and dramatic reactions. Choose someone who looks older than YOUNG ALICE and YOUNG WILLIAM, who is loud and has good comedic timing.

MRS. BREWSTER

The Wife of William Brewster, and mother of Jonathan and Patience Brewster. Surrogate mother to William Bradford. A mature and motherly woman. Choose one of your strongest actresses with a motherly presence. Should be able to act with kindness and sensitivity, but also speak loudly and command attention when necessary.

PATIENCE

Patience Brewster, the daughter of Elder and Mrs. Brewster. Sister of Jonathan Brewster. Warns her father of soldiers coming to raid their house. Choose an actress who can speak loudly and urgently. Should be able to show desperation, fear, and sorrow.

MRS. CLIFTON

The wife of Richard Clifton, one of the separatist pastors. An older woman, with courage, strength and maturity. Choose someone with a mature presence who can speak with strength.

MRS. ROBINSON

The wife of John Robinson, one of the separatist pastors. When William and Dorothy set off on the Mayflower, they leave their 3-yr old son, John, with Mr. and Mrs. Robinson. Choose someone who can look comforting and motherly.

MRS. CARVER

The wife of John Carver, the future governor of Plymouth. A leader amongst the women. Choose someone strong who can lead with kindness.

DOROTHY

The wife of William Bradford. Fearful of the dangerous voyage, she convinces her husband William to leave their 3-yr old son, John, in Holland while they sail to the new world. However, when they set sail, she comes to deeply regret this decision, wishing that she had stayed in Holland with him. Choose one of your strongest actresses, who is sensitive and sincere. Someone who can show Dorothy's anguish in her decision.

ANNE TILLEY

A young pilgrim woman, who is concerned about the many dangers and complications of moving to Holland. Choose an actress who can project.

SAMANTHA

A pilgrim girl who feels the weight of the move to Holland. Choose someone who can project and show fear and longing.

MRS. MULLINS

Mother of Pricilla Mullins. A practical woman, concerned by the dangers of their potential journey. Choose someone who can project and speak with weight and maturity.

PRICILLA

Pricilla Mullins, daughter of Mrs. Mullins. Future wife of John Alden. Is threatened by Sailors aboard the Mayflower, and rescued by John Alden. Her scene and character arc is brief, but is important, so that the production ends with a sense of hope for the future. Choose someone who is smaller than the sailors, and can look fearful of them, but who can also project, and take the audience through Pricilla's arc of falling in love with John Alden.

DESIRE

A pilgrim who encourages everyone to quote a psalm during the storm. Choose someone who can yell.

SARAH

One of Dorothy's friends. Kind and considerate. Choose someone who can project and can sound kind and caring.

FAITH

One of Dorothy's friends. A little bit oblivious. Not good at reading the room. Choose someone who can be loud, with good comedic timing.

LADY 1

A woman at court who is being entertained by King James. Loud, flirtatious, and obnoxious. Laughs loudly. Choose someone who can be loud, dramatic, and silly.

WARDEN

The haggard, and grimy warden of the women's prison. Hunched over, mean and nasty. Choose a girl who is physically intimidating. Must be able to be loud, rough and mean.

WAITRESS

A waitress in the tavern. Blunt and a little bit sarcastic. Not too happy with the pilgrims coming into the tavern without buying anything. Choose someone with a little bit of sass and good comedic timing.

JOSAIN

Wife of Captain Christopher Jones. A more high-class lady. Poised and controlled. Choose someone who can sound caring, can project, and can look regal and poised.

OLD WOMAN

An old woman, who owns an inn. Is currently hiding Elder Brewster. Very old, and almost deaf. Cleans her furniture by spitting on it, then wiping it with a rag. Choose someone with a good sense of humor, who can sound old, and has good physical comedy.

WOMAN 1

A pilgrim who is concerned about the voyage to Holland. Choose someone who can speak loudly.

WOMAN 2

A pilgrim who is concerned about the voyage to Holland. Choose someone who can speak loudly.

WOMAN 3

A pilgrim voting on whether or not to sail to the New World. Choose someone who can speak loudly.

MALE ONLY

GREENWOOD

John Greenwood. Imprisoned for reading the Bible in a friend's house. A man of steadfastness, courage, and conviction who is eventually martyred for the faith. Choose a strong actor, who can speak with strength and intensity. Must be able to take us through Greenwood's arc of learning about his impending execution, and comforting his wife through it.

BARROW

Henry Barrow. Imprisoned for the faith. Continuing to write letters and petitions to fellow church leaders while in prison. Gets the news that he and John Greenwood are to be executed in a few hours. A leader with strength and courage. Has lived under the strain of physical abuse, and psychological torture, and is ready to give his life for the faith. Choose a strong actor, who can portray the stress and exhaustion that Barrow is under, while also showing his strength and resolve.

JOHN SMYTH

Visits Greenwood and Barrow in prison, helps them smuggle one last letter out of prison before they are executed. Pastors his own church, but helps Elder Brewster and his congregation a great deal. Choose a young man with strength and sensitivity, who can show compassion and grief as he says goodbye to Greenwood and Barrow before they are executed.

JAILOR

A grimy, unkempt jailor of Greenwood and Barrow's prison. Predatory, and money hungry. Choose someone who can be loud, sound rough and ragged, and act gross and uncivilized.

SOLDIER I

A high-ranking soldier. Rough, and demanding. Takes pleasure in threatening and bullying those beneath him. Choose someone with a strong voice who can look physically intimidating.

YOUNG WILLIAM

A young William Bradford. Still getting over a long period of sickness. Has a great desire to learn more about God. Choose a young man with spiritual sensitivity. Must be able to take us through Young William's arc of searching for answers, and eventually accepting the Lord as his Savior. Should look similar to whoever is cast as WILLIAM. Should be shorter than whoever is cast as WILLIAM.

WILLIAM

William Bradford. Pilgrim, and future governor of Plymouth. The production mainly follows William on his journey of becoming a Christian, then joining the Separatists, and choosing to move first to Holland, then to the New World. Chooses to go to Holland, even though it means leaving his entire family behind. Then chooses to go to the New World, even though it means leaving his 3-yr old son, John, behind. Choose one of your strongest actors. Someone who can lead, and can display strength, conviction, and sensitivity.

YOUNG JONATHAN

A young Jonathan Brewster. Son of Elder and Mrs. Brewster, brother of Patience Brewster. Close friend of William Bradford. First meets Young William while keeping watch outside of Scrooby Manor. Choose a young man with strength and boldness. Should look similar to whoever is cast as JONATHAN. Should be shorter than whoever is cast as JONATHAN.

JONATHAN

Jonathan Brewster. Son of Elder and Mrs. Brewster, brother of Patience Brewster. Close friend of William Bradford. Often helps defend his home while his father is in hiding, and keeps watch during the different meetings that the congregation has. Choose a young man who can speak loudly and with strength. Should look similar to whoever is cast as YOUNG JONATHAN. Should be taller than whoever is cast as YOUNG JONATHAN.

ELDER BREWSTER

William Brewster. The Post-Master of Scrooby Manor. When the congregation is forced out of Babworth, he opens up his home for them to begin meeting there. Throughout the production, he is often on the run, and must go into hiding as he is wanted for printing books and tracts against the Church of England. Becomes the leader of the Pilgrim's when they finally board the

Mayflower. Choose one of your strongest actors. Someone who can speak with volume and authority. Should be able to lead, and command attention, but also show sensitivity, compassion, or humor when the time calls for it.

CLIFTON

Richard Clifton. One of the pastors of the Pilgrim congregation. Speaks out against the Church of England, and encourages the people to move to Holland. Choose someone with maturity, who can lead and speak loudly with authority.

ROBINSON

John Robinson. One of the pastors of the Pilgrim congregation. Urges the congregation to make the journey to the New World, but when the majority choose to stay in Holland, he must stay there to continue pastoring them. Choose someone with strength, maturity and sensitivity.

CARVER

John Carver. First governor of Plymouth. Throughout the production we watch as he and Robert Cushman work to plan the journey to the New World. Helps inspire Captain Jones to agree to the voyage. Choose someone with energy, strength, and sensitivity. Should be able to inspire hope and excitement as he delivers his lines.

CUSHMAN

Robert Cushman. A mild-mannered, and gentle man. Despite this, he works diligently to serve Elder Brewster and to help John Carver plan the voyage to the New World. Eventually the stress and pressure of the journey become too much for him to bear, and he makes the decision to stay behind in Holland. Choose a strong actor who can show Cushman's kindness, but can also show the stress and pressure that he is under.

SCOTTISH MINISTER

A minister from Scotland who is visiting Elder Brewster at Scrooby Manor. He is caught with books and tracts opposing the Church of England. After his capture he is taken to the Tower Prison and tortured. One of his ears is cut off, his nose is split open, and he is branded on the forehead. Choose a student with energy. It is preferable if they can do a Scottish accent.

JAMES

King James I. Focused on pleasure and entertainment. Unconcerned with the situation of the people. Vindictive, demanding, and irritable. Has a sharp wit, and a flaring temper. Slightly flamboyant, but not feminine. Choose one of your strongest actors, with energy, charisma, and comedic timing. Should be able to portray King James with layers, and not as a 1-dimensional villain.

SECRETARY

The exasperated secretary of King James. Has the unfortunate job of trying to keep the King on task, and trying to keep him pleased. Choose someone who can banter with King James and has good comedic timing.

BISHOP

The groveling Bishop of King James. More of a “yes man” than the Secretary. However, in the end, he does help convince King James to allow the Pilgrim’s to leave and settle in the New World. Choose someone who can grovel and has good comedic timing.

DUTCH CAPTAIN

Captain of the ship that is supposed to take the Pilgrims from England to Holland. Impatient and angry. He is stressed, as he fears that the English will seize his boat if they are caught. He chooses to leave the women and children behind to be arrested. Choose an actor with a lot of energy and body control who can take charge and be urgent, angry, and demanding.

JUDGE

The judge who is called to sentence the Pilgrim women, after they are caught trying to escape England. The women have not actually committed a crime, so they can’t stay in prison, but they’ve also sold their homes so they have nowhere to go. The judge is exasperated and annoyed by the ridiculous situation. Choose an actor with a good sense of humor and comedic timing.

PHILLIP

Friend of William Bradford. Teasing William about his feelings for Dorothy. Choose someone with comedic timing.

WINSLOW

Edward Winslow. Joins the Pilgrim’s congregation in Holland. Is an experienced printer who helps Elder Brewster continue printing tracts and books. Escapes with part of the printing press during a raid. Choose someone who can speak with volume and energy.

BREWER

Thomas Brewer. A member of the congregation who is imprisoned after helping Elder Brewster and Edward Winslow escape with parts of the printing press. Choose someone with energy who can speak loudly and with urgency.

JONES

Christopher Jones, Captain of the Mayflower. A seasoned sailor, who doesn’t feel at home in high society. Makes the decision to take one last adventure, and sail the Pilgrims to the New World. Choose someone with a mature and commanding presence. Should be able to speak loudly, and command attention.

WESTON

A scheming but charismatic merchant always looking for how to make quick money. Is helping the Pilgrims find a ship and get to the New World, but only because he thinks he can make money off of them. Choose someone with strong presence and charisma.

STANDISH

Myles Standish. An English military officer, who was hired as a military advisor for Plymouth Colony. Commander of the Plymouth Colony militia. Assistant Governor, and treasurer. Choose someone with a loud, commanding voice.

JOHN

John Bradford. The 3-yr old son of William and Dorothy Bradford. They choose to leave him behind in Holland when they sail to the New World. **CANNOT BE PLAYED BY A HIGH SCHOOLER.** A younger sibling, elementary student, or another child will need to be pulled for this role. We recommend a child between the ages of 4 – 7. Needs to look about 3. Will have to say a few short lines.

JOHN ALDEN

A cooper who was hired on the Mayflower to maintain the barrels. Is moved by the Pilgrim's display of faith, and decides to stay in the New World with them at the end of the voyage. Defends Pricilla Mullins from the other sailors. Choose someone strong and athletic looking, who is able to show John's integrity, and good heart.

SAILOR II

A cruel sailor with evil intentions. Threatens Pricilla, but is stopped by John Alden. Choose someone who can be rough, loud, intimidating, and mean.

SAILOR III

A cruel sailor with evil intentions. Threatens Pricilla, but is stopped by John Alden. Choose someone who can be rough, loud, intimidating, and mean.

SAILOR IV

The ring-leader of the sailors. Handsome, profane, and cruel. Is so wicked, that the Pilgrim's believe it to be the providence of God when he is the first to die of sickness. Choose someone athletic and good looking. Should look like he would be able to boss the other sailors around. A lot of his action will happen during a voiceover, so he should be able to act physically and not just vocally.

MALE OR FEMALE

MR. MARTIN (MRS. MARTIN)

A pilgrim who is skeptical about the financial situation when they sail to the new world. Choose someone who can speak loudly, and sound agitated.

MALE roles that can be played by FEMALES

*Please note, the following roles should be cast as guys if at all possible. However if absolutely necessary they can be played by girls. Please note that the roles will still be portrayed as male even if a girl is playing it. Any girl playing one of these roles will likely have her hair up in a hat, and possibly be given facial hair.

SOLDIER II

A cruel soldier. Choose someone who can be loud, menacing, and physically intimidating.

SOLDIER III

A soldier. Choose someone who can be loud and physically intimidating.

MATE 1

A crewman on the Dutch Captain's ship. Choose someone who can speak loudly, with urgency.

SAILOR I

A sailor aboard the Mayflower. Will have to yell above the storm sound effects. Choose someone who can be loud.

BOATSWAIN

Lead actor in the play that Captain Jones is attending. Choose someone funny, who can be loud, and overly dramatic

MASTER

Actor in the play that Captain Jones is attending. Choose someone funny, who can be loud and overly dramatic.

GONZALO

Actor in the play that Captain Jones is attending. Choose someone funny, who can be loud and overly dramatic.

ALONSO

Actor in the play that Captain Jones is attending. Choose someone funny, who can be loud and overly dramatic, or someone who can be dead pan.

ANTONIO

Actor in the play that Captain Jones is attending. Choose someone funny, who can be loud and overly dramatic, or someone who can be deadpan.