

Journal #6123

Season's Greetings

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Elevating Native voices is essential

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In 1924, elephants from the Central Park Zoo marched in Macy's inaugural parade

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She buried her son on sacred land. Then a pipeline company came

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Seventh State of the Union Address by President US Grant December 7, 1875

Seasons's Greetings





Today, we pause to reflect on the National Day of Mourning—a day that began in 1970 as a protest against the silencing of Native voices and the myths surrounding Thanksgiving. It's a reminder of the historical injustices faced by Indigenous peoples and the ongoing struggles for recognition, equity, and justice.

The National Day of Mourning remains as relevant now as it was over 50 years ago. Native voices are still too often excluded from conversations about history, culture, and policy. This day calls on all of us to acknowledge the truths of our shared past and to work toward a future where Native perspectives are heard and valued.

Elevating Native voices is essential—not just to honor the resilience and strength of Indigenous communities but to ensure that their stories and experiences, long ignored, are given the platform they deserve. We invite you to take this moment to [listen, learn, and amplify Native perspectives](#) in whatever way you can.

Thank you for joining us in recognizing the significance of this day and in supporting Native voices now and always.

Listen, Learn, Amplify

[An Indigenous perspective on Thanksgiving](#)

For today's Native Americans, the history of Thanksgiving is much more complicated than what is taught in school. Decades of violence and disease brought by European settlers had devastated local tribes; without this subjugation of the indigenous population, the Pilgrims could never have settled at Plymouth. And while it's true that the Wampanoag offered their help to the Pilgrims, their decision was more strategic than altruistic. This history provides additional context to the traditional Thanksgiving myth. Read on potawatomi.org

[The historically accurate menu at the first Thanksgiving](#)

We might serve turkey and mashed potatoes now, but neither of those made it onto the table in 1621. This guide to the first Thanksgiving meal covers what would and would not have been served when the Pilgrims and Wampanoag sat down to celebrate their successful harvest. While they didn't have pumpkin pie, the custard made from roasted pumpkin, honey, milk, and spices sounds pretty good even by today's standards. Read on history.com

[Stephen Jennings, Esq. - Native American Heritage Month](#)

[Clip | 1m |](#)

[Stephen Jennings, Esq., Attorney at Law, Jennings & Jennings LLC \(1m\)](#)

[Sid Jamieson - Native American Heritage Month](#)

[Clip | 2m 30s | Sid Jamieson - Former Lacrosse Coach, Bucknell University \(2m 30s\)](#)

[Lakota Sky Maglioli - Native American Heritage Month](#)

[Clip | 1m | Lakota Sky Maglioli - Owner, Old Man John's \(1m\)](#)

[Frank Littlebear - Native American Heritage Month](#)

[Clip | 1m | Frank Littlebear - Native American Lecturer, Musician & Artist \(1m\)](#)

[Evolution of the Thanksgiving Proclamation](#)

[The text of Presidential thanksgiving proclamations reveals a the dramatic evolution of the idea and meaning of Thanksgiving Day. Thanksgiving proclamations began as a call to participate in a day of solemn reflection and expression of thanks to a Supreme Being. Over time, however, the Thanksgiving Proclamation has evolved to evoke a distinctively American history and celebration of certain core values. \(Jump to the list of proclamations\)](#)
[Read more](#)

The Wampanoag people, weakened by disease, were at risk of being forcefully subsumed by the neighboring Narragansett tribe. Recognizing an opportunity, the Wampanoag offered the settlers necessary survival skills in exchange for protection through the settlers' firearms. The treaty remained in place for more than 40 years. Found via [History](#)

In 1924, elephants from the Central Park Zoo marched in Macy's inaugural parade

Enormous balloons didn't make an appearance until 1927, and the parade wasn't televised until 1948. But no matter the decade, a visit from Santa Claus has always been a highlight.

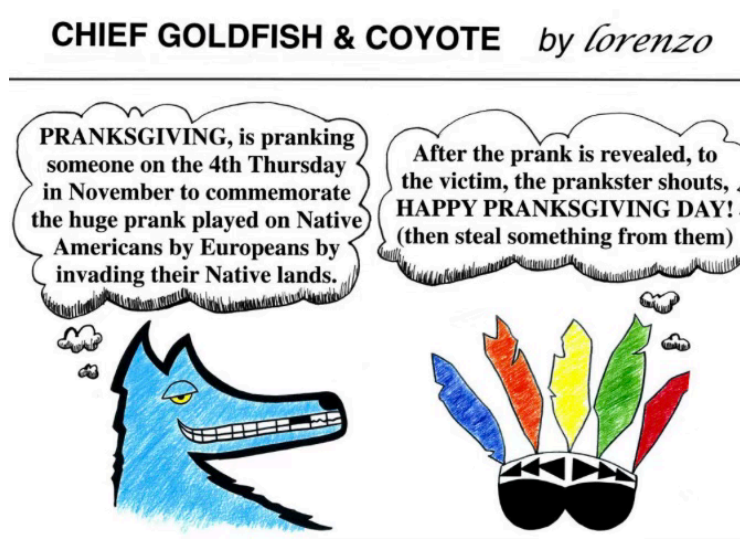
Found via Business Insider

https://currently.att.yahoo.com/news/article/photos-presidential-turkey-pardons--a-look-back-122014100.html?ncid=crm_-1295960-20251124-591--A

Quakers Against Thanksgiving

In colonial America, government "thanksgivings" blurred faith and politics. For Quakers, rejecting them was an act of religious conviction.

https://daily.jstor.org/quakers-against-thanksgiving/?utm_source=firefox-newtab-en-us



Consider swapping your standard Turkey Day mashed potatoes for this Indigenous roasted potato recipe

"Like many teachings perpetuated by our education system, these inaccurate history lessons largely disregard the devastating traumas that colonialism wreaked upon the area's original residents," he continues. "But against all odds, steadfast cooks, seed keepers, and food sovereignty warriors have strived to maintain connection to their foodways by reviving heirloom varieties and reintroducing important ingredients to their communities."

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2025/11/17/recipe-roasted-smashed-baby-potatoes/>

Colonists at the First Thanksgiving Were Mostly Men Because Women Had Perished

The three-day feast was about giving thanks, but it wasn't much like today's holiday.

Sarah Pruitt

When families gather annually in the fall to eat turkey, watch football and perhaps partake in some [Black Friday](#) shopping, they might be surprised to learn how much we don't know about the origins of the [Thanksgiving](#).

Nearly all of what historians have learned about one of the first Thanksgiving comes from a single eyewitness report: a letter written in December 1621 by Edward Winslow, one of the 100 or so people who sailed from England aboard the [Mayflower](#) in 1620 and founded Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts. William Bradford, Plymouth's governor in 1621, wrote briefly of the event in *Of Plymouth Plantation*, his history of the colony, but that was more than 20 years after the feast itself.

According to this account (elements of which continue to be debated by historians, especially regarding the presence and role of Native Americans), the historic event didn't happen on the fourth Thursday in November, as it does today—and it wasn't known as Thanksgiving. In fact, it took place over three days sometime between late September and mid-November in 1621, and was considered a harvest celebration.

“Basically it was to celebrate the end of a successful harvest,” says Tom Begley, the executive liaison for administration, research and special projects at [Plimoth Plantation](#). “The three-day celebration included feasting, games and military exercises, and there was definitely an amount of diplomacy between the colonists and the native attendees as well.”

A depiction of early settlers of the Plymouth Colony sharing a harvest Thanksgiving meal with members of the local Wampanoag tribe at the Plymouth Plantation.

Frederic Lewis/Archive Photos/Getty Images

It was a feast for a young crowd.

[Just over 50 colonists](#) are believed to have attended, including 22 men, four married women—including Edward Winslow's wife—and more than 25 children and teenagers. These were the lucky ones who had made it through a [rough entry into the New World](#), including a harsh winter during which an epidemic of disease swept through the colony, felling nearly half the original group. Some 78 percent of the women who had arrived on the Mayflower had died during the first winter, a far higher percentage than for men or children. “For the English, [the first Thanksgiving] was also celebrating the fact that they had survived their first year here in New England,” Begley points out.

The Plymouth colonists were likely outnumbered more than two-to-one at the event by their Native American counterparts. Winslow's account records “many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men.” Massasoit (who was actually named Ousemequin) was the sachem (leader) of the Pokanoket [Wampanoag](#), a local Native American society that had begun dealings with the colonists earlier in 1621.

“We don't know for sure how it came about that they were there,” Begley says of the Native Americans at the first Thanksgiving. “Some native historians have suggested that Massasoit and his men were in the area anyways, because at the end of the harvest was when they typically made their diplomatic rounds to other native groups. Also, Massasoit commented to the Pilgrims in March of 1621 that they would be back to plant the corn on the south side of what we know as Town Brook in Plymouth. So he still recognizes that there are some planting grounds that are his peoples’ in Plymouth.”

The first feast was also about giving thanks.

While the 1621 event may not have been called Thanksgiving, the sentiment was certainly present in that historic celebration, just as it would play a defining role in how the tradition developed over the centuries to come.

“Giving thanks is really an important part of both cultures,” Begley says. “For the English, before and after every meal there was a prayer of thanksgiving. For something on this scale, celebrating a successful harvest, there definitely would have been moments of giving thanks to their God.”

For the Native Americans at the first Thanksgiving, giving thanks was a daily part of life. “We as native people [traditionally] have thanksgivings as a daily, ongoing thing,” Linda Coombs, the former associate director of the Wampanoag program at Plimoth Plantation, [told the *Christian Science Monitor*](#). “Every time anybody went hunting or fishing or picked a plant, they would offer a prayer or acknowledgment.”

Venison and shellfish were on the menu.

When the colonists and Native Americans [sat down to feast](#), they probably enjoyed quite different fare than what we’re used to seeing on our Thanksgiving tables today. They *may* have eaten wild turkey, which Bradford mentions was plentiful in the colony, but it’s not certain even that most ubiquitous of Thanksgiving staples was on the menu.

In addition to venison (Winslow wrote that the Native Americans killed five deer and presented it to the colonists), Begley says that the group probably ate fish and shellfish, which were abundant in the region, as well as fruits and vegetables that the colonists grew in their home gardens. “Cabbage, carrot, cucumbers, leeks, lettuce, parsnips, pumpkins,” he lists. “There were also a lot of native wild plants that English learned how to cook, including Jerusalem artichokes, garlic, cranberries, Concord grapes, walnuts and chestnuts.”

The Plymouth colonists certainly did not serve potatoes, which weren’t available to them at the time, and it’s unlikely they prepared the sweet cranberry sauce we know today—their cranberries were more likely a tart garnish. Pumpkin pie would have been impossible, as the colony didn’t have butter, wheat flour or an oven.

As for who prepared the food for the first Thanksgiving, Winslow’s account (like many contemporary sources) doesn’t offer much in the way of domestic details. “There were only four English housewives that were alive in 1621, out of, I think, 20 that came on the *Mayflower*,” Begley says. “That’s not really a lot of people to help you prepare a meal for over 100. So we can

speculate that the children, servants and probably some unmarried men were also helping out in preparing all the food.”

The fall tradition took hold in New England.

While it’s not known whether the Plymouth colonists repeated the 1621 celebration in subsequent years, the tradition of giving thanks to God merged with celebrations of the harvest to become a fall tradition in New England by the late 1600s.

But the significance of that first 1621 harvest celebration didn’t really emerge until the mid-19th century, after the writer Alexander Young rediscovered Winslow’s letter and made it famous in his 1841 book [*Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*](#). Bradford’s manuscript, stolen by the British during the Revolutionary War, was recovered in the 1850s, just in time for the magazine editor [Sarah Josepha Hale](#) to incorporate it into her campaign to create an official national Thanksgiving holiday.

In 1863, Hale achieved her goal when President [Abraham Lincoln](#) proclaimed the final Thursday in November as a national Thanksgiving holiday for the first time. From its roots in the Plymouth harvest celebration to Hale and Lincoln’s attempt to mend a divided nation during the [Civil War](#), we can trace the origins of the annual celebration of family, food and gratitude we know today.

As for Black Friday, [that’s a whole other story](https://www.history.com/articles/first-thanksgiving-colonists-native-americans-men).
<https://www.history.com/articles/first-thanksgiving-colonists-native-americans-men> [Bernard Alvarez](#)

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**Most folks don’t know this, but many Native Americans don’t “celebrate” Thanksgiving the way the rest of the country does. For us, it’s a National Day of Mourning. It’s a time to honor our ancestors, remember the truth of what happened on this land, and hold space for all the lives, cultures, and traditions that were nearly erased.**

It’s not about guilt or pointing fingers. It’s about truth-telling. It’s about respecting the people who were here long before colonization, and acknowledging the pain, the resilience, and the stories that still deserve to be heard.

So while many gather for turkey and thanks, we gather in remembrance, in ceremony, and in strength. We honor our relatives who carried our traditions through generations of hardship. And we keep our culture alive by speaking openly about our history—because healing doesn’t happen through silence.

If you’re observing tomorrow, whatever that looks like for you, I hope you do it with awareness and an open heart. - PS- I personally love Thanksgiving dinner and I love hosting and cooking. For me it's a moment of gratitude and community.

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Whatever.....Am grateful to have you as readers and thankful for being able to be in this place and time.....for all the adventures.....and all those accomplishments of those around me.
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### [The Forgotten Ledger ·](#)

She buried her son on a hill overlooking the river. Then a pipeline company announced plans to drill right next to his grave. She said if she had to stand alone to stop them, she would stand.

LaDonna Brave Bull Allard knew every inch of the land where the Cannonball River meets the Missouri. Her people, the Standing Rock Sioux, had lived there for thousands of years. She had hauled water from that river as a child. She had watched her family's burial sites flood when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built a dam in the 1950s. And in 2009, she had buried her son Philip on that sacred ground.

Then in 2016, she learned that the Dakota Access Pipeline was coming. The route would cut through burial sites, sacred grounds, and run beneath Lake Oahe—the drinking water source for her entire reservation. And it would be built right next to her son's grave.

LaDonna was 59 years old. She was a tribal historian, not an activist. She worked as Standing Rock's Historic Preservation Officer, documenting sacred sites and protecting her people's history. She knew these lands held 380 archaeological sites. Twenty-six of them were right there at the river confluence—places sacred not just to the Sioux, but to the Arikara, Mandan, and Northern Cheyenne nations.

She had spent years cataloging these sites, protecting them, making sure the world remembered her people existed here.

Now a pipeline company was going to bulldoze through them anyway.

On April 1, 2016, LaDonna made a decision. She would donate her family's land to establish a resistance camp. She called it Sacred Stone Camp, named after the spherical sandstone formations the river used to create before the government destroyed them decades earlier. She set up tents. She started a fire circle. And she waited.

"I told Dakota Access that if I'm the only person standing, I'm standing," she said. "They will not build this pipeline."

Her reasons were both universal and heartbreakingly personal.

"It's not some grandiose 'save the world,'" she explained. "I'm just a mom. I can't conceive of anybody building a pipeline next to my son's grave."

She posted a message on social media. A call for help. A prayer that someone, anyone, would join her.

People came.

First, a few. Then dozens. Then hundreds. Indigenous youth who called themselves "ReZpect Our Water." Tribal elders who brought teachings and prayers. Representatives from other tribes who remembered their own battles with broken treaties and stolen land.

By summer 2016, Sacred Stone Camp had become something no one predicted: the largest gathering of Indigenous peoples in over a century.

Thousands of people from more than 100 tribes traveled to Standing Rock. They came from across North America and eventually from around the world. They called themselves water protectors, not protesters, because they weren't opposing something—they were defending life itself.

LaDonna stood at the center of it all, teaching about the land's history, explaining why these sites mattered, reminding everyone that this fight was about more than one pipeline.

"We say mni wiconi—water of life," she told visitors. "Every time we drink water, we say mni wiconi. We cannot live without water. I don't understand why America doesn't understand how important water is."

Then came September 3, 2016. Labor Day weekend.

LaDonna had documented sacred burial sites directly in the pipeline's path. The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe had submitted this information to the courts, requesting protection for these places. On September 3, hundreds of water protectors walked to the construction site to plant tribal flags in ceremony. They thought work had stopped for the holiday weekend.

But when they arrived, bulldozers were already destroying the exact burial grounds LaDonna had identified.

The company had bulldozed sacred sites on the weekend—before the judge could even rule on the tribe's request to protect them.

When water protectors tried to stop the destruction, private security guards unleashed attack dogs. At least six people and one horse were bitten. Security workers used pepper spray on the crowd.

The world watched the footage in horror. Dogs attacking Indigenous people trying to protect their ancestors' graves.

But the pipeline company kept building.

Throughout that fall and winter, LaDonna kept the camps going. When critics said people would leave when North Dakota winter arrived, she laughed. "I'm from North Dakota. Winter is nothing. We know how to survive."

And they stayed. The grandmothers stayed. Young people stayed. Water protectors endured subzero temperatures, blizzards, and increasingly violent confrontations with law enforcement.

Over 140 people were arrested. Many reported being strip-searched in harsh conditions. LaDonna's own daughter was strip-searched in front of male officers and left naked and freezing in a cell for hours. But the resistance continued.

LaDonna traveled to the United Nations to speak. She wrote articles. She gave interviews. She explained over and over that this wasn't just about one pipeline—it was about the fundamental right of Indigenous peoples to protect their land, water, and sacred sites. "We are fighting for our liberation, and the liberation of Mother Earth," she wrote. "We want every last oil and gas pipe removed from her body."

In early 2017, the government forced the camps to close. Protesters were evicted. The pipeline was eventually completed. LaDonna returned to her home in Fort Yates, heartbroken but unbowed. She kept fighting. She turned her property into a refuge for water protectors from around the world. She continued speaking at the UN. She never stopped advocating for her people.

But something had shifted. The Standing Rock movement had awakened a global consciousness about Indigenous rights, climate justice, and the sacredness of water. The images of water protectors—the prayers, the elders, the youth, LaDonna standing by her fire—became symbols of resistance worldwide.

In 2020, LaDonna was diagnosed with glioblastoma, an aggressive brain cancer. She underwent surgery, but the cancer was relentless.

On April 10, 2021—exactly five years and nine days after she founded Sacred Stone Camp—LaDonna Brave Bull Allard died at age 64.

Indigenous youth on their way to another pipeline protest stopped by her house. They placed banners and signs in her yard: "We love you LaDonna" and "Water is Life." They chanted outside her window.

Her son told them: "She heard you. She knows you're here."

Even dying, LaDonna's last message was clear: "Don't be sad for me. Continue the fight." Today, LaDonna's legacy lives in every movement that protects water. In every Indigenous community fighting pipelines. In every person who understands that clean water is a human right, not a privilege.

She proved that resistance can begin with one woman standing on her family's land, next to her son's grave, saying: "Not here. Not this. I will stand."

And when she stood, thousands stood with her.

LaDonna Brave Bull Allard didn't stop the Dakota Access Pipeline. The pipeline was built. The oil flows.

But she started something they can never build over: a global movement of people who refuse to let corporations and governments destroy sacred land and poison water without a fight. She was just a mom who couldn't conceive of a pipeline being built next to her son's grave. **And that mother's love became a revolution.**

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## **Seventh State of the Union Address by President US Grant December 7, 1875**

Centennial Address: An update from the 6th.....and commenting on the changes of the US since 1776. One really needs to read the entire address!

“The proceedings of the joint commission under the convention between the United States and Mexico of the 4th of July, 1868, on the subject of claims, will soon be brought to a close. The result of those proceedings will then be communicated to Congress. *“(Ed note: The Mexican Claims Commission continued to 1946 when it was disbanded to create the Indian Claims Commission. Some of the claims still remain in the courts. sdc)”*

Laying of cable under the Atlantic Ocean:

“There is reason to believe that large amounts of capital, both at home and abroad, are ready to seek profitable investment in the advancement of this useful and most civilizing means of intercourse and correspondence. They await, however, the assurance of the means and conditions on which they may safely be made tributary to the general good.” Rules therefore

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“The discovery of gold in the Black Hills, a portion of the Sioux Reservation, has had the effect to induce a large emigration of miners to that point. Thus far the effort to protect the treaty rights of the Indians to that section has been successful, but the next year will certainly witness a large increase of such emigration. The negotiations for the relinquishment of the gold fields having failed, it will be necessary for Congress to adopt some measures to relieve the embarrassment growing out of the causes named. The Secretary of the Interior suggests that the supplies now appropriated for the sustenance of that people, being no longer obligatory under the treaty of 1868, but simply a gratuity, may be issued or withheld at his discretion.

The condition of the Indian Territory, to which I have referred in several of my former annual messages, remains practically unchanged. The Secretary of the Interior has taken measures to obtain a full report of the condition of that Territory, and will make it the subject of a special report at an early day. It may then be necessary to make some further recommendation in regard to legislation for the government of that Territory.

“The method for the treatment of the Indians adopted at the beginning of my first term has been steadily pursued, and with satisfactory and encouraging results. It has been productive of evident improvement in the condition of that race, and will be continued, with only such modifications as further experience may indicate to be necessary.”

*Ed note: AI corrected me.....they were “Annual Addresses ro Congress until 1947”)*