

Thanksgiving Day Here and in Foreign Climes

By Mrs. Edward Dunroy-Reed



The Authoress

Whenever our chins expand our chests and our our "came over on the Mayflower" expression when some one mentions the origin of Thanksgiving. Unhesitatingly we lay claim to the honor of having the "only original" Thanksgiving day on the globe. Then along comes the historian with his array of facts and our pride receives a shock.

There is hardly a country in the world which does not give thanks for one reason or another. Some have better reasons than others, but they all claim to have sufficient excuse for being grateful to set aside one day each year.

Thanksgiving day was held long before the timber for the Mayflower or the Anne was planted. It had its origin in antiquity when the Romans and Greeks held a fast day in October which they dedicated to the goddess agriculture and followed the day of fasting by one of feasting and royal frolicking, a day on which the chase and all sorts of rustic sports held sway.

Going even further back into the remote ages—not our country, alas—but of the world, we find the early Egyptians setting aside a day for general thanksgiving and burning of incense and offering sacrifices to their divinity of the crops, the Goddess Isis.

For seven or eight days the Jewish "Feast of Tabernacles" was, centuries ago, held during the seventh month, which is November, and after the completion of Solomon's temple (the people that year held a 14-day festival) which was a time of thanksgiving, and during which time they gave thanks for the abundance of their land. Living in booths they decorated their entire homes with branches of the palm and of citron trees and then showed that it was for the yield of the season as well as for the completion of the temple that they were giving thanks.

Coming forward a century or two we find Thanksgiving day being held in England under the name of "Harvest Home." This day was usually early in November and it opened by a church service, which was followed by a day of gayety and feasting. Thanks were given in the churches for the benefits of the season and then the "masses" flocked to the grounds of the "clashes," to which they were all invited. Here squire and gentry entertained the peasantry with free and easy dances in the barns, wrestling matches and feats of archery, for which prizes were given.

In the evening harvest songs were sung by the light of the moon, over the beer and ale, which flowed freely. A dinner, such as only the early English knew how to prepare, was served to these great crowds of thanksgivers, and the Harvest Home day ended in repetition both of appetite and merrymaking.

Before the Reformation a special day was set apart in England for giving thanks, and after the reformation the custom was added with added fervor, but after all, it is not from our English ancestors, as we might suppose, that we received the inspiration for our first Thanksgiving day.

Neither did the idea originate with the Pilgrims themselves. They merely continued a custom with which they had become familiar and of which their natures approved, when they were living with their Dutch cousins.

To digress just a little: It has been claimed by some investigators who stopped just a little short of the beginning of tracing backward that the first real Thanksgiving day of true American meaning was held by the Pilgrim colonists of Monhegan, but as they were Episcopalians and gave thanks every week in their regular church ritual this must be blackballed and cast out of our calculations.

And now to return to the Pilgrims and the customs they absorbed while protected in Holland. The pious Dutch, before the Pilgrims flocked to their peaceful land, had set apart October 3 on which they give thanks for their harvest, but more especially for their deliverance from Spanish authority. The

day opened in this water-locked land with a great ringing of bells and over every shining doornail there stepped into the crisp morning air the household's full number. Each Hans or Gretchen, clasping a silver-bound prayer book, walked sedately to the various places of worship and there, lifting up their sweetest voices, sang, perhaps in Dutch, but full and round in tone, sent up musical praise for the freedom of their land and the good things for the earth.

Church over the entire population for the nonce broke through their usual stolidity and there was a general scampering of young feet in game or dance and a clattering of older tongues in friendly gossip as neighbor visited neighbor or a father welcomed his large flock of grandchildren.

The great event of this Dutch Thanksgiving day was dinner, at which was served as central dish a queer stew of meat and vegetables which they called Spanish hodge-podge. For once in their practical lives the Hollanders became facetious, and over this hodge-podge they made merry and cracked jokes at their old-time enemy—Spain. The general "chuckle" appearance of the hodge-podge was supposed to represent the condition of the Spanish army when the Dutch had vanquished it. Even the children entered into the fun and kept their history fresh by gleefully slashing into a potato or a turnip and chuckling as they swallowed the morsel. "This is General So-and-so—ah! Me eat him—so!"

Well, the Puritans heartily approved of the early religious services of the morning and their hearty appetites could not fail to appreciate the Spanish hodge-podge, however much they may have disapproved of the sentiment which flavored it, so they entered most heartily into the Dutch Thanksgiving of October 3. In 1623 these Pilgrims held October 3 as a day of Thanksgiving in the New World, and here we have our first true American Thanksgiving day.

This day has passed through many vicissitudes since that date. There is not a festival on the almanac, fixed or movable, which has had the struggle for existence that our November holiday has endured.

From 1623 until 1630 Thanksgiving day was held a different day by order of the governor, and the Pilgrims in America in various months, some of the Pilgrims keeping to October 3 and other colonists holding a different date. The first record of a joint celebration of Thanksgiving in the Colonial Records of Massachusetts. In 1630 the people of Massachusetts were suffering for food and clothing and Gov. Winthrop hired the good ship Lyon to return to England for supplies. For many days the vessel lay stranded off the Isle of Rhé, but finally put out. Winter came on apace, and nothing was heard of the ship. The colonists were nearly disheartened when, on February 21, 1631, the Lyon was sighted, and the governor ordered that the day be given over to feasting and thanksgiving. This is the first written record of a Thanksgiving day in Boston; it can still be found in the Colonial Records of Massachusetts. It is an interesting fact that this first Boston Thanksgiving was held on what is now one of our most patriotic holidays, Washington's birthday.

The first record of a joint celebration of Thanksgiving day is given in the Colonial Records of 1632, when Gov. Winthrop of Massachusetts bay, asked the governor of Plymouth colony to join him in issuing a proclamation of a public Thanksgiving day. The invitation was accepted, and in November, 1632, Plymouth Massachusetts Bay colony celebrated Thanksgiving day together in a manner pretty much the same as their descendants of to-day, in religious service and feasting and funmaking. The one noticeable omission was the turkey, which marks the day in our generation.

From 1632 until 1677 the New England records show that 23 different dates were set apart by the various governors as days for public thanksgiving, and that with the exception of the two colonies mentioned no two held the day on the same date. The celebrations, however, were held in October or November.

In 1677, as other denominations had crept into Plymouth colony, over which the Puritan church had sole jurisdiction, the governor decreed that it would be well to have the power of fixing public holidays, "whether for feasting, praying or funmaking," vested in civic authority. Accordingly in that year the first printed Thanksgiving day proclamation was printed, setting November 25 as the festival.

The law reads: "That it be in the power of the governor and assistants to command solemn dates of humiliation by fasting, etc., and also, thanksgiving as occasion shall be."

This shows that the law called for only "occasional" Thanksgiving days and so the holiday was but-fered about hither and yon, from October to November, according to the pleasure of the rulers of the colonies and there never was any feeling of certainty as to the holiday date of celebration.

That it was held annually, with-out break in Plymouth, Massachusetts until 1689, with the exception of the year when King Phillip's war interrupted, there are records to show. In this colony the church and government alternated in arranging the date of celebration.

GEORGE ON THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving day comes once a year because the Pilgrim band
 Was thankful that they had the sense to leave their native land
 And come across the sea to find a stern and rock-bound shore
 Where they would never halt to bow to bosses
 any more,
 Where this would not break in and steal and
 To gobble everything and let the little dealer die.

We celebrate Thanksgiving day because the Pilgrims came
 In search of freedom where they knew that they would find the same
 Where men would be as brothers, where the strong would aid the weak,
 Where liberty would raise her flag on every crag and peak,
 Where billions would never dare to cheat or profit's sake
 Or break the laws that other men were not allowed to break.

We celebrate because the hopes hoped by that Pilgrim band
 Have all come true, because there's not an evil in our land,
 Because we have no wealthy rogues to plan and plot and scheme
 To make our liberty we claim a vain and empty dream,
 Because our magnates go to church and teach in Sunday schools,
 And everywhere from sea to sea the Christian spirit rules.

We keep Thanksgiving day because the man who does his best
 To be an honest citizen is honored by the rest;
 He may not have a share of stock or own a foot of land,
 But all our wealthy senators are glad to shake his hand
 And hear his plea and guard his rights with all the jellus care,
 They ever give the interests of any millionaires.

We keep the good old day because no idle rich ignore
 The pressing needs of those where Want is scratching at the door,
 Because we have such freedom as the Pilgrims wished to claim,
 Because we never are oppressed and never plot to cheat the poor,
 Because we've frightened Greed away and raised our standard high
 And kept the faith for which our sires were not afraid to die.

THE PHILOSOPHIC BRAKEMAN.

He Rejoices When the Train is Late for Purely Personal Reasons.

The Flying Bluenose, a train which usually earns its title as railroad traveler, has been held for an hour or more at a little town until a new locomotive could be procured. The regular locomotive had laid down its life in a case of tired boiler tubes.

Passengers were chafing at the delay. There was no reason for impeding the next stop was the terminus of the line, and a seaport; those who were going to take the boat knew it would wait for the train; the others had no other object for the day but dinner, and the train would surely arrive before six. The scheduled time of arrival was 3:30.

Nevertheless the passengers were impatient. Most of them were Americans, which explains it. They clustered around the rear platform of the Pullman or made daring excursions into the town, with one ear open for the whistle of the extra locomotive coming down the line.

Members of the train crew took matters calmly and answered all questions, with the inevitable foolish kind with courtesy. The brakeman voted his scrutinity.

"This suits me," he said, leaning against the guard rail. "Here we have been getting in on time or nearly so day after day and there have been two hours before supper with nothing to do. To-day we'll get in about six, just in time for supper."

"I wish we'd get held up every day on schedule. The appearance of being busy suits me much better than actual loafing."

He shifted to an easier position and gazed dreamily up the stretch of track. When the relief engine announced its approach with a raucous blast he seemed to resent the intrusion and made his way back to the switch fat too leisurely to please the passengers.

Kaiser Invents Safety Brake.

Emperor William has invented a new hub and brake for railroad trains and automobiles which is described as offering the greatest possible guarantee against accident arising from failure of existing brakes to operate when called upon.

Some time ago Emperor William took a lively interest in this branch of technical work, but he has done nothing in it of recent years. The recent accident on the elevated road of Berlin, however, revived his interest, and he spent part of his time during his recent holiday in the country in working out the present device. The practical experiments with it have not yet been completed.

Emperor William, who at one time was a pupil of Prof. Slavy, will resume his studies in advanced technical science in the professor's laboratory after the end of the winter social season.

Costly Railroad Construction.

Sixty miles of the Chicago, St. Paul & Milwaukee railroad, from Taft, Mont., to St. Joe, Idaho, has cost \$11,000,000. This was at the rate of \$19,000 a mile, which was the heaviest amount ever paid by any railroad company in the world for the construction of a line of similar length. In this piece of road there are 35 tunnels, the longest being more than 5,000 feet through solid rock. The company expects that within five years after the completion of the road, which is now being rushed through Idaho and Washington to the sound, the traffic will be so large it will be necessary to double track the line in order to handle the volume of business. The line will bypass the Patouso and part of the Big Bend wide belts, which sent more than 40,000,000 bushels of grain to market in 1907.

The Railroad Death Rate.

Returns of the Interstate commerce commission show that in the year ending June 30, 1907 there were 10,046 persons killed and 84,155 injured on the railroads in the United States. Of these 70,693 were employees, of whom 2,622 were killed and 57,067 injured. The greater part of the remaining casualties were suffered by trespassers, of whom 5,103 were killed and 5,194 injured. It is presumed that for accidents to persons classified as trespassers the railroads were in no sense responsible.

Fly Stopped a Train.

In North Wales there is a section of single line worked on the electric trolley system. When the signalman tried recently to draw a train from the instrument in order to dispatch a train he was unable to do so. The failure of the instrument lasted for nearly five hours. Investigation revealed that a small fly had crept into the instrument and had while in the act of examining the delicate mechanism of one of the contacts, leaving its tiny body as an insurmountable barrier to the passage of electric current.—Great Western Railway Magazine.

Railroad Slips into River.

Some thousands dollars' worth of railroad property slid into a Mississippi river at New Orleans when a section of earth 20 feet long and about 200 feet wide caved in between Washington avenue and Fourth street, carrying along seven freight cars and four lines of railway track. Undermining the bank by high water was the cause. The cars and two of the tracks belonged to the Illinois Central and the other two to the Public Belt rail road.

SOME REMARKS FROM MINNEAPOLIS EDITORS.

What They Think of Western Canada.

A party of editors from a number of cities and towns of Minnesota recently made a tour of Western Canada, and having returned to their homes they are now telling their respective newspapers of what they saw on their Canadian trip. The West St. Paul Times recalls the following: "Thousands of miles of new railway lines have been built, and the development of the country has made marvelous strides. Millions of acres, then lying in their wild and untouched state, have since been transferred into grain fields. Towns have sprung up as if by the wand of a magician, and their development is now in full progress. It is a revelation, a record of conquest by settlement that is remarkable."

The Hutchinsonian describes characteristically Western Canada as "a great country undeveloped. The summer outing," it says, "was an eye-opening to every member of the party, even those who were on the excursion through Western Canada ten years ago. Referring to what has happened in the interval the writer says: 'Thousands of miles of new railway lines have been built, and the development of the country has made marvelous strides. Millions of acres, then lying in their wild and untouched state, have since been transferred into grain fields. Towns have sprung up as if by the wand of a magician, and their development is now in full progress. It is a revelation, a record of conquest by settlement that is remarkable.'

The Hutchinsonian describes characteristically Western Canada as "a great country undeveloped. The summer outing," it says, "was an eye-opening to every member of the party, even those who were on the excursion through Western Canada ten years ago. Referring to what has happened in the interval the writer says: 'Thousands of miles of new railway lines have been built, and the development of the country has made marvelous strides. Millions of acres, then lying in their wild and untouched state, have since been transferred into grain fields. Towns have sprung up as if by the wand of a magician, and their development is now in full progress. It is a revelation, a record of conquest by settlement that is remarkable.'

Since the visit of these editors the Government has revised its land regulations and it is now possible to acquire 160 acres of prairie land at \$3.00 an acre in addition to the 160 acres that may be homesteaded.

The crops of 1908 have been splendid, and reports from the various districts show good yields, which at present prices will give excellent profits to the farmers.

A HINT TO GOLFERS.



The Visitor—What on earth does that chap carry that photograph round for. He does not want it.

The Member—No! But he's dumb. So he has that talking machine to give instructions to his caddy or to make a few words when he is in a case he fancies his drive or does anything else annoying.

Like a Dream.

A bubble of air in the blood, a drop of water in the brain, and a man is out of gear, his machine fails to place his thought variables, the world disappears from him like a dream at morning. On waking a spider thread is hung across his individual existence. Fragility, appearance, nothingness. If it were not for our powers of self-detrusion and forgetfulness, all the fairy world which surrounds and brands us would seem to us but a broken specter in the darkness—an empty appearance and a form, lady's position. Appeared—disappeared—there is the whole history of a man, or of a world, or of an infusoria.—Amiel.

UPWARD START

After Changing from Coffee to Postum.

Many a talented person is kept back because of the interference of coffee with the nourishment of the body. This is especially so with those whose nerves are very sensitive, as is often the case with talented persons. There is a simple, easy way to get rid of coffee evils and a Postum lady's persistence along these lines is worth considering. She says:

"Almost from the beginning of the use of coffee it hurt my stomach. By the time I was fifteen I was almost a nervous wreck, nerves all unstrung, no strength to endure the most trivial thing, either work or play."
 "Here the scarcely anything I could eat that would agree with me."
 "The little I did eat seemed to give me more trouble than it was worth. I finally quit coffee and drank hot water, but there was no little food I was so weak I could not sit up long at a time."

"It was then a friend brought me a hot cup of Postum. I did not part of it and after an hour or so, feeling as though I had had something to eat—felt strengthened. That was about five years ago, and since that time Postum getting stronger, to-day I can eat and digest anything I want, walk as much as I want, and my nerves are steady. I don't believe the first thing that did me any good and gave me an upward start, was Postum, and I use it and geth up instead of coffee."
 Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read "The Road to Wellville," in plain English, in other two issues of this paper.

River read the above letter? A new one appears from the other two issues of this paper, and full of human interest.