

It was therefore a bit of a surprise to me about 15 yrs. ago to see the Sat. Eve. Post, which was then very widely read, coming out in its Nov. issue with a big headline, "Let's Have No More Nonsense About the Pilgrims." It was an article written by someone who said it is perfectly ridiculous all this fuss being made about the Pilgrims. It said, after all their ancestors had been in Maine before the Pilgrims, <sup>and</sup> ~~so they said,~~ <sup>in</sup> Mass., and that their ancestors in Maine had received letters from England telling them about a group of poor people who were coming to Mass. and would probably have a tough time of it and they perhaps might look in on them and see if perhaps they could give them any help! They said their ancestors were catching fish and making a decent living in Maine at least as early as ~~the~~ when the Pilgrims came. Why all this fuss about the Pilgrims?

Well, I have here a little booklet which gives in handy form dates connected with the colonization of N. America. It is interesting as we look over it to see the many different efforts that were made to colonize here. As we know Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492. Well, the Pilgrims did not come until a 130 yrs. later. Think! That puts it back to about the time when the very first railroad was built in the USA. It seems like a long long time to us. Well it was that long a time between when Columbus discovered America and the time when the Pilgrims came. During that period there were many efforts made to establish colonies in N. America.

The Spaniards made various early efforts. As early as 1521 one hundred years before the Pilgrims, Ponce de Lion attempted to make a settlement in Florida. He was really interested in finding the Fountain of Youth. He did not find that, and he did not get a permanent settlement established. Another attempt was made seven years later, in 1541 the French tried to settle Canada. In 1565 the Spaniards actually founded St. Augustin in Florida. That is more than 50 yrs. before the Pilgrims came!

In 1582 Spanish monks planted N. Mexico and Arizona 40 yrs. before the Pilgrims came. In 1585 the English tried to make a settlement off the Carolina coast. In 1587 the first white child born in America was born there. That is 35 yrs. before the Pilgrims came. A Spanish settlement was made near Santa Fe New Mexico in 1598 20 yrs. before the Pilgrims came. In 1603 the French got establishments in Canada, that's nearly 20 yrs. before the Pilgrims came. In 1606 the English established a colony in Jamestown. Why then is so much attention given to the Pilgrims?

In the very year after the Pilgrims came the Dutch settled in New York. Why so much fuss about the Pilgrims? That was a question I think very few Americans know the answer to. They've heard a lot about how wonderful the Pilgrims came and just why was it important.