

## Chapter 1 : Native American Rituals and Ceremonies – Legends of America

*In South Dakota people celebrate Native Americans' Day through learning from educational resources that focus on the traditions, culture and background of Native Americans. It is a day to celebrate the heritage of Native Americans and for both native and non-native cultures to unite so the many aspects of native culture can be shared.*

See Article History Powwow, a celebration of American Indian culture in which people from diverse indigenous nations gather for the purpose of dancing, singing, and honouring the traditions of their ancestors. The term powwow, which derives from a curing ritual, originated in one of the Algonquian nations of the Northeast Indians. These vendors often employed local Indians to dance for the entertainment of potential customers, who soon applied the term to the exhibition dancing as well as to the patent medicines. The name took hold, and Indians themselves added to it their nomenclature to describe dancing for an audience in an exhibition. Spectators including non-Indians are welcome to attend, as participants seek to share the positive aspects of their culture with outsiders. Modern powwows can be grouped into two broad divisions: Both divisions share the same order of events and styles of singing and dancing. Native American dance Dancers at a Canadian powwow. Dances were usually associated with one of four occasions: One major difference between old-time events and modern powwows is that the latter are intertribal and inclusive, meaning that they are open to all who wish to attend, whereas pre-contact events allowed only tribal members and those from friendly neighbouring tribes on the dance grounds. Ritual dancing to ensure agricultural fertility among the Algonquin peoples of early Virginia, detail of an engraving by Theodor de Bry after a watercolour by John White, ; in the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Okla. Courtesy of the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma The songs and dances performed at 21st-century powwows derive primarily from those practiced by the warrior societies of the Plains Indians, with the greatest influences coming from the Heluska Warrior Society styles common to the Omaha and Ponca peoples. After the reservation period began c. The Grand Entry not only marks the beginning of the event but also motivates dancers to arrive in a timely manner, because competition points are deducted from those who miss it. Native American dance Native American man dancing in leather attire with feather fans at a powwow in Bandera, Texas, U. After armistice, however, celebrations honouring the return of native veterans fostered the revival of homecoming dances. A new sense of friendship with other American Indian peoples also emerged as the war ended: In Oklahoma, for instance, where numerous but disparate tribes had been crowded closely together as a result of 19th-century federal removal policies, communities began to invite members of neighbouring tribes to their dances – often called picnics or fairs – as a matter of course. This practice spread to the reservations on the northern Plains as automobiles became common. Bureau of Indian Affairs initiated a program that relocated thousands of Plains Indians into large urban areas, most notably Denver; Minneapolis, Minn. This migration sparked a second wave of cultural diffusion and intertribal collaboration, as Indians whose tribal heritage was not from the Plains peoples began to adopt the music and dance styles of that region as their own. The ensuing urbanization of powwow culture encouraged sponsors to hold the largest events in metropolitan and, later, casino settings. Some aspects of the powwow circuit differ on the basis of location. Styles of music and dance that are considered northern include those from the Lakota, Dakota, and other bands of the Sioux nation and from other northern Plains peoples such as the Blackfoot and Ojibwa. Northern and southern powwow formats are similar in many ways, differing mostly in the presence or absence of specific forms of dance. Native American dance Native American boy dancing at a powwow in Canada. The northern style area includes singers from the central and northern Plains, Canada, and the Great Lakes regions, while southern singing is synonymous with that done by the Oklahoma nations. In both traditions, singing is performed by a group of individuals who are arrayed in a circle around a large drum. Musically, all powwow songs share the same basic formal structure, including a steady drumbeat, but southern songs have a lower vocal range and three accented drumbeats between repetitions of each verse. In the southern tradition, drumming is an exclusively male activity: See also Native American dance ; Native American music.

### Chapter 2 : 21 Celebrities You Didn't Know Were Native American | Babble

*It is celebrated in the State of Arizona in the United States and in the country of Mexico. The ceremony ends on Easter Sunday. The name of this festival comes from the Yaqui Indians, now living in the Tucson and Phoenix, Arizona area that are descendants of the original tribe that lived near the Yaqui River.*

Do American Indians celebrate the 4th of July? July 3rd, , 4: How do Indians observe the 4th of July? A reasonable chapter to begin in is July , when the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence and 13 colonies became the United States of America. With the emergence of a nation interested in expanding its territory came the issue of what to do with American Indians. History tells us that as the American non-Indian population increased, the indigenous population greatly decreased, along with their homelands and cultural freedoms. From the beginning, U. Enforced on reservations, the code banned Indian ceremonies, disrupted religious practices, and destroyed or confiscated sacred objects. Indian ceremonial activities were prohibited under threat of imprisonment and the withholding of treaty rations. Indian superintendents and agents implemented the code until the mids. During this year period, Indian spiritual ceremonies such as the Sun Dance and Ghost Dance were held in secret or ceased to exist. Some have since been revived or reintroduced by Indian tribes. In response to this policy of cultural and religious suppression, some tribes saw in the 4th of July and the commemoration of American independence a chance to continue their own important ceremonies. Superintendents and agents justified allowing reservations to conduct ceremonies on the 4th of July as a way for Indians to learn patriotism to the United States and to celebrate its ideals. That history is why a disproportionate number of American Indian tribal gatherings take place on or near the 4th of July and are often the social highlights of the year. Over time these cultural ceremonies became tribal homecomings. American Indian veterans in particular were welcomed home as modern-day warriors. The Navajo Tribe of Arizona and Pawnee of Oklahoma are two examples of tribes that use the 4th of July as an occasion to honor their tribal veterans. More than 12, American Indians served during World War I, and after the war, the American flag began to be given a prominent position at American Indian gatherings, especially those held on the 4th of July. This symbol of patriotism and national unity is carried into powwow and rodeo arenas today. It is extremely important to note that before the Reservation Era, when most Indians saw the American flag coming toward their villages and camps, it symbolized conflict, death, and destruction. Today tribes hold ceremonies and celebrations on or near Independence Day for different reasons. The Lumbee of North Carolina and Mattaponi of Virginia use this time as a homecoming for tribal members to renew cultural and family ties. The Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma holds Gourd Clan ceremonies on the 4th of July because the holiday coincides with their Sun Dance, which once took place during the hottest part of the year. The Lakota of South Dakota and Cheyenne of Oklahoma continue to have some of their annual Sun Dances on the weekends closest to the 4th of July to coincide with the celebration of their New Year. Some American Indians do not celebrate the 4th of July because of the negative consequences to Indian people throughout history, while others simply get together with family and have cookouts, like many non-Native American citizens. Jumping ahead to the present: To find out how individual American Indians across the country spend their 4th of July, we asked on Facebook. Here are some of the answers we received in the last few days: Independence Day has a different meaning for us as Native people. We exercise our freedom carrying on the traditions of our people in whatever that form that may be. I am headed to Quapaw Powwow, arguably the longest running annual powwowâ€™ years. Our family and tribal nation have always played host to friends and visitors from all over the world. As much turmoil the United States government has given our people in the past and present, my father has instilled in my family a sense of loyalty, liberty, and responsibility for our country. He is a Vietnam Veteran and could easily have forsaken this country due to the treatment he and other Vietnam veterans received upon their return. Instead, he chose to defend the country and the land of Indigenous Americans. He then raised his children and grandchildren to respect the country. So we will spend the day probably watching a parade in the morning and then have a BBQ with friends and family. We will honor and remember the veterans on this day. Akwesasne Mohawk territory, Haudenosaunee

territory: This while so many of our people were helping the Americans at Valley Forge, while decisive battles were won due to Iroquois allies. We have a powwow in Oneida every 4th of July, because we fought with George Washington and the colonists to help them win their independence. In Canada First Nations people are faced with that dilemma this year more so than ever, because the federal government is promoting their th anniversary and reconciliation at the same time. My choka grandfather was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, killed in action during the Korean War. I will volunteer on the 4th, if my relatives, the Redcloud family, need my assistance. Greet and end the day by thanking Creator for another blessed day. I celebrate my two grandmothers who were born on the 4th of July. They were both good grandmothers. Santa Fe, New Mexico: We chose to get married on the 4th of July. It adds nuance to a day that could just be about patriotism and blowing things up. Plus we always have the day off and get to spend the day with family and friends who believe in the importance of journeying together in peace and equality. And yes, we get fireworks, too. We have our homecoming then. It never feels like a 4th of July celebration even though it is. It feels more like what we call it, Lumbee Homecoming. We have thousands of people packed in one little town for nine days celebrating our people, our food and culture, their talent, or their coming back home to visit relatives, spending time together, and making new memories, and of course enjoying eating grape ice cream. The flag of the United States is not exclusively the flag of the immigrants who came here and created a government, it is also the flag that our own warriors defended many times in the last century and currently today. Yes, it was once flown by our enemy, but it now represents those warriors who fought under it and all those who work toward fulfillment of tribal sovereignty and treaty rights and an inclusive country where immigrants and indigenous people live together equally protected under the Constitution. It is a symbol of the treaty agreements that we as indigenous people still have our inherent rights. Do as our people always have: Help feed and care for those who need it! These are the answers we highlighted in earlier years: For three days we are just in Kiowa heaven. Been doing this for years. Now my parents have gone on, but we will continue to attend the Kiowa Gourd Dance Celebration. Yes, it represents freedom in the United States of America. Freedom to continue to worship Creator, freedom to dance my prayers, freedom to sweat, freedom to rise early and pray the day in and be up late to pray the day out. We, the Host People, celebrate the 4th of July every day! Prewitt, New Mexico, and the Navajo Nation: No, I do not celebrate. Taos is a very close-knit community, and even more so at Taos Pueblo nearby. I have been told many times that, for us, the idea of protection goes deeper than for most Americans, because this land is where our people emerged, and that any threat to it is met from a place of deep, deep meaning. People here celebrate Independence Day pretty much as they do everywhere. I wish all people could remember that, especially those who allow blind bigotry and hate to cloud their judgment. The 4th is the celebration of independence, which Native people have practiced as sovereign nations for generations. No, I do not celebrate Independence Day, simply because the Declaration of Independence labels my people "our enemies, the merciless savages of our frontiers. Because I do not celebrate Independence Day does not mean I am not proud of our Native American veterans and soldiers. Out of respect we will honor their day, because our people helped them. I celebrate the 4th of July and I do so proudly. When you have been lucky enough to travel and see life in other places, you come to appreciate the home and land you live on. Many yearsâ€”even centuriesâ€”of healing have taken place to get us to this point. And I think by celebrating the 4th of July, I feel I am honoring that healing my Pueblo ancestors have prayed for. Sawmill, Arizona, and the Navajo Nation: I recognize Independence Day as a day off, as time with family. As Native people, we recognized our independence through our prayers and practicing our traditions. Oklahoma City and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma: I think of the 4th of July as American Ideals Day. If only America would live up to its own stated ideals, none of what happened to American Indian people would have happened. Today, if those ideals were finally acted upon, American Indian sovereignty would be fully recognized and the treaties would be kept intact. The fireworks celebrate the great ideals that could be America, if only greed were not allowed to pervert them. My people, Kiowas, have always held this time of the year as a gathering of all our bands. As we progressed into this modern society we are a part of, we recognized the importance of this celebration even more so. To honor our freedoms and the men and women who sacrificed for us today is truly a reason to celebrate the 4th of July. Does it mean we are to forget our

struggles and the plight of our people? NO, but it commemorates the beauty of our land and the resolve of this nation we call America. To honor our fallen ones, who sacrificed their lives for us, and the veterans who are buried in our tribal cemeteries. To honor my daughter. Army, a proud Native American woman who is serving our country.

**Chapter 3 : Two Sides of Thanksgiving History**

*Native Americans have shown extraordinary patriotism to the United States, serving in the U.S. armed forces in every conflict since the Revolutionary War, and enlisting today in higher numbers per.*

Do American Indians celebrate Thanksgiving? November 26th, 1999: Courtesy of the Wampanoag Nation Singers and Dancers In thinking about my earliest memories of elementary school, I remember being asked to bring a brown paper sack to class so that it could be decorated and worn as part of the Indian costume used to celebrate Thanksgiving. I was also instructed to make a less-than-authentic headband with Indian designs and feathers to complete this outfit. Looking back, I now know this was wrong. The Thanksgiving Indian costume that all the other children and I made in my elementary classroom trivialized and degraded the descendants of the proud Wampanoags, whose ancestors attended the first Thanksgiving popularized in American culture. The costumes we wore bore no resemblance to Wampanoag clothing of that time period. Among the Wampanoag, and other American Indians, the wearing of feathers has significance. The Thanksgiving myth has done so much damage and harm to the cultural self-esteem of generations of Indian people, including myself, by perpetuating negative and harmful images to both young Indian and non-Indian minds. There are so many things wrong with the happy celebration that takes place in elementary schools and its association to American Indian culture; compromised integrity, stereotyping, and cultural misappropriation are three examples. When children are young, they are often exposed to antiquated images of American Indians through cartoons, books, and movies. But Thanksgiving re-enactments may be their most active personal encounter with Indian America, however poorly imagined, and many American children associate Thanksgiving actions and images with Indian culture for the rest of their lives. These cultural misunderstandings and stereotypical images perpetuate historical inaccuracy. Tolerance of mockery by teachers is a great concern to Native parents. Much harm has been done to generations of Indian people by perpetuating negative and harmful images in young minds. Presenting Thanksgiving to children as primarily a happy time trivializes our shared history and teaches a half-truth. And while I agree that elementary-school children who celebrate the first Thanksgiving in their classrooms are too young to hear the truth, educators need to share Thanksgiving facts in all American schools sometime before high school graduation. Around 1492, when he was perhaps 30, Squanto was kidnapped along with others of his people and taken across the Atlantic Ocean to Malaga, Spain, where they were sold into slavery. Monks in Spain bought Squanto, shared their faith with him, and made it possible for him to find his way to England in 1494. In England he worked for shipbuilder John Slany and became proficient in English. In 1495 Squanto returned to his homeland by joining an exploring expedition along the New England coast. When he arrived at the village where he has been raised, all his family and the rest of his tribe had been exterminated by a devastating plague. What about the Pilgrims? Separatists who fled from England to Holland seeking to escape religious persecution by English authorities, and who later booked passage to North America, are now called "Pilgrims," though Americans did not widely use the term until the 18th century. In November, 1620, the Mayflower dropped anchor in present-day Provincetown Harbor. Within the first year, half of the Pilgrims who set out from Europe on the Mayflower had perished. In desperation the Pilgrims initially survived by eating corn from abandoned fields, raiding villages for stored food and seed, and robbing graves at Corn Hill. Squanto was introduced to the Pilgrims in the spring of 1621, became friends with them, and taught them how to hunt and fish in order to survive in New England. He taught the Pilgrims how to plant corn by using fish as fertilizer and how to plant gourds around the corn so that the vines could climb the cornstalks. Due to his knowledge of English, the Pilgrims made Squanto an interpreter and emissary between the English and Wampanoag Confederacy. What really happened at the first Thanksgiving in 1621? The Pilgrims did not introduce the concept of thanksgiving; the New England tribes already had autumn harvest feasts of thanksgiving. To the original people of this continent, each day is a day of thanksgiving to the Creator. In the fall of 1621, William Bradford, the governor of the Plymouth Colony, decided to have a Plymouth harvest feast of thanksgiving and invited Massasoit, the Grand Sachem of the Wampanoag Federation, to join the Pilgrims. Massasoit came with approximately 90 warriors and brought food to add to the feast, including venison, lobster, fish, wild fowl,

clams, oysters, eel, corn, squash and maple syrup. Massasoit and the ninety warriors stayed in Plymouth for three days. These original Thanksgiving foods are far different from the meals prepared in modern Thanksgiving celebrations. Squanto died in , but Massasoit outlived the era of relative peace in colonial New England. Colonial authorities found justification to kill most of the Pequot men and enslave the captured women and their children. Pequot slaves were sent to Bermuda and the West Indies. In the official number of Pequot people living in Connecticut was Similar declines in Native population took place throughout New England as an estimated three hundred thousand Indians died by violence, and even more were displaced, in New England over the next few decades. Looking at this history raises a question: Why should Native peoples celebrate Thanksgiving? Many Natives particularly in the New England area remember this attempted genocide as a factual part of their history and are reminded each year during the modern Thanksgiving. They gather at the feet of a statue of Grand Sachem Massasoit of the Wampanoag to remember and reflect in the hope that America will never forget. Do I celebrate Thanksgiving? But I do take advantage of the holiday and get together with family and friends to share a large meal without once thinking of the Thanksgiving in I think it is the same in many Native households. I turn to the Internet to find out what Native people think of Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving was a blending of two different cultures, one culture helping another to survive. The historical knowledge we have now of what was actually taking place may not be the same as what was being experienced in those days. Our assessment now may not be fair because of all that the Native people have endured. I see many other teachers I work with who are not native struggle with knowing how to address the issue comfortably. I have to say, I have fear that if we avoid the issue altogether, Native people will be forgotten about. I have seen some teachers decide to stop teaching about Native Americans for fear of offending. I personally get sad when I see that happen. I know Thanksgiving is a controversial subject, and there are so many viewpoints. I share the modern theme of Thanksgiving, which I think has good intentionsâ€”family and community. I have also chosen to teach about Native American culture, even more heavily in November because of Thanksgiving, even though it is no longer a part of the curriculum. I have found ways to integrate it while teaching something that I think is important. I do an assembly for the students in which we dance, and I emphasize how it is not possible to teach everything there is to know about Native Americans in just one assembly. I emphasize the diversity among native people. Regardless of all the political views of Thanksgiving, we can all find something to be thankful for! Except for the last four years, the twenty years before that I spent 95 percent of my Thanksgivings at the table of my brother-in-law. Our gatherings were about giving thanks for what we had. As for Native American history being left out of teaching, it is an outrage. Educate our fellow educators on how to teach it. It would be a great way to help others teach courses and show how to respect the culture. We have family members with addiction issues. The kids get to eat, which my mom loves. And we are thankful not only to survive colonization, but also grateful to feed family. But when my daughter was young and the realization hit, as it does all young American Indians, she said to me , "Do you think we should have helped them? Could we just start over and go forward? History needs to be taught correctly in our schoolsâ€”that is what needs to happen. My daughter had to write a paper about Big Tree, Satank, and Satanta. Ecuador via Bozeman, Montana: Many of us were told a fairytale lie that led us to believe the same old story: Colonization was good for everyone and colonization was relatively peaceful the violence was necessary, the ends justify the means. Now, a lot of us are learning more, and that comes from educating ourselves with the help from those who do know. I will say this, the generic idea of thanksgiving, or taking the time to be with family and friends and give thanks for all the blessings in our lives, the big and small, is a great practice and should happen more often. I wonder how we can turn a negative into a positive? Can we have an honest Thanksgiving? Can we move forward and, if so, where do we begin? Santa Fe, New Mexico: We give pause, and acknowledge all of the blessings that we received in the past year. We think of family and friends; of the homeless; of those away from family in hospitals, elders in nursing homes, those incarcerated, the soldier men and women overseas, around the world, standing watch and guarding our freedom. We think of those in mourning, whose family have gone ahead of them. We also think of those in school, no matter what age. And, finally, we pray for traveling mercies said for folks traveling home. Our folks and ancestors left a good road to follow and prayed for gifts or successes for us that they may not have

achieved. We have opportunities even more than them in these days and days to come. Long time ago we sat down in thanksgiving and had a great day. They are smiling when we achieve. Yes, I celebrate Thanksgiving. I have a thankful heart and feel blessed, so I give thanks. Lawton, Oklahoma, with gentle humor: Do we have to feed the Pilgrims? It is good to celebrate the concept of gratitude and thankfulness.

**Chapter 4 : Red Jacket Defends Native American Religion,**

*The story of the first Thanksgiving re-enacted in classrooms throughout the United States has been romanticized beyond recognition. Understandably so, as the actual history of Native-non-Native.*

Red Jacket, also known as Sagoyewatha, was a chief and orator born in eastern New York; he derived his English name from his habit of wearing many red coats provided to him by his British allies. After the hostilities, as the British ceded their territories to the Americans, the Senecas and many other Indian peoples faced enormous pressure on their homelands. Red Jacket was a critical mediator in relations between the new U. Friend and brother; it was the will of the Great Spirit that we should meet together this day. He orders all things, and he has given us a fine day for our council. He has taken his garment from before the sun, and caused it to shine with brightness upon us; our eyes are opened, that we see clearly; our ears are unstopped, that we have been able to hear distinctly the words that you have spoken; for all these favors we thank the Great Spirit, and him only. Brother, this council fire was kindled by you; it was at your request that we came together at this time; we have listened with attention to what you have said. You requested us to speak our minds freely; this gives us great joy, for we now consider that we stand upright before you, and can speak what we think; all have heard your voice, and all speak to you as one man; our minds are agreed. Brother, you say you want an answer to your talk before you leave this place. It is right you should have one, as you are a great distance from home, and we do not wish to detain you; but we will first look back a little, and tell you what our fathers have told us, and what we have heard from the white people. Brother, listen to what we say. There was a time when our forefathers owned this great island. Their seats extended from the rising to the setting sun. The Great Spirit had made it for the use of Indians. He had created the buffalo, the deer, and other animals for food. He made the bear and the beaver, and their skins served us for clothing. He had scattered them over the country, and taught us how to take them. He had caused the earth to produce corn for bread. All this he had done for his red children because he loved them. If we had any disputes about hunting grounds, they were generally settled without the shedding of much blood. But an evil day came upon us; your forefathers crossed the great waters, and landed on this island. Their numbers were small; they found friends, and not enemies; they told us they had fled from their own country for fear of wicked men, and come here to enjoy their religion. They asked for a small seat; we took pity on them, granted their request, and they sat down amongst us; we gave them corn and meat; they gave us poison in return. The white people had now found our country; tidings were carried back, and more came amongst us; yet we did not fear them, we took them to be friends; they called us brothers; we believed them, and gave them a larger seat. At length, their numbers had greatly increased; they wanted more land; they wanted our country. Our eyes were opened, and our minds became uneasy. Wars took place; Indians were hired to fight against Indians, and many of our people were destroyed. They also brought strong liquor among us; it was strong and powerful, and has slain thousands. Brother, our seats were once large, and yours were very small; you have now become a great people, and we have scarcely a place left to spread our blankets; you have got our country, but are not satisfied; you want to force your religion upon us. Brother, continue to listen. You say you are sent to instruct us how to worship the Great Spirit agreeably to his mind, and if we do not take hold of the religion which you white people teach, we shall be unhappy hereafter. You say that you are right, and we are lost; how do we know this to be true? We understand that your religion is written in a book; if it was intended for us as well as you, why has not the Great Spirit given it to us, and not only to us, but why did he not give to our forefathers the knowledge of that book, with the means of understanding it rightly? We only know what you tell us about it. How shall we know when to believe, being so often deceived by the white people? Brother, you say there is but one way to worship and serve the Great Spirit; if there is but one religion, why do you white people differ so much about it? Why not all agree, as you can all read the book? Brother, we do not understand these things. We are told that your religion was given to your forefathers, and has been handed down from father to son. We also have a religion which was given to our forefathers, and has been handed down to us their children. We worship that way. It teacheth us to be thankful for all the favors we receive; to love each other, and to be

united. We never quarrel about religion. Brother, the Great Spirit has made us all; but he has made a great difference between his white and red children; he has given us a different complexion, and different customs; to you he has given the arts; to these he has not opened our eyes; we know these things to be true. Since he has made so great a difference between us in other things, why may we not conclude that he has given us a different religion according to our understanding. The Great Spirit does right; he knows what is best for his children; we are satisfied. Brother, we do not wish to destroy your religion, or take it from you; we only want to enjoy our own. Brother, you say you have not come to get our land or our money, but to enlighten our minds. I will now tell you that I have been at your meetings, and saw you collecting money from the meeting. I cannot tell what this money was intended for, but suppose it was for your minister; and if we should conform to your way of thinking, perhaps you may want some from us. Brother, we are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors; we are acquainted with them; we will wait, a little while and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it does them good, makes them honest and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will then consider again what you have said. Brother, you have now heard our answer to your talk, and this is all we have to say at present. As we are going to part, we will come and take you by the hand, and hope the Great Spirit will protect you on your journey, and return you safe to your friends.

*Lives of Celebrated American Indians: By the Author of Peter Parley's Tales by Samuel Griswold Goodrich and a great selection of similar Used, New and Collectible Books available now at [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com)*

The word evokes images of football, family reunions, roasted turkey with stuffing, pumpkin pie and, of course, the Pilgrims and Wampanoag, the acknowledged founders of the feast. But was it always so? Read on to find out This article explores the development of our modern holiday. For information on food at the First Thanksgiving, go to Partakers of our Plenty. From ancient times, Native People of North America have held ceremonies to give thanks for successful harvests, for the hope of a good growing season in the early spring, and for other good fortune such as the birth of a child. Giving thanks was, and still is, the primary reason for ceremonies or celebrations. In , when their labors were rewarded with a bountiful harvest after a year of sickness and scarcity, the Pilgrims gave thanks to God and celebrated His bounty in the Harvest Home tradition with feasting and sport recreation. To these people of strong Christian faith, this was not merely a revel; it was also a joyous outpouring of gratitude. The arrival of the Pilgrims and Puritans brought new Thanksgiving traditions to the American scene. Florida, Texas, Maine and Virginia each declare itself the site of the First Thanksgiving and historical documents support the various claims. However, few people knew about these events until the 20th century. They were isolated celebrations, forgotten long before the establishment of the American holiday, and they played no role in the evolution of Thanksgiving. But as James W. Baker states in his book, *Thanksgiving: Our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling that so we might after a special manner rejoice together*. This published description of the First Thanksgiving was lost during the Colonial period. It was rediscovered in Philadelphia around Reverend Young saw a similarity between his contemporary American Thanksgiving and the Harvest Feast. On this occasion they no doubt feasted on the wild turkey as well as venison. Auspicious events, such as the sudden ending of war, drought or pestilence, might inspire a thanksgiving proclamation. It was like having an extra Sabbath during the week. Fasts and thanksgivings never fell on a Sunday. In the early s, they were not annual events. Simultaneously instituted in Plymouth, Connecticut and Massachusetts, Thanksgiving became a regular event by the middle of the 17th century and it was proclaimed each autumn by the individual Colonies. By the s, the emotional significance of the New England family united around a dinner table overshadowed the civil and religious importance of Thanksgiving. By the s, almost every state and territory celebrated Thanksgiving. In , she began a campaign to reinstate the holiday after the model of the first Presidents. She publicly petitioned several Presidents to make it an annual event. The President declared two national Thanksgivings that year, one for August 6 celebrating the victory at Gettysburg and a second for the last Thursday in November. Neither Lincoln nor his successors, however, made the holiday a fixed annual event. A President still had to proclaim Thanksgiving each year, and the last Thursday in November became the customary date. In a controversial move, Franklin Delano Roosevelt lengthened the Christmas shopping season by declaring Thanksgiving for the next-to-the-last Thursday in November. Two years later, in , Congress responded by permanently establishing the holiday as the fourth Thursday in the month. After , representations of the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag began to reflect a shift of interest to the harvest celebration. By the beginning of the 20th century, the Pilgrims and the Thanksgiving holiday were used to teach children about American freedom and how to be good citizens. Each November, in classrooms across the country, students participated in Thanksgiving pageants, sang songs about Thanksgiving, and built log cabins to represent the homes of the Pilgrims. Immigrant children also learned that all Americans ate turkey for Thanksgiving dinner. The last lesson was especially effective with the recollections of most immigrant children in the 20th century including stories of rushing home after school in November to beg their parents to buy and roast a turkey for a holiday dinner. Today, many Americans delight in giving regional produce, recipes and seasonings a place on the Thanksgiving table. In New Mexico, chiles and other southwestern flavors are used in stuffing, while on the Chesapeake Bay, the local favorite, crab, often shows up as a holiday appetizer or as an ingredient in dressing. In Minnesota, the turkey might be stuffed with wild rice, and in

Washington State, locally grown hazelnuts are featured in stuffing and desserts. In Indiana, persimmon puddings are a favorite Thanksgiving dessert, and in Key West, key lime pie joins pumpkin pie on the holiday table. Some specialties have even become ubiquitous regional additions to local Thanksgiving menus; in Baltimore, for instance, it is common to find sauerkraut alongside the Thanksgiving turkey. Most of these regional variations have remained largely a local phenomenon, a means of connecting with local harvests and specialty foods. However this is not true of influential southern Thanksgiving trends that had a tremendous impact on the 20th-century Thanksgiving menu. Corn, sweet potatoes, and pork form the backbone of traditional southern home cooking, and these staple foods provided the main ingredients in southern Thanksgiving additions like ham, sweet potato casseroles, pies and puddings, and corn bread dressing. Other popular southern contributions include ambrosia a layered fruit salad traditionally made with citrus fruits and coconut; some more recent recipes use mini-marshmallows and canned fruits , biscuits, a host of vegetable casseroles, and even macaroni and cheese. Unlike the traditional New England menu, with its mince, apple and pumpkin pie dessert course, southerners added a range and selection of desserts unknown in northern dining rooms, including regional cakes, pies, puddings, and numerous cobblers. Many of these Thanksgiving menu additions spread across the country with relocating southerners. Southern cookbooks of which there are hundreds and magazines also helped popularize many of these dishes in places far beyond their southern roots. Some, like sweet potato casserole, pecan pie, and corn bread dressing, have become as expected on the Thanksgiving table as turkey and cranberry sauce. The Sunday following Thanksgiving is always the busiest travel day of the year in the United States. Each day of the long Thanksgiving weekend, more than 10 million people take to the skies. Another 40 million Americans drive miles or more to have Thanksgiving dinner. The only references to the event are reprinted below: They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help beside, served the company almost a week. At which time, amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the plantation and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain and others. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want that we often wish you partakers of our plenty. For as some were thus employed in affairs abroad, others were exercised in fishing, about cod and bass and other fish of which they took good store, of which every family had their portion. All the summer there was no want; and now began to come in store of fowl, as winter approached, of which is place did abound when they came first but afterward decreased by degrees. And besides waterfowl there was great store of wild turkeys, of which they took many, besides venison, etc. Besides, they had about a peck a meal a week to a person, or now since harvest, Indian corn to that proportion. Which made many afterwards write so largely of their plenty here to their friends in England, which were not feigned but true reports. William Bradford, Of Plymouth Plantation:

**Chapter 6 : Native American women's election to US House celebrated - Washington Times**

*Death Ceremonies - Native Americans celebrated death, knowing that it was an end to life on Earth, but, believing it to be the start of life in the Spirit World. Most tribes also believed, that the journey might be long, so after life rituals were performed to ensure that the spirits would not continued to roam the earth.*

Red Jacket, also known as Sagoyewatha, was a chief and orator born in eastern New York; he derived his English name from his habit of wearing many red coats provided to him by his British allies. After the hostilities, as the British ceded their territories to the Americans, the Senecas and many other Indian peoples faced enormous pressure on their homelands. Red Jacket was a critical mediator in relations between the new U. Friend and brother; it was the will of the Great Spirit that we should meet together this day. He orders all things, and he has given us a fine day for our council. He has taken his garment from before the sun, and caused it to shine with brightness upon us; our eyes are opened, that we see clearly; our ears are unstopped, that we have been able to hear distinctly the words that you have spoken; for all these favors we thank the Great Spirit, and him only. Brother, this council fire was kindled by you; it was at your request that we came together at this time; we have listened with attention to what you have said. You requested us to speak our minds freely; this gives us great joy, for we now consider that we stand upright before you, and can speak what we think; all have heard your voice, and all speak to you as one man; our minds are agreed. Brother, you say you want an answer to your talk before you leave this place. It is right you should have one, as you are a great distance from home, and we do not wish to detain you; but we will first look back a little, and tell you what our fathers have told us, and what we have heard from the white people. Brother, listen to what we say. There was a time when our forefathers owned this great island. Their seats extended from the rising to the setting sun. The Great Spirit had made it for the use of Indians. He had created the buffalo, the deer, and other animals for food. He made the bear and the beaver, and their skins served us for clothing. He had scattered them over the country, and taught us how to take them. He had caused the earth to produce corn for bread. All this he had done for his red children because he loved them. If we had any disputes about hunting grounds, they were generally settled without the shedding of much blood. But an evil day came upon us; your forefathers crossed the great waters, and landed on this island. Their numbers were small; they found friends, and not enemies; they told us they had fled from their own country for fear of wicked men, and come here to enjoy their religion. They asked for a small seat; we took pity on them, granted their request, and they sat down amongst us; we gave them corn and meat; they gave us poison in return. The white people had now found our country; tidings were carried back, and more came amongst us; yet we did not fear them, we took them to be friends; they called us brothers; we believed them, and gave them a larger seat. At length, their numbers had greatly increased; they wanted more land; they wanted our country. Our eyes were opened, and our minds became uneasy. Wars took place; Indians were hired to fight against Indians, and many of our people were destroyed. They also brought strong liquor among us; it was strong and powerful, and has slain thousands. Brother, our seats were once large, and yours were very small; you have now become a great people, and we have scarcely a place left to spread our blankets; you have got our country, but are not satisfied; you want to force your religion upon us. Brother, continue to listen. You say you are sent to instruct us how to worship the Great Spirit agreeably to his mind, and if we do not take hold of the religion which you white people teach, we shall be unhappy hereafter. You say that you are right, and we are lost; how do we know this to be true? We understand that your religion is written in a book; if it was intended for us as well as you, why has not the Great Spirit given it to us, and not only to us, but why did he not give to our forefathers the knowledge of that book, with the means of understanding it rightly? We only know what you tell us about it. How shall we know when to believe, being so often deceived by the white people? Brother, you say there is but one way to worship and serve the Great Spirit; if there is but one religion, why do you white people differ so much about it? Why not all agree, as you can all read the book? We are told that your religion was given to your forefathers, and has been handed down from father to son. We also have a religion which was given to our forefathers, and has been handed down to us their children. We worship that way. It teacheth us to be

thankful for all the favors we receive; to love each other, and to be united. We never quarrel about religion. Brother, the Great Spirit has made us all; but he has made a great difference between his white and red children; he has given us a different complexion, and different customs; to you he has given the arts; to these he has not opened our eyes; we know these things to be true. Since he has made so great a difference between us in other things, why may we not conclude that he has given us a different religion according to our understanding. The Great Spirit does right; he knows what is best for his children; we are satisfied. Brother, we do not wish to destroy your religion, or take it from you; we only want to enjoy our own. Brother, you say you have not come to get our land or our money, but to enlighten our minds. I will now tell you that I have been at your meetings, and saw you collecting money from the meeting. I cannot tell what this money was intended for, but suppose it was for your minister; and if we should conform to your way of thinking, perhaps you may want some from us. Brother, we are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors; we are acquainted with them; we will wait, a little while and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it does them good, makes them honest and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will then consider again what you have said. Brother, you have now heard our answer to your talk, and this is all we have to say at present. As we are going to part, we will come and take you by the hand, and hope the Great Spirit will protect you on your journey, and return you safe to your friends.

**Chapter 7 : Full text of "Celebrated American Indians"**

*Native American holidays often celebrate the sun as a life-giving power, both physically and spiritually. The Inca called their sun god Inti, and they celebrated him during the Inti Raymi. This festival traditionally begins on 21 June, the southern hemisphere's winter solstice.*

Historians have suggested that many of the dishes were likely prepared using traditional Native American spices and cooking methods. Check out the Thanksgiving by the Numbers infographic for more facts about how the first Thanksgiving compares to modern holiday traditions. Days of fasting and thanksgiving on an annual or occasional basis became common practice in other New England settlements as well. His successors John Adams and James Madison also designated days of thanks during their presidencies. In 1777, New York became the first of several states to officially adopt an annual Thanksgiving holiday; each celebrated it on a different day, however, and the American South remained largely unfamiliar with the tradition. For 36 years, she published numerous editorials and sent scores of letters to governors, senators, presidents and other politicians. Roosevelt moved the holiday up a week in an attempt to spur retail sales during the Great Depression. Thanksgiving Traditions In many American households, the Thanksgiving celebration has lost much of its original religious significance; instead, it now centers on cooking and sharing a bountiful meal with family and friends. Turkey, a Thanksgiving staple so ubiquitous it has become all but synonymous with the holiday, may or may not have been on offer when the Pilgrims hosted the inaugural feast in 1621. Today, however, nearly 90 percent of Americans eat the bird—whether roasted, baked or deep-fried—on Thanksgiving, according to the National Turkey Federation. Other traditional foods include stuffing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie. Volunteering is a common Thanksgiving Day activity, and communities often hold food drives and host free dinners for the less fortunate. Parades have also become an integral part of the holiday in cities and towns across the United States. It typically features marching bands, performers, elaborate floats conveying various celebrities and giant balloons shaped like cartoon characters. A number of U. Thanksgiving Controversies For some scholars, the jury is still out on whether the feast at Plymouth really constituted the first Thanksgiving in the United States. In their view, the traditional narrative paints a deceptively sunny portrait of relations between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag people, masking the long and bloody history of conflict between Native Americans and European settlers that resulted in the deaths of millions. Both the Separatists who came over on the Mayflower and the Puritans who arrived soon after brought with them a tradition of providential holidays—days of fasting during difficult or pivotal moments and days of feasting and celebration to thank God in times of plenty. As an annual celebration of the harvest and its bounty, moreover, Thanksgiving falls under a category of festivals that spans cultures, continents and millennia. In ancient times, the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans feasted and paid tribute to their gods after the fall harvest. Thanksgiving also bears a resemblance to the ancient Jewish harvest festival of Sukkot. Finally, historians have noted that Native Americans had a rich tradition of commemorating the fall harvest with feasting and merrymaking long before Europeans set foot on their shores.

**Chapter 8 : Native American Day - Wikipedia**

*The decision to celebrate Thanksgiving divides even Native Americans. Jacqueline Keeler wrote a widely circulated editorial about why she, a member of the Dineh Nation and Yankton Dakota Sioux, celebrates the holiday.*

Rather, their beliefs and practices form an integral and seamless part of their very being. Like other aboriginal peoples around the world, their beliefs were heavily influenced by their methods of acquiring food, from hunting to agriculture. They also embraced ceremonies and rituals that provided power to conquer the difficulties of life, as well as events and milestones, such as puberty, marriage, and death. Taos Indian with peace pipe The arrival of European settlers marked a major change in Native American culture. Some of the first Europeans that the Indians would meet were often missionaries who looked upon Native American Spirituality practices as worthless superstition inspired by the Christian devil. These early missionaries then determined to convert the Native Americans to Christianity. As more and more Europeans flooded North America, US and Canadian governments instituted policies to force Natives onto reservations and to encourage them to become assimilated into the majority culture. This also changed their spiritual traditions and when, in 1978, the U. Federal Government began to work towards banning Native American Religious Rights, which impacted their ceremonies. At that time, U. Interior Secretary Henry M. When the Seventh U. Though some traditions were lost along the way, many others survived despite the ban, and various tribes continue to follow many spiritual traditions. Some Native Americans have been devout Christians for generations, and their practices today combine their traditional customs with Christian elements. Other tribes, particularly in the Southwest, have retained their aboriginal traditions, mostly intact. Tribute to the Dead Death Ceremonies Native Americans celebrated death, knowing that it was an end to life on Earth, but, believing it to be the start of life in the Spirit World. Most tribes also believed, that the journey might be long, so after life rituals were performed to ensure that the spirits would not continued to roam the earth. Various tribes honored the dead in several ways, by giving them food, herbs, and gifts to ensure a safe journey to the after life. The Hopi Indians believe that the soul moves along a Sky path westwards and that those who have lived a righteous life will travel with ease. To ensure a safe journey, they wash their dead with natural yucca suds and dress them in traditional clothes. Prayer feathers are often tied around the forehead of the deceased, and they are buried with favorite possessions and feathered prayer sticks. Traditional foods and special herbs are served and placed at the grave side. The Navajo perceived that living to an old age was a sign of a life well lived, thus ensuring that the soul would be born again. After life rituals could last for several days with careful thought given to foods and herbs chosen for the celebration, a reflection on how the deceased lived their life. Many believe, that on that day, the spirits return to visit family and friends. In preparation various tribes would prepare food and decorate their homes with ears of corn as blessings for the dead. The ceremony typically coincides in the late summer and is tied to the ripening of the corn crops. Marked with dancing, feasting, fasting and religious observations, the ceremony usually lasts for three days. Activities varied from tribe to tribe, but the common thread is that the corn was not to be eaten until the Great Spirit has been given his proper thanks. During the event, tribal members give thanks for the corn, rain, sun, and a good harvest. Some tribes even believe that they were made from corn by the Great Spirits. The Green Corn Festival is also a religious renewal, with various religious ceremonies. Others also signify the event as the time of year when youth come of age and babies are given their names. Several tribes incorporate ball games and tournaments in the event. Cleansing and purifying activities often occur, including cleaning out homes, burning waste, and drinking emetics to purify the body. At the end of each day of the festival, feasts are held to celebrate the good harvest. Green Corn festivals are still practiced today by many different native peoples of the Southeastern Woodland Culture. Incense over a medicine bundle, by Edward S. Curtis, Healing Rituals Symbolic healing rituals and ceremonies were often held to bring participants into harmony with themselves, their tribe, and their environment. Ceremonies were used to help groups of people return to harmony; but, large ceremonies were generally not used for individual healing. Varying widely from tribe to tribe, some tribes, such as the Sioux and Navajo used a medicine wheel, a sacred hoop, and would sing and dance in ceremonies that might last for

days. Historic Indian traditions also used many plants and herbs as remedies or in spiritual celebrations, creating a connection with spirits and the after life. The healing process in Native American Medicine is much different than how most of us see it today. Native American healing includes beliefs and practices that combine religion , spirituality, herbal medicine , and rituals, that are used for both medical and emotional conditions. From the Native American perspective, medicine is more about healing the person than curing a disease.

**Chapter 9 : Thanksgiving - HISTORY**

*American Indian Heritage Day, also known as Native American Heritage Day, recognizes the native American heritage, history and contributions. It's the Friday after Thanksgiving Day in the United States. Some states recognize this day as a legal holiday or observance. Is American Indian Heritage Day.*

History[ edit ] Early thanksgiving observances[ edit ] Shrine of the first U. The first documented thanksgiving services in territory currently belonging to the United States were conducted by Spaniards [9] [10] and the French [11] in the 16th century. Wisdom practices such as expressing gratitude, sharing, and giving away, are integral to many indigenous cultures and communities. Thanksgiving services were routine in what became the Commonwealth of Virginia as early as , [12] with the first permanent settlement of Jamestown, Virginia holding a thanksgiving in External video The True Story of the First Thanksgiving , American Experience , PBS , November 24, [15] Harvest festival observed by the Pilgrims at Plymouth[ edit ] Americans also trace the Thanksgiving holiday to a celebration at the Plimoth Plantation , where the settlers held a harvest feast after a successful growing season. Autumn or early winter feasts continued sporadically in later years, first as an impromptu religious observance and later as a civil tradition. Squanto , a Patuxet Native American who resided with the Wampanoag tribe, taught the Pilgrims how to catch eel and grow corn and served as an interpreter for them. Squanto had learned the English language during his enslavement in England. The Wampanoag leader Massasoit had given food to the colonists during the first winter when supplies brought from England were insufficient. The Pilgrims celebrated at Plymouth for three days after their first harvest in . The exact time is unknown, but James Baker, the Plimoth Plantation vice president of research, stated in , "The event occurred between Sept. It included 50 persons who were on the Mayflower all who remained of the who had landed and 90 Native Americans. Gaudens is based on his earlier work The Puritan Two colonists gave personal accounts of the feast in Plymouth. The Pilgrims, most of whom were Separatists English Dissenters , are not to be confused with Puritans , who established their own Massachusetts Bay Colony on the Shawmut Peninsula current day Boston in Puritans wished to remain in the Anglican Church and reform it, while the Pilgrims wanted complete separation from the church. William Bradford , in Of Plymouth Plantation wrote: They began now to gather in the small harvest they had, and to fit up their houses and dwellings against winter, being all well recovered in health and strength and had all things in good plenty. For as some were thus employed in affairs abroad, others were exercised in fishing, about cod and bass and other fish, of which they took good store, of which every family had their portion. All the summer there was no want; and now began to come in store of fowl, as winter approached, of which this place did abound when they can be used but afterward decreased by degrees. And besides waterfowl there was great store of wild turkeys, of which they took many, besides venison, etc. Besides, they had about a peck a meal a week to a person, or now since harvest, Indian corn to the proportion. Which made many afterwards write so largely of their plenty here to their friends in England, which were not feigned but true reports. The painting shows common misconceptions about the event that persist to modern times: Pilgrims did not wear such outfits, and the Wampanoag are dressed in the style of Native Americans from the Great Plains. Our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruits of our labor. They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help beside, served the company almost a week. At which time, amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which we brought to the plantation and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain and others. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want that we often wish you partakers of our plenty. William DeLoss Love calculates that this thanksgiving was made on Wednesday, July 30, , a day before the arrival of a supply ship with more colonists, [25] but before the fall harvest. And afterwards the Lord sent them such seasonable showers, with interchange of fair warm weather as, through His blessing, caused a fruitful and liberal harvest, to their no small comfort and rejoicing. For which mercy, in time

convenient, they also set apart a day of thanksgiving. By this time harvest was come, and instead of famine now God gave them plenty for which they blessed God. And the effect of their particular planting was well seen, for all had pretty well so as any general want or famine had not been amongst them since to this day. By the eighteenth century the original booklet appeared to be lost or forgotten. A copy was rediscovered in Philadelphia in , with the first full reprinting in . In a footnote the editor, Alexander Young, was the first person to identify the feast as the first Thanksgiving. Kennedy issued Proclamation on November 5, stating, "Over three centuries ago, our forefathers in Virginia and in Massachusetts, far from home in a lonely wilderness, set aside a time of thanksgiving. On the appointed day, they gave reverent thanks for their safety, for the health of their children, for the fertility of their fields, for the love which bound them together and for the faith which united them with their God. The First National Proclamation of Thanksgiving was given by the Continental Congress in from its temporary location in York, Pennsylvania , while the British occupied the national capital at Philadelphia. Delegate Samuel Adams created the first draft. Congress then adapted the final version: For as much as it is the indispensable Duty of all Men to adore the superintending Providence of Almighty God; to acknowledge with Gratitude their Obligation to him for Benefits received, and to implore such farther Blessings as they stand in Need of: And it having pleased him in his abundant Mercy, not only to continue to us the innumerable Bounties of his common Providence; but also to smile upon us in the Prosecution of a just and necessary War, for the Defense and Establishment of our unalienable Rights and Liberties; particularly in that he hath been pleased, in so great a Measure, to prosper the Means used for the Support of our Troops, and to crown our Arms with most signal success: It is therefore recommended to the legislative or executive Powers of these United States to set apart Thursday, the eighteenth Day of December next, for Solemn Thanksgiving and Praise: That at one Time and with one Voice, the good People may express the grateful Feelings of their Hearts, and consecrate themselves to the Service of their Divine Benefactor; and that, together with their sincere Acknowledgments and Offerings, they may join the penitent Confession of their manifold Sins, whereby they had forfeited every Favor; and their humble and earnest Supplication that it may please God through the Merits of Jesus Christ, mercifully to forgive and blot them out of Remembrance; That it may please him graciously to afford his Blessing on the Governments of these States respectively, and prosper the public Council of the whole: To inspire our Commanders, both by Land and Sea, and all under them, with that Wisdom and Fortitude which may render them fit Instruments, under the Providence of Almighty God, to secure for these United States, the greatest of all human Blessings, Independence and Peace: That it may please him, to prosper the Trade and Manufactures of the People, and the Labor of the Husbandman, that our Land may yield its Increase: To take Schools and Seminaries of Education, so necessary for cultivating the Principles of true Liberty, Virtue and Piety, under his nurturing Hand; and to prosper the Means of Religion, for the promotion and enlargement of that Kingdom, which consisteth "in Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost. And it is further recommended, That servile Labor, and such Recreation, as, though at other Times innocent, may be unbecoming the Purpose of this Appointment, be omitted on so solemn an Occasion. George Washington , leader of the revolutionary forces in the American Revolutionary War, proclaimed a Thanksgiving in December as a victory celebration honoring the defeat of the British at Saratoga. Done in Congress at Philadelphia, the eleventh day of October, in the year of our LORD, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-two, and of our Sovereignty and Independence, the seventh. The next day, Congressman Elias Boudinot from New Jersey proposed that the House and Senate jointly request of President Washington to proclaim a day of thanksgiving for "the many signal favors of Almighty God". Boudinot said that he "could not think of letting the session pass over without offering an opportunity to all the citizens of the United States of joining, with one voice, in returning to Almighty God their sincere thanks for the many blessings he had poured down upon them. Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor, and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me "to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and

happiness. That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks, for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country previous to their becoming a Nation, for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his providence, which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war, for the great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed, for the peaceable and rational manner, in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted, for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us. And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions, to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually, to render our national government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed, to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations especially such as have shown kindness unto us and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord. To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease of science among them and Us, and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best.

President John Adams declared Thanksgivings in and No Thanksgiving proclamations were issued by Thomas Jefferson but James Madison renewed the tradition in , in response to resolutions of Congress, at the close of the War of Caleb Strong, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts , declared the holiday in , "for a day of public thanksgiving and prayer" for Thursday, November 25 of that year. The document, written by Secretary of State William H. Seward , reads as follows: The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle, or the ship; the axe had enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years, with large increase of freedom. No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and voice by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the city of Washington, this third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three , and of the

independence of the United States the eighty-eighth. The holiday superseded Evacuation Day , a de facto national holiday that had been held on November 25 each year prior to the Civil War and commemorated the British withdrawal from the United States after the American Revolution. A traditional New England Thanksgiving, for example, consisted of a raffle held on Thanksgiving Eve in which the prizes were mainly geese or turkeys , a shooting match on Thanksgiving morning in which turkeys and chickens were used as targets , church services and then the traditional feast, which consisted of some familiar Thanksgiving staples such as turkey and pumpkin pie, and some not-so-familiar dishes such as pigeon pie. In New York City, people would dress up in fanciful masks and costumes and roam the streets in merry-making mobs. By the beginning of the 20th century, these mobs had morphed[ citation needed ] into Ragamuffin parades consisting mostly of children dressed as "ragamuffins" in costumes of old and mismatched adult clothes and with deliberately smudged faces, but by the late s the tradition had diminished enough to only exist in its original form in a few communities around New York, with many of its traditions subsumed into the Halloween custom of trick-or-treating. But in , President Franklin D. Roosevelt broke with this tradition. Although many popular histories state otherwise, he made clear that his plan was to establish the holiday on the next-to-last Thursday in the month instead of the last one. With the country still in the midst of The Great Depression , Roosevelt thought an earlier Thanksgiving would give merchants a longer period to sell goods before Christmas. Increasing profits and spending during this period, Roosevelt hoped, would help bring the country out of the Depression. At the time, advertising goods for Christmas before Thanksgiving was considered inappropriate. People began referring to November 30 as the "Republican Thanksgiving" and November 23 as the "Democratic Thanksgiving" or " Franksgiving ". As in , some states went along with the change while others retained the traditional last-Thursday date. Mordecai Johnson , president of Howard University, serving portions of Thanksgiving turkey to members of his family in On October 6, , both houses of the U. Congress passed a joint resolution fixing the traditional last-Thursday date for the holiday beginning in However, in December of that year the Senate passed an amendment to the resolution that split the difference by requiring that Thanksgiving be observed annually on the fourth Thursday of November, which was usually the last Thursday and sometimes two years out of seven, on average the next to last. Most communities have annual food drives that collect non-perishable packaged and canned foods, and corporations sponsor charitable distributions of staple foods and Thanksgiving dinners. Foods of the season[ edit ] Main article: It is continued in modern times with the Thanksgiving dinner , traditionally featuring turkey, playing a central role in the celebration of Thanksgiving. In the United States, certain kinds of food are traditionally served at Thanksgiving meals. Turkey , usually roasted and stuffed but sometimes deep-fried instead , is typically the featured item on most Thanksgiving feast tables, so much so that Thanksgiving is also colloquially known as "Turkey Day. Green bean casserole was introduced in and remains a favorite. All of these are actually native to the Americas or were introduced as a new food source to the Europeans when they arrived. Turkey may be an exception. In his book *Mayflower*, Nathaniel Philbrick suggests that the Pilgrims might already have been familiar with turkey in England, even though the bird is native to the Americas. The Spaniards had brought domesticated turkeys back from Central America in the early 17th century, and the birds soon became popular fare all over Europe, including England, where turkey as an alternative to the traditional goose became a "fixture at English Christmases".