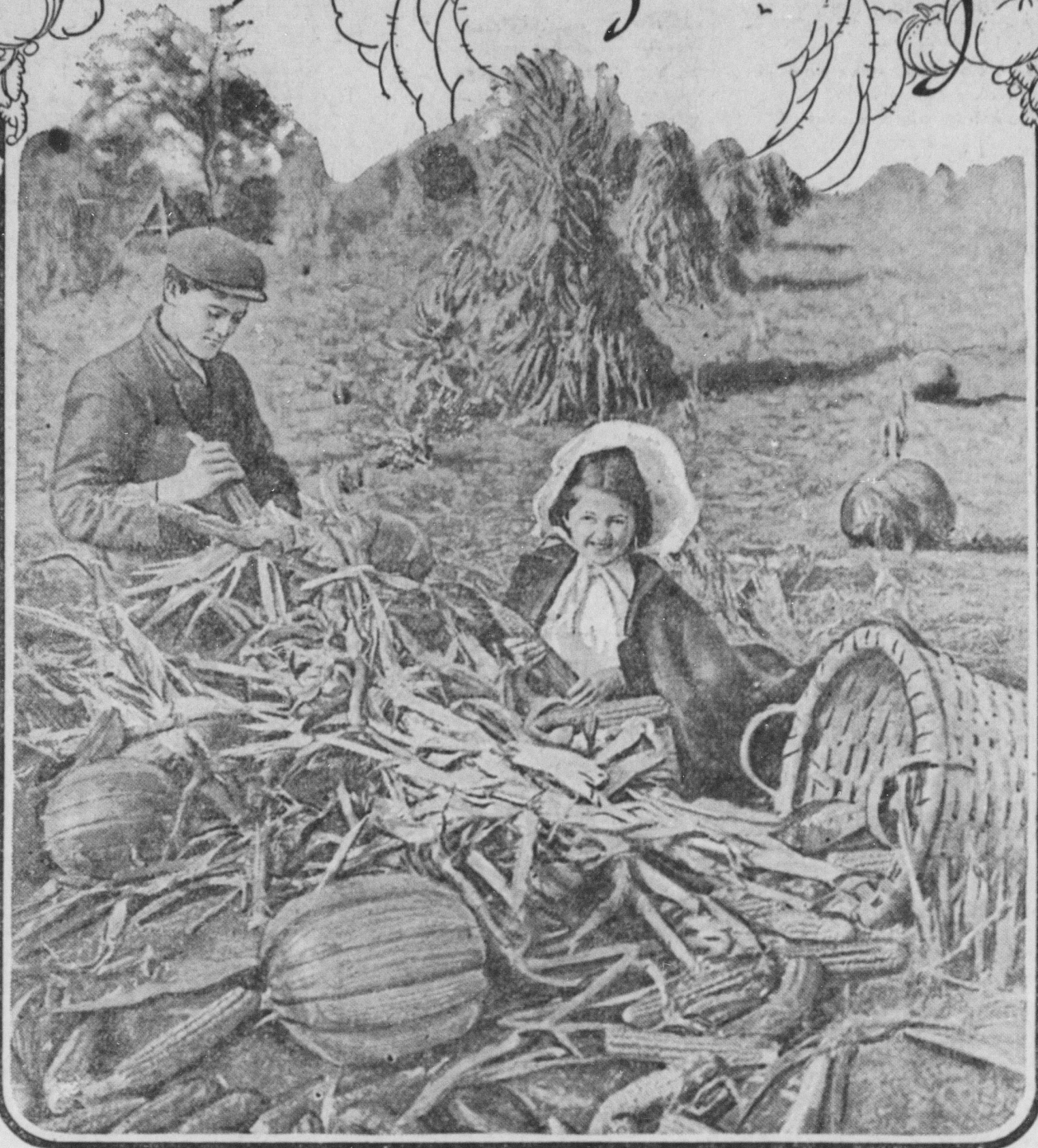


# Thanksgiving



"When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock"

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## HAD FEAST OF SPANISH STEW

Brave Burghers of Dutch Town of Leyden Held Thanksgiving in 1574.

Governor Bradford Has Testified That the Pilgrims Followed "the Laudable Custom of Holland"—Prop- er Tribute to Red Men.

"After the laudable custom of Holland," is Bradford's own description of one of the many functions and even institutions introduced into America and set to work at Plymouth. There was nothing exclusive or selfish about these beginners of the American Thanksgiving day of 1621. They made no profession of originality or the invention of anything new. They were as generous in their acknowledgment of what the Indians furnished for their feast as they were to their former hosts for their "courteous entreaty" received while in the Dutch republic.

The red men taught the white how to cultivate maize to make sugar from maple sap, to visualize the clams by treading them up and out of the sea beach and, not least for economic success, to raise tobacco. "Dear Lady Nicotine" enabled the Pilgrims to send as a present to their Dutch friends on Manhattan a fine sample of fuel for the pipe. In fact, tobacco was their first paying crop for export.

It is true that Washington Irving and common tradition here distort chronology and history for legend, but it is Bradford's record that in the North the Pilgrims were the first raisers of tobacco. In all probability, besides the American Thanksgiving, it was they who introduced the after-dinner luxury of the cigar.

It is highly probable also that, following the turkey and possibly cranberries, and certainly without regard to cuticle red or white, the feast ended in a smoker, followed by competitive target practice between masters of the bow and the blunderbuss.

These pious folks followed another and very laudable gastronomic Dutch custom which during their ten years' stay in Leyden they had seen and enjoyed. The besieging Spaniards in 1574 were considerate enough to furnish Leyden with an occasion for Thanksgiving day. This was fixed at the very sensible date of October 4, instead of a Thursday in late November. After William the Silent had cut the dikes at Delfshaven and sent messages of cheer by the carrier pigeons to the besieged, the Zealand Water Beggars drove their cannon boats up to the city walls, over which they tossed loaves and dried herring. These brave rescuers wore on their caps a silver

crest, called in Dutch a Half Moon, with an inscription showing preference for the Turk rather than the Spaniard for their ruler. After this symbol of valor, daring and freedom was the ship of Henry Hudson named.

It was the enterprising boy Gijbert Cornelison who climbed out early in the morning over the wall to find that the Spaniards had evacuated every one of their camps and their 54 forts. Over the fires was steaming the huts-puts, Anglicized as hodge-podge. It was this ragout of meat and vegetables smoking hot but still untasted which furnished a free dinner on October 4, the day of deliverance. It made a fine addition to the dry rations brought by the victorious Beggars. The exact spot of the initial rescue and loaf tossing is marked and the original water gate and masonry are still kept in repair. Near by stands the modern Hall of Archives, in which are more contemporary documents of the Pilgrims, maids, swains, fathers and mothers, with their signatures, than in all the British Isles.

At once the Dutch made October 4 a Thanksgiving day by going to church. Both the date and its significance are still celebrated, with the eating not of turkey and cranberries but of the Spanish stew. After church all the brides and bridegrooms of the previous 12 months ride in a gala procession of carriages through the city of Leyden. In New Netherlands Thanksgiving day was also a regular function announced by proclamation and observed in both public and private life.

### The Coat of Arms

November has a coat of arms. No king's could grander be; It beats the finest specimens Of ancient heraldry. Upon a shield of pumpkin pie In hues of brown and gold Are lozenges of cranberry sauce And chicken casserole.



A roasted turkey couchant on A tablecloth is seen, With quarterings of potato mashed, And celery white and green, And apples red, and pretty girls The flour for crullers siving, And at the top the legend scrolled In letters bold, "Thanksgiving." —Minna Irving in New York Sun.



Did these newcomers to Plymouth get used to the biting off of grain that grew on a cob which was not edible? Did they fasten their incisors too deep in the cob, as is done at first by most English tasters of the luscious corn? As for the cranberry, who of them visualized the future to behold an American annual crop of a million bushels? Who could foresee the boys of four states blushing with the crimson globules, a small library of literature concerning the berry, and even an association of breeders and defenders of this indigenous delicacy?

And what of the turkey which furnished a poultry yard at the very doors of the Pilgrims? Unafraid of man, these majestic birds came with and without invitation. And what of the friendly competition between the Dutch oven which the immigrants brought over and the Algonquin cooking hole? No doubt the folks of both red and white skins were strenuous rivals to produce the toothsome and savory roast. Yet who but a bold hunter in 1922 ever sees this original American king of birds? The domestic fowl of today is but a pale copy of the magnificent lord of the forest, with its sheeny iridescence of breast feathers and the combs of its neck and head changing when excited with excitement or fear. It is true that the modern bird of November struts in ostentatious splendor and with a vanity that at times seems very nearly human. Its display of the exultant passion of victory over rivals reminds one of a Wall Street boss of finance or a lady that is queen of the ball. Is it any wonder that Benjamin Franklin pleaded eloquently that the American wild turkey should be adopted as our national emblem and the symbol of our prosperity rather than the eagle, beloved of monarch and autocrat? Like maize, called Turkey wheat, this glorious fowl got the name it bears because the origin of all novelties was in that era ascribed to Asia, but unlike the cereal grain it still lacks an appropriate name.

Thanks, then, to the Pilgrim Fathers for their discovery of the food resources and gastronomic possibilities of the American wilderness, and quite as much to the Pilgrim Mothers who added deliciousness to the native culinary contributions. They certainly did continue in the New world most of the good things of the Old. Nor in this relation of things must we forget the Indian. In fact, the more we have learned of late of so-called civilized warfare and the methods of propagating Hunnish culture, the more do we respect the red man.

Reverently may we add that the profound faith of these pioneers in the ancient promises recorded in the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, concerning the Promised Land wherein they should "eat bread without scarceness," was vindicated. They made the inspired prophecy valid by their industry and perseverance, and their descendants may well follow their example in these days.

## FESTIVAL NOW ALL AMERICAN

Though Its Origin Was Pagan, Thanksgiving Is Peculiarly of This Country.

Pilgrim Fathers Gave Religious Character to Celebration Which for Centuries Had Been Occasion Only for Material Jollification.

People who do not chloroform their sense of fun before starting to read history have had many a chuckle over the Pilgrim and Puritan festival of Thanksgiving. These early settlers of New England were so militantly Christian that they could not bear any suggestion of an earlier creed. They objected to Christmas as "heathenish," because it contained—as it still contains—so many relics of pre-Christian days. Having done this, they turned round, seized on the most thoroughly pagan of all celebrations, that of the gathered harvest, and made it an institution that has grown and spread for three centuries, is the indictment drawn by a writer in an eastern magazine.

But the joke is not all on the Pilgrims. True, they went back to a festival which has been held ever since man began to plant and gather crops; but they made of it something peculiarly modern, Christian, and, at the last, American.

They gave a religious character to a celebration which for ages had been a purely material jollification, and made it a part of the community's public policy: an occasion for coming together in common aspirations, hopes and gratitude. All the changes and developments of the last 300 years have not been able to change the essential character of the Pilgrim Thanksgiving. How many inventions of today will last so long?

The first Thanksgiving feast, held in the fall of 1621, was not ordained by formal proclamation. The colony was too small to need such a notice. But the circumstances under which the celebration was held are told in Governor Bradford's history in a way well worthy of quotation:

"They (the colonists) began now to gather in the small harvest they had, and to fite up their houses and dwellings against winter, being all well recovered in health & strength, & had all things in good plenty: for as some were thus employed in affairs abroad, others were exercised in fishing, aboute codd, & bass, & other fish, of which they tooke good store, of which every family had their portion. . . . And now began to come in store of fowle, as winter approached, of which this place did abound when they came first, but afterwards decreased by degrees. And besides water fowle, there was great store of wild Turkeys, of which they took many, besides venison, &c. Besides they had aboute a peck a weeke to a person, or now, since harvest, Indian corne to that proportion. Which made many afterwards write so largely of their plenty hear to their friends in England, which were not fained, but true reports."

Excepting small boys, one can hardly imagine the folk of a modern community boasting about their plenty under the stimulus of a "peck a weeke to a person," plus such game

## Let All Rejoice

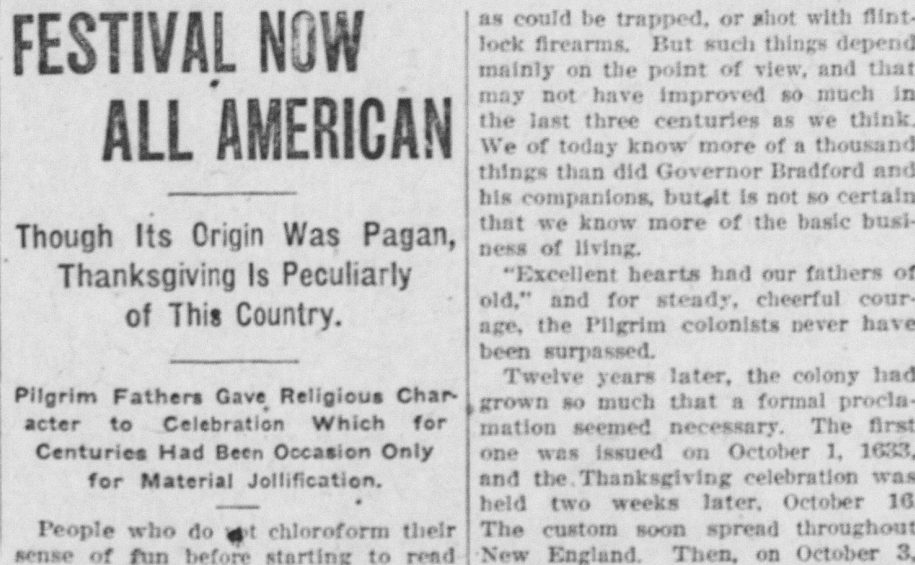
LET US give thanks—not for those gifts alone Of field and garden, tree and fruitful vine, But for those gifts by which our lives have grown More nearly like the Infinite design.

Let us give thanks, from fervent hearts, for love; Pure love toward God, unselfish love toward man; For tenderness, compassion—gifts above What human thought could wish to have, or plan.

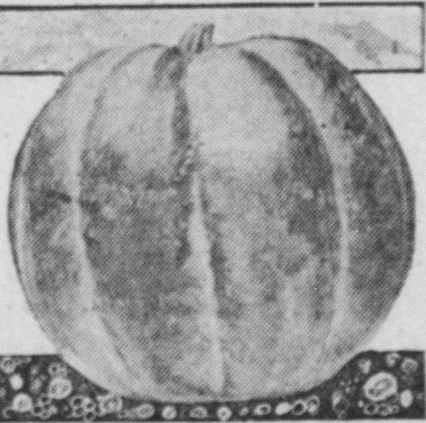
Let us give thanks for the great gift of prayer By which we reach the consciousness of peace, And realize the constant help and care Of Love divine, that cannot lapse nor cease.

Let us give thanks for true and loyal friends, For home, and family ties; for work, for play; For beauty, and the grace that laughter lends To toil or trial, on our daily way.

Let us give thanks that in this troubled hour, With skies bedimmed by doubt, by hate, by fear, We can rejoice that Good alone has power, Can prove it true, and thus win heaven here



## The Pumpkin



O, greenly and fair in the lands of the sun, The vines of the gourd and the tree the melon run, And the rock and the tree and the cottage unfold, With broad leaves all greenness and blossoms all gold, Like that which o'er Nineveh's prophet once grew, While he waited to know that his warning was true, And longed for the storm-cloud, and listened in vain, For the rush of the whirlwind and red fire-rain.

On the banks of the Xenil, the dark Spanish maiden Comes up with the fruit of the tangled vine laden; And the Creole of Cuba laughs out to behold Through orange-leaves shining the broad spheres of gold; Yet with dearer delight from his home in the North, On the fields of his harvest the Yankee looks forth, Where crook-necks are colling and yellow fruit shines, And the sun of September melts down on his vines.

Ah! on Thanksgiving day, when from East and from West, From North and from South come the pilgrim and guest, When the gray-haired New Englander sees round his board The old broken links of affection restored. . . .

O, fruit loved of boyhood! the old days recalling, When wood-grapes were purpling and brown nuts were falling! When wild, ugly faces were carved in its skin, Gazing out through the dark with a candle within! When we laughed round the corn-heap, with hearts all in tune, Our chair a broad pumpkin, our lantern the moon, Telling tales of the fairy who traveled like steam, In a pumpkin-shell coach, with two rats for her team! —John Greenleaf Whittier.



1789, the new President of the new nation, George Washington, called on the American people to assemble on Nov. 26 and give thanks, among other things,

"For the signal and manifold Mercies, and the favorable Interposition of His Providence in the course and conclusion of the late War . . . for the peaceful and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish Constitutions and Governments for our safety and happiness; and particularly the national one now lately instituted."

Washington, it might be deduced from this alone, was a nationalist, with no leaning whatever toward state sovereignty, and with a perfect readiness to make his preferences manifest, in prayer as well as in any other way. An amusing instance of this frankness occurs later in the same proclamation, where he asks the people to pray heaven, "To protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shown kindness to us)."

An honored lineage, that of this best-beloved festival. It started in the days when the Neolithic dweller by the lakes of Switzerland finished bringing in his scanty harvest and settled down to a secure winter. It is close akin to the Dionysiac feasts of ancient Greece and the "horkey night" of rural England. But it has a peculiarly American flavor and substance; and for this, one must thank the sturdy Pilgrims, whose iron courage was tempered by a fine humanity, and who probably smiled into their beards when, over their supper of small soup, they thanked God, "who had given them to suck of the abundance of the seas, and the treasures hid in the sands."



Humility Goes With Thanks. Thanksgiving is essentially a religious holiday. Like Christmas, it has lost something of its significance through the overemphasizing of its secular features. The other holidays commemorate the birth or the deeds of great men or perpetuate the memory of great events. They speak to the mind in its happiest moods, telling ever a record of glorious actions and repeating reasons for contentment and love of country. Thanksgiving day ought at least to suggest the virtue of humility.

## The Death Sentence

