

**UNDER A COLONIAL
ROOF-TREE; FIRESIDE
CHRONICLES OF EARLY
NEW ENGLAND. [1891]**

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Under a Colonial Roof-Tree; Fireside Chronicles of Early New England. [1891] by Arria S. Huntington

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ARRIA S. HUNTINGTON

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THE OLD HOUSE

UNDER A COLONIAL
ROOF-TREE

37893

FIRESIDE CHRONICLES OF EARLY
NEW ENGLAND

BY
ARRIA S. HUNTINGTON

The great eventful Present hides the Past; but through the din
Of its loud life hints and echoes from the life behind steal in;
And the lore of home and fireside, and the legendary rhyme,
Make the task of duty lighter which the true man owes his time
J. G. WHITTIER



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UNDER A COLONIAL ROOF-TREE.

OUR ANCESTRY OF FREEMEN.

There has been no nation but, in the beginning of its history, there was the consciousness of a relation to a world which it did not conquer with its swords, and whose fruits it did not gather in its barns nor exchange in its markets. — MULFORD.

In the spring of 1630, the Winthrop fleet, departing from Plymouth, England, turned its course westward in the direction of the New World. Reaching the coast of the unexplored continent, the first to arrive in Massachusetts Bay was the large ship *Mary and John*, freighted with one hundred and forty passengers, "godly families and people," under the lead of their two ministers.

These colonists were men and women respectable in condition and lineage, possessed of fortitude, and moved by high moral purpose and strong religious devotion. Of their ten weeks on the ocean one of the number wrote: "So we came by the good hand of the Lord through the deeps comfortably, having Preaching and expounding of the Word of God every day."

At the end of May they found themselves near

the shore; but instead of anchoring in Charles River as was intended, the captain disembarked the whole company in a wild spot at Nantasket, where they were left to shift for themselves. A week later, a day of rest and thanksgiving celebrated their settlement at Dorchester, in which place permanent dwellings were erected during the summer months.

A winter of severe privation followed. Their historian says: "They suffered Hunger and saw no hope in an Eye of Reason to be supplied, only by Clams and Muscles and Fish. It was not accounted a strange thing in those Days to drink Water and to eat Samp or Hominie without Butter and Milk."

It is related that "a good man, who had asked his neighbor to a dish of clams, after dinner returned thanks to God, who had given them to suck of the abundance of the seas and of treasure hid in the sands."

Even groundnuts and acorns were articles of food, and the Indians who brought their own stores of corn were welcomed as benefactors.

Yet the minds of these high-spirited adventurers were not occupied alone with material necessities or daunted by discomforts. Their deepest concern was for security in political and religious privileges. With their Anglo-Saxon birth-right of liberty came a conviction of their right to self-government. The belief of the Puritans