This Week in History:

THE MAYFLOWER AND MY BONE TO PICK WITH PLYMOUTH ROCK

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In the 1934 musical comedy "Anything Goes," there is always a line that stands out among the rest:

"Times have changed / And we've often rewound the clock / Since the Puritans got the shock / When they landed on Plymouth Rock."

Over the years I have heard this lyric many times, mostly because of my staunch love for Cole Porter tunes, and until very recently I had believed it to be factual. I would imagine the Puritans reaching the Americas, their boat making landfall and using the rock as a commemoration to the end of their sea faring journey. Much to my dismay, I was wrong.

Welcome back to another year of This Week in History. Over this past summer, I have missed my quill and ink and am positively ecstatic to write about weekly historical events once more. For our first edition of the Fall Semester, I am going to discuss the Mayflower and the sheer amount of Revolutionary propaganda that has allowed us to believe that Plymouth Rock was the spot where they actually landed.

On Sept. 16, 1620, the Mayflower set sail from Plymouth, England carrying 102 passengers. 35 of which were part of the religious Separatist movement, who were somewhat extremist and sought to leave the jurisdiction of, in their minds, the corrupt Church of England.

According to the article, Mayflower departs England from history.com, the settlers had planned to go to Jamestown, the newly formed colony in Virginia. However, due to rough seas and storms, they were blown off course and wound up in what would become Massachusetts.

Now, I won't bore you with details of the Mayflower Compact and such, as I'm sure you have heard that detail in every U.S. History Class ever. However, I do want to touch upon the fact that when they made landfall, they didn't even hit Plymouth. No, the pilgrims aboard the Mayflower first landed in Provincetown.

Now as someone who loves Provincetown and goes whenever I can, imagine my shock as I sit in one of the towns many gay bars and found out that the pilgrims first landed here. Lied to, cheated and frustrated were a few words that came to mind. As a result, I decided to continue pulling the string that would unravel the sweater that was my perception of Massachusetts history, and I began to ask, where did all this Plymouth Rock business come from then?

According to the Pilgrim Hall Museum in their article, The History of Plymouth Rock, there are two primary sources that describe the settlers' arrival in Plymouth, Mass., both of which contained no mention of a rock. The perception of the rock as we know it today came primarily orally, from a man named Thomas Faunce.

In 1741, over 120 years after the journey of the Mayflower, a 94-year-old Faunce was informed that a wharf was to be constructed over the rock. He expressed a strong desire to see it one last time before construction began as his father had told him that it was the spot their forefathers had first arrived on, pointing out the rock at the base of Cole's Hill.



Faunce was about 6 years old when his father died and was born in 1647, 27 years after the Mayflower first made landfall, sounds like a credible source to me.

Faunce gave a telling of the story on the beach to townspeople after his dramatic journey to the shore. The story was then preserved by Ephraim Spooner, who was also around 6 years old at the time of the event.

The first published account of Plymouth Rock would print in 1832, written by Dr. James Thacher, a lover of history and doctor in Plymouth who based the rock on Spooner and Faunce's account.

The story of the rock also acquired a patriotic tone during the Revolutionary War, as Faunce's story spread. In 1774, the town decided to consecrate the rock, enlisting a team of oxen to relocate it to the town's "liberty pole." During this maneuver, the rock split in half, which many town folks took as an ominous sign of separation from the British Empire. As a result of the schism, the town decided to leave half the rock on the beach and take the other half to the liberty pole.

As time goes on, the rock is moved around town, broken a bit more during its removal, and so on and so forth. The date 1620 wasn't even carved into the stone until the late 1800s.

To be entirely honest, the whole story sounds like a load of baloney. I'm glad that I never even made the trip to see the rock because the only formal evidence we have is based on a 94-year-old's memory from when he was 6 years old. If anything, Provincetown should be the area people visit if they would like to see the spot where the first pilgrims landed. That being said, I am sad to lose the magic that was Plymouth Rock, however I look forward to bringing this up insufferably at parties.

Thanks for reading this week's issue and hopefully you found this just as bizarre as I did.



An art piece displayed in Provincetown, Mass., describing the town's cultural and social differences from its Puritanical origins. The town at the end of Cape Cod is where the Mayflower first made landfall when traveling to North America, before the Pilgrims reached Plymouth, Mass. PHOTO BY ISABELLA KULAWIK, MANAGING EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Leave the game before the game leaves you



The album cover for "Anatomy of a Brief Romance" features a silhouette of a person walking down a red and white circular covered walkway. The artwork accompanies the review for the Bloc Party album.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SPOTIFY

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It has been 21 years since Bloc Party released their legendary album "Silent Alarm," which helped define the indie rock era of the 2000s. This Friday, Bloc Party returned with their seventh studio album and first in four years: "Anatomy of a Brief Romance." Is Bloc Party back? Or have they fumbled once again? Let's dig in.

Lead singer Keke Okereke told NME earlier this year that this record is their "most personal to date." The LP opens with "22.01.22"; this song serves as the beginning of a relationship, and that feeds into the overwhelming theme of the album. Okereke called it a concept album about the end of a long-term relationship and the beginning of a new one. This track however is bland and uninspiring; Okereke's vocals sound very out of place, and there is a weird autotune vocal effect that does not sound good. Not a great start.

"Coming On Strong" immediately feels off, the instrumental is clunky, it wants to be dark and cool but sounds messy. Okereke's vocals come in, and he's off beat, like he cannot find the rhythm. The chorus comes and goes; it's so unmemorable that I didn't realize it was the chorus until it came back around. Then we get a useless guitar solo, and the song continues to meander on for another 50 seconds before thankfully ending.

"Love Bombs" starts off interesting; this little riff that plays at first is a bit appealing. Okereke kind of comes out here with a disco-inspired sound. We almost get some trap-like drumbeats, and Okereke sort of sing-rapping. His vocals so far have not been great. The chorus isn't awful; it's not an earworm though. The second verse feels like "Fairly Local" by Twenty-One Pilots but with worse lyrics somehow, and if Tyler Joseph was not a decent rapper. 'Love Bombs" is the best song so far, but that's not saying much.

"Pigwig" got a bit of attention on TikTok, not positive attention though; most people slandered it. However, "Pigwig "is not awful, this is Okereke's best vocal performance so far, the chorus is fun and the melody of the chorus is very pleasant. The lyrics on this track and most of the album are too detailed; there is no subtlety.

Okereke did tell NME that "Every lyric you're hearing on this record was something that actually happened to me. I had to tell the story, from start to finish." This is a sweet sentiment, but it does not work. There are a lot of odd lyric choices that don't sound good and are just oddly placed.

"Lagoon Blue" starts out like a slow ballad and is frustrating. Bloc Party is a band that delivers on more up-tempo, bright tracks, and then that opens them to make their lush ballads. If the quick tracks are not hitting, the ballads feel like a slog to get through. Out of all the ballads on the album, this track is the best. Is it a good song? I wouldn't go that far; it's fine. There are a few moments that feel as pretty as some classic Bloc Party. But overall, the song is in one ear out the other. This song is the biggest show of how Okereke's almost musical theater vocal delivery. The way he enunciates is very dramatic, and it can make his talk-singing feel very musical theater-esque. On the ballads, that can work, but for the tighter, quicker tracks, it just doesn't fit.

Tracks like "Muscleworks," "Clark Kent," "Worst Birthday" and "Not Your Problem" are either complete filler of awful. If they don't sound ugly, they sound cheap. They continue the clunkiness of the first half, overly detailed lyrics that get very grating. "Muscleworks" has a key change down a step that is very rough on the ears. "Not My Problem" is a huge lowlight, a repeating chorus that wasn't good the first time, a weak instrumental and Okereke just shouting anything that comes to his head. I would rather marathon Vortex at Carowinds than listen to this track ever again.

"Now We Can't Be Friends" has a nice build up but leads to absolutely nothing. It has no punch and desperately feels like it's missing something to make it fuller.

"Rotherhithe" feels like it was ripped straight out of a dramatic scene in an on-stage production. In the context of a Bloc Party album, it's not very ideal. I think Okereke should genuinely go write a musical; I think he would be great.

The final three tracks are all uninteresting and keep up the blandness of this album.

Overall, "Anatomy of a Brief Romance" is a huge miss from Bloc Party. This album is a mess, Okereke is honest, and I can admire that, but it does not work as a full-length Bloc Party album. Just go listen to the first two albums and pretend they stopped after that.

Score: 1/5