

America's Thanksgiving Hymn

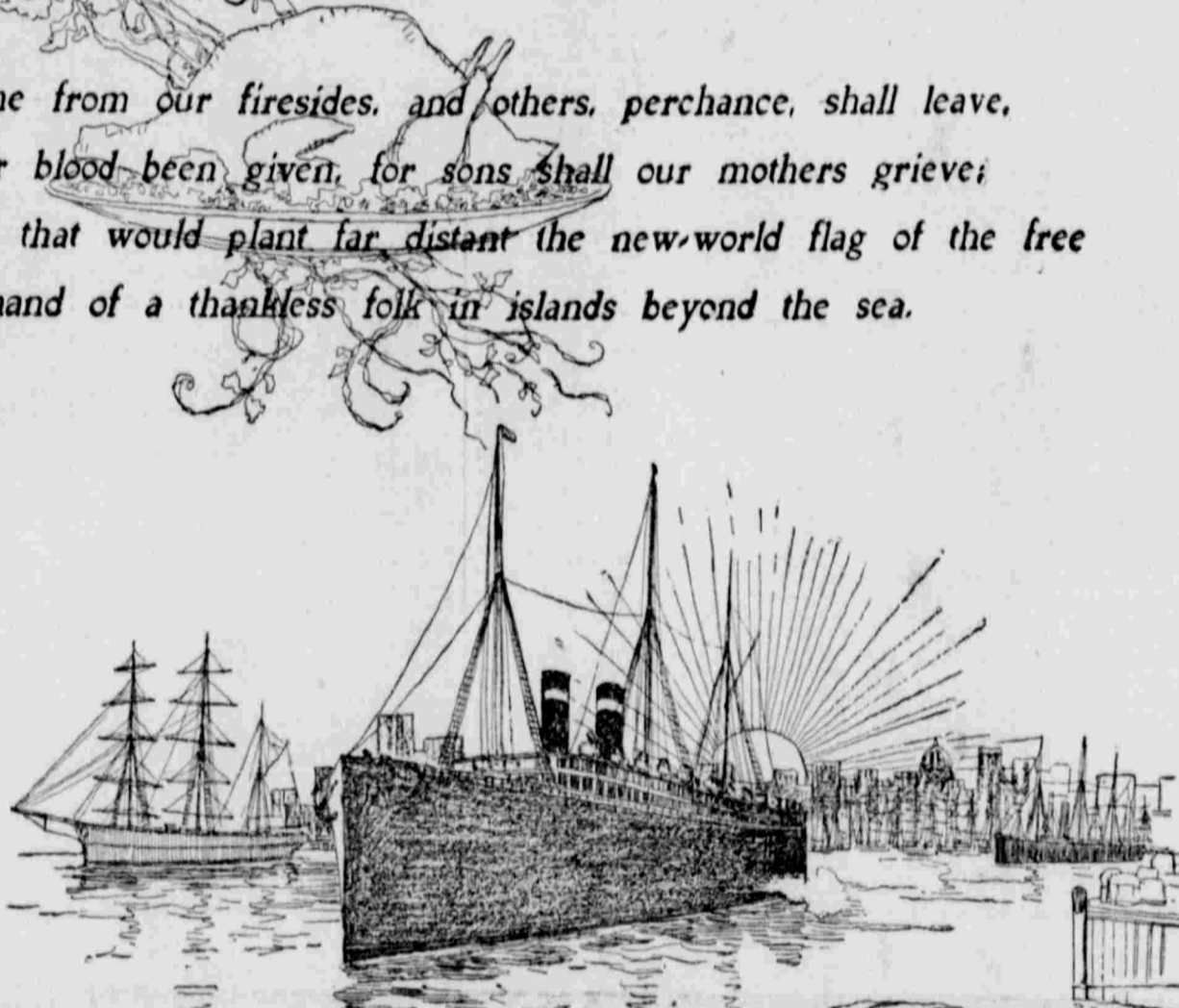
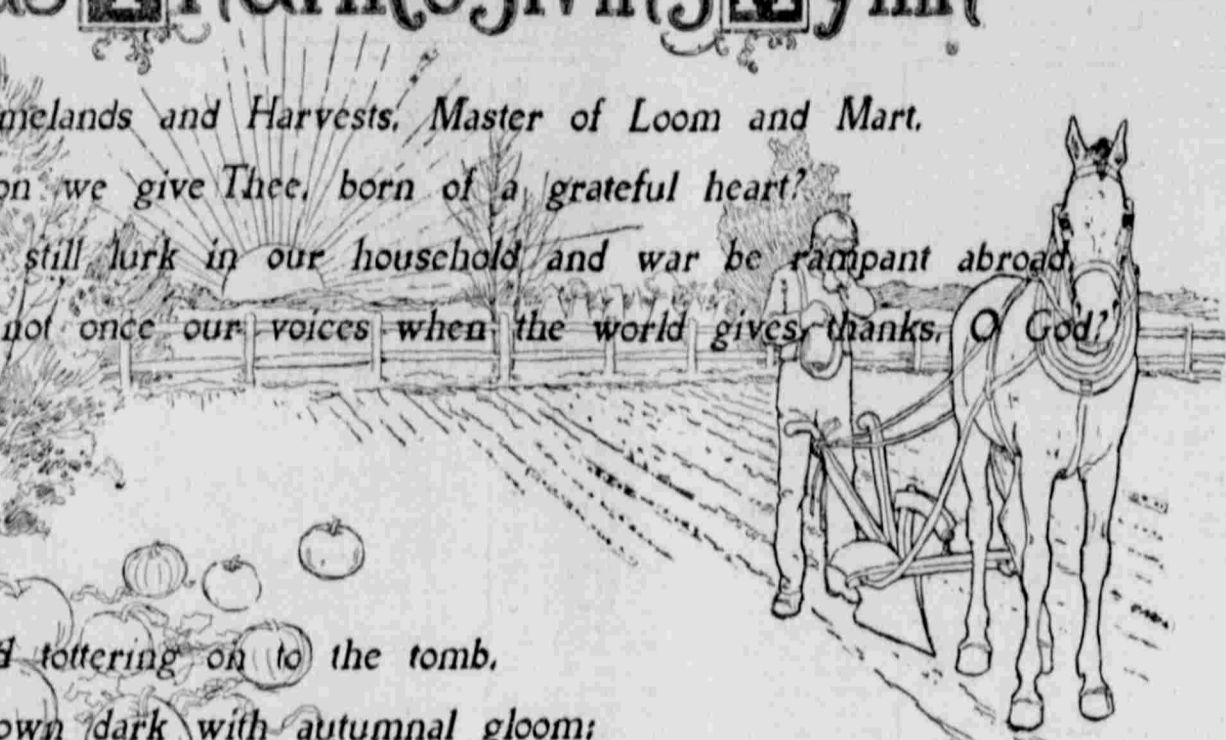
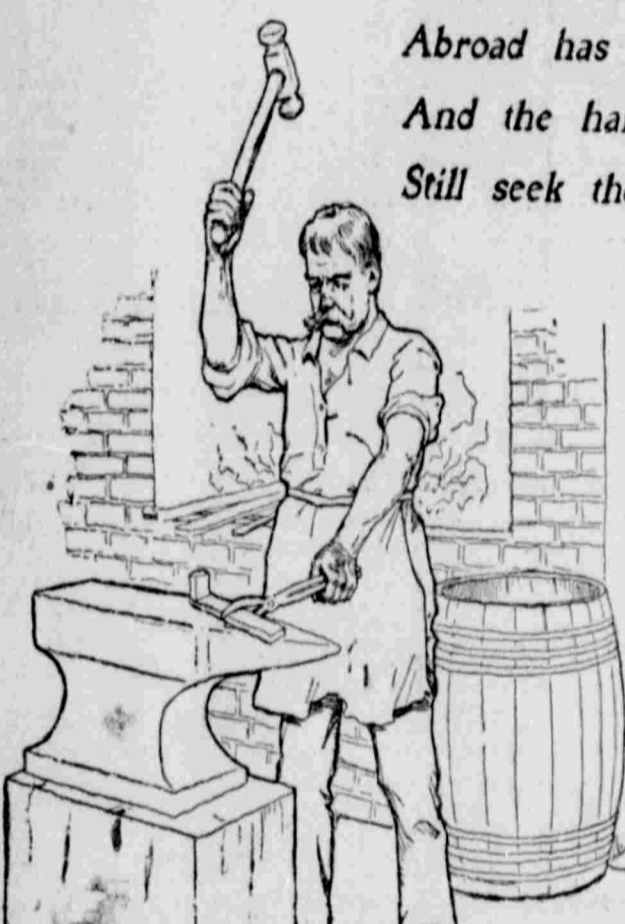
God of our Homelands and Harvests, Master of Loom and Mart,
What the oblation we give Thee, born of a grateful heart?
Though hunger still lurk in our household and war be rampant abroad,
Shall we raise not once our voices when the world gives thanks, O God?

The year is aging and palsied and tottering on to the tomb,
Withered and faded the season, grown dark with autumnal gloom;
Through fields where the wheat waved golden, where harvest and sun lay warm,
The hand of Winter has loosened the leash of the howling storm.

Many have gone from our firesides, and others, perchance, shall leave,
Abroad has our blood been given, for sons shall our mothers grieve;
And the hands that would plant far distant the new-world flag of the free
Still seek the hand of a thankless folk in islands beyond the sea.

But, God of Homeland and Harvest, of Forge, and Loom, and Mart,
Ah, shall we not give oblation still out of our grateful heart,
Where the golden wheat lies garnered, where the laden ships go forth,
And Plenty joins hands with Freedom, and the South joins hands with the North?
Still, out of our sorrow, shall we not—nowise in childish glee—
For all of the blessings Thou givest, give our own poor thanks to Thee,
Who watched where Caesar and Nineveh and Tyre their season reigned,
Yet keeps the flag of the Stars and Stripes today, as of old, unstained?

JOHN ARBUTHNOTT.



THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATIONS

Famous Documents from the Time of the Pilgrim Fathers Down to the Present Day, Causes For Giving Thanks.

TO REALIZE just what a long established institution Thanksgiving day in the United States really is one has only to turn over the musty leaves of a certain old book in the archive room of the secretary of state at Washington.

In that strange volume are many dry and yellow parchments, one of the most interesting of which is a time faded sheet covered with crooked characters in which is set forth an official proclamation beginning as follows: "Whereas, the Lord our gracious God hath lately bestowed several public mercies upon our dear native country, and so on.

and then asks the people to duly give thanks for the blessings of the past year. In the majority of the proclamations of this time—and very solemn and staid documents they are—it is the king of England who gets most of the space in the document. Only three years, in fact, before the Declaration of Independence there is a prayerful reference to King George and Queen Mary. But the change was soon to come. In 1776 the usual thanksgiving proclamation is very unequivocal in its expression of thankfulness for deliverance from king-ly rule. After a long preamble the document of 1776, somewhat after the manner of the Declaration of Independence itself, states: "Especially that whilst British avarice openly and British tyranny vigorously endeavours to wrest from us the free exercise of those rights which heaven alike bestowed on all mankind, and without which human life is less a favor than the grave, God has given these States a just sense of their worth and of the impossibility of resigning those rights to man without the guilt of rebellion against God, treason to the present and treachery to all future generations."

The Book of Common Prayer, revised in 1789 for the use of the Protestant Episcopal church in America, directed "a form of prayer and thanksgiving to Almighty God for the fruits of the earth and all the other blessings of His merciful providence, to be used yearly on the first Thursday in November, or on such other day as shall be appointed by the civil authority." All the thanksgiving proclamations issued by the different presidents of the republic are kept in the library of the state department in one of the large bookcases there. Each document is in a big brown envelope and is carefully filed away, a series for each year. The first official proclamation issued in this connection is dated Jan. 1, 1795, and, in one sense of the word, this date might be called the birth year of the real American Thanksgiving day. This first document is signed by George Washington, his attorney general. There is a second proclamation by James Madison, after which the chief magistrates of this country appear to have forgotten the day, or else the proclamations establishing the same have been lost, for there is none until we come down to the Lincoln administration. In 1812 there was a significant and at the same time a noble proclamation

which "enabled the armies to make such stands as have baffled the efforts of our inveterate foes and protected the frontiers from the sword and the wilderness and the seas from the depredations of an hostile fleet," and also compelled the enemy to vacate the capital and delivered the same from the "mortal distemper" which had visited it. There are a dozen signers to this paper, which refers again and again to circumstances and incidents of the war of the Revolution, showing well what was foremost in every man's heart and mind. The proclamation then goes on to invoke thanks for the preservation of the commander in chief of the army and for the soldiers, reflecting, not without its touch of quiet irony, the troubles through which the country was then passing. In those early Thanksgivings turkey gobblers and guns must have been somewhat inconspicuously mixed up. Still this particular proclamation gives thanks to that Providence

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ABOUT MEN OF NOTE.
The Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Williams, who has been consecrated Episcopal bishop coadjutor of Nebraska, is the son of a Presbyterian clergyman. It is said he is the youngest looking bishop of the Episcopal church.

James E. Galloway of Hillside, Mich., has purchased the whole of Morgan county, Ont., 354 square miles, for the white pine timber upon it. He could cut nearly if not quite 100,000,000 feet, but intends to hold most of it, awaiting developments. He paid \$300,000.

Ezra Wilkinson, an eccentric resident of Sharon, Mo., has just completed the construction of a four story brick dwelling for himself underground. The roof of the house is on a level with the street, and the whole structure stands in an excavation 40 feet deep, lined with stone and cement—the house walls being separated from those of the pit by a four foot airway. Wilkinson lives

in constant dread of cyclones, and he designed his novel dwelling with a view to making it windproof. It is said to have cost him \$20,000.

Congressman Otley of Virginia, having discovered that there was no portrait of General Robert E. Lee among those at West Point of the former superintendents of the Military academy, has written to President McKinley and Secretary Root, and received answer that the portrait will be hung among the others if donated to the academy.

The people of Hartford, Conn., raised money and purchased an organ for use on the United States training ship Hartford, and now they are contributing more funds for the purchase of a library for the ship. The desire is to have the subscriptions "in small sums and many of them."

Mr. Four Miles of Bridgeport, Conn., has made application to the court to have his name changed to Frank Miller, on the ground that his present appellation is frequently used to hold him up to ridicule. His father had five chil-

children, all boys, and instead of giving them ordinary Christian names he called them by the first five numerals. One and Three Miles have already had their names changed by the court; Two Miles seems to be satisfied with his unique cognomen, and Five Miles cannot take a new name until he shall have become of age.

There are not many holidays aboard a man-of-war, so that when one does come around it is appreciated by all aboard at its full worth. Thanksgiving is one of the gala days of the year on board the vessel carrying Uncle Sam's flag. The jacks celebrate it in the good old fashioned style, which means that the dinner is the chief feature of the jollification.

The extra expense attached to the layout with which the ordinary ratings are supplemented is all borne by the men themselves. Ordinarily Jack is a notoriously improvident creature who sees no reason for worrying himself about what he is to eat tomorrow so long as he has enough for today, but for special occasions like Thanksgiving, Christmas and Fourth of July he makes a little unusual effort and saves something to put into the common treasury for the occasion, and if, as sometimes happens, his pockets are light when the contributions are being taken up, he is not allowed to miss the feast, but may have his share charged up against him, to be paid when convenient.

One way by which the men save money is by commencing their rations. The government is extremely liberal in the amount of food furnished, so that the daily ration provided for each sailor is more than he can eat under ordinary circumstances. The value of a daily ration is put down as 20 cents. When men want to save for some special occasion like Thanksgiving, it is a common practice for ten to draw rations for only seven. If the mess consists of 10 men, the value of the commuted rations would thus amount to \$14 per day. This is multiplied to a considerable sum by the time pay day comes around and is used for extra luxuries for the holiday dinner.

When sailors go in for anything they seldom do it by halves, and a Thanksgiving dinner on board an American warship is well worth seeing. The decorations of the messroom and tables would often do credit to a much more pretentious assembly. American flags and bunting of all sorts form the main part of the embellishments. Instead of the enamel cloth, such as is used for ordinary days, spotless linen is laid on the board, and if the ship is in port the celebration can be made very elaborate. For in that case the men can by it borrow many ornaments to beautify the tables, and flowers can be had too.

Enormous turkeys stand watch at each end of the tables at the beginning of the feast, but they become fearfully wounded early in the action, and their places are supplied later by roasts of mince and pumpkin pies. "Spuds" as all sailors call potatoes, are plenty affording ample proof of Jack's traditional fondness for this vegetable. Besides tea and coffee, the only drink is beer. The men are allowed to have this not only on special occasions, but have money to pay for it at the general store. At dinner time each sailor has a day a few of the men may be seen with open bottles of beer before their places at the table.

When an American ship is in a foreign port on Thanksgiving or other holiday, there is even greater enthusiasm than when at home, for the men are proud of their country and anxious to show their love of their native land and its institutions before the foreigners.

EXCESS OF HOSPITALITY.
A popular Scotchman visiting this country says: "The one drawback to American hospitality is that it is apt to be too profuse. I have more than once had to offer a mild protest against being entertained by a hardworking brother journalist on a scale that would have baffled a millionaire. The possibility of returning the compliment in kind affords the canny Scot but poor consolation. A dinner three times more lavish and expensive than you want is not sweetened by the thought that you may in turn give your host a dinner three times more expensive and lavish than he wants. Both parties, on this system, suffer in indignation and in pocket, while only Demitrios is the gainer. It seems to me, on the whole, that in this country the millionaire is too commonly allowed to fix the standard of expenditure. Society would be less, but more agreeable, if instead of always emulating the splendor of Lucullus, people now and then studied the art of Horatian frugality."

THANKSGIVING THURSDAY.
The fact that Thanksgiving day has nearly always been held on a Thursday is curious, but there seems to be no real explanation of the fact except that of custom. This Thursday third of custom. This Thursday third of custom. This Thursday third of custom. This Thursday third of custom.

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