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Thanksgiving

The year has turned its circle,
The seasons come and go.
The harvest is all gathered in
And chilly north winds blow.
Orchards have shared their treasures,
The fields, their yellow grain.
So open wide the doorway-
Thanksgiving comes again!

- Anon.

What Matters It The Cold Wind's Blast

What matters it the cold wind's blast,
What matters though 'tis snowing,
Thanksgiving Day has come at last;
To grandmamma's were going.

Wrapped in furs as warm as toast,
O'er the hills we're fleeing;
To welcome friends, a merry host
And grandma's smile of greeting.

The sleigh bells jingle merrily,
And though the flakes are flying,
At last beyond the hills we see
A little mansion lying.
I'm sure we'll find sweet cakes and fruit
And pumpkin pies so yellow;
For grandma knows just how to suit
Each hungry little fellow.

- Author Unknown

Chief Seattle's Lesson

Chief Seattle was a teacher
Who taught us how to care
For all the living things on Earth.
Fresh water, and clean air.

"The Earth does not belong to us,"
Great Chief Seattle said.
"We sometimes think it does, but we
Belong to Earth, instead."

- Helen H. Moore

Thanksgiving Comes But Once a Year

Thanksgiving comes but once a year,
But when it comes it brings good cheer.
For in my storehouse on this day
Are piles of good things hid away.
Each day I've worked from early morn
To gather acorns, nuts, and corn,
Till now I've plenty and to spare
Without a worry or a care.
So light of heart the whole day long,
I'll sing a glad Thanksgiving song."

- Thornton W. Burgess (1874-1965)

Thanksgiving Time

When all the leaves are off the boughs,
And nuts and apples gathered in,
And cornstalks waiting for the cows,
And pumpkins safe in barn and bin,
Then Mother says, "My children dear,
The fields are brown, and autumn flies;
Thanksgiving Day is very near,
And we must make thanksgiving pies!"

- Author Unknown

The Pilgrims Came

The Pilgrims sailed across the sea,
And never thought of you and me;
And yet it's very strange the way
We think of them each Thanksgiving day.

We tell their story, old and true
Of how they sailed across the blue,
And found a new land to be free
And built their homes quite near the sea.

Every child knows well the tale
Of how they bravely turned the sail
And journeyed many a day and night,
To worship as they thought was right.

- Author Unknown

The First Thanksgiving

When the Pilgrims
first gathered together to share
with their Indian friends
in the mild autumn air,
they lifted the voices
in jubilant praise
for the bread on the table,
the berries and maize,
for field and for forest,
for turkey and deer,
for the bountiful crops
they were blessed with that year.

They were thankful for these
as they feasted away,
and as they were thankful
we're thankful today.

- Jack Prelutsky (1940 -)

Ate Too Much Turkey

I ate too much turkey,
I ate too much corn,
I ate too much pudding and pie,
I'm stuffed up with muffins
and much too much stuffin',
I'm probably going to die.
I piled up my plate
and I ate and I ate,
but I wish I had known when to stop,
for I'm so crammed with yams,
sauces, gravies, and jams
that my buttons are starting to pop.
I'm full of tomatoes
and french fried potatoes,
my stomach is swollen and sore,
but there's still some dessert,
so I guess it won't hurt
if I eat just a little bit more.

- Jack Prelutsky (1940 -)

The Turkey Shot Out of the Oven

The turkey shot out of the oven
and rocketed into the air,
it knocked every plate off the table
and partly demolished a chair.

It ricocheted into a corner
and burst with deafening boom,
then splattered all over the kitchen,
completely obscuring the room.

It stuck to the walls and the windows,
it totally coated the floor,
there was turkey attached to the ceiling,
where there'd never been turkey before.

It blanketed every appliance,
it smeared every saucer and bowl,
there wasn't a way I could stop it,
that turkey was out of control.

I scraped and I scrubbed with displeasure,
and thought with chagrin as I mopped,
that I'd never again stuff a turkey
with popcorn that hadn't been popped.

- Jack Prelutsky (1940 -)

Thanksgiving Day Parade

Thanksgiving Day is here today,
the great parade is under way,
and though it's drizzling quite a bit,
I'm sure that I'll see all of it.

Great balloons are floating by,
cartoon creatures stories high,
Mickey Mouse and Mother Goose,
Snoopy and a mammoth moose.

Humpty Dumpty, Smokey Bear
hover in the autumn air,
through the windy skies they sway,
I hope that they don't blow away.

Here comes Santa, shaking hands
as he waddles by the stands.
It's so much fun, I don't complain
when now it really starts to rain.

The bands are marching, here they come,
pipers pipe and drummers drum,
hear the tubas and the flutes,
see the clowns in silly suits.

It's pouring now, but not on me,
I'm just as dry as I can be,
I watch and watch, but don't get wet,
I'm watching on our TV set.

- Jack Prelutsky (1940 -)

Thanksgiving Observance

Count your blessings instead of your crosses;
Count your gains instead of your losses.
Count your joys instead of your woes;
Count your friends instead of your foes.
Count your smiles instead of your tears;
Count your courage instead of your fears.
Count your full years instead of your lean;
Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.
Count your health instead of your wealth;
Count on others instead of yourself.

- Author Unknown

Giving Thanks

Giving Thanks

For the hay and the corn and the wheat that is reaped,
For the labor well done, and the barns that are heaped,
For the sun and the dew and the sweet honeycomb,
For the rose and the song and the harvest brought home -
Thanksgiving! Thanksgiving!

For the trade and the skill and the wealth in our land,
For the cunning and strength of the workingman's hand,
For the good that our artists and poets have taught,
For the friendship that hope and affection have brought -
Thanksgiving! Thanksgiving!

For the homes that with purest affection are blest,
For the season of plenty and well-deserved rest,
For our country extending from sea unto sea;
The land that is known as the "Land of the Free" -
Thanksgiving! Thanksgiving!

- Author Unknown

Landing of the Pilgrims

The breaking waves dashed high,
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear;--
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free!

Landing of the Pilgrims cont'd.

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam; And the rocking pines of
the forest roared--
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim band:
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?--
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod.
They have left unstained what there they found--
Freedom to worship God.

- Felicia Dorothea Hemans (1793-1835)

Thanksgiving at Plymouth

One hundred two passengers on the ship,
Sixty-five days was a very long trip.
'Twas November 11 when there was a shout.
"Land ho! We've made it!" a voice yelled out.

Their very first winter was cold and was gray.
The Pilgrims worked hard in the new land each day.
People got sick and some even died.
Still others continued to work side by side.

To the Pilgrims, Squanto was a teacher and friend.
He helped them from sunrise until each day's end.
He told them to plant corn in rows long and narrow.
He taught them to hunt with a bow and an arrow.

When the leaves once again turned gold in the fall,
Enough food for the winter was stored up for all.
The Pilgrims felt joy they wanted to share.
They wanted their Indian friends to be there.

There were tables piled high with fish and with meat.
Vegetables, fruits, and good things to eat.
The Pilgrims gave thanks for all that they had.
Pilgrims and Indians together were glad.

- Author Unknown

We Thank Thee

For flowers that bloom about our feet;
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet;
For song of bird, and hum of bee;
For all things fair we hear or see,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

For blue of stream and blue of sky;
For pleasant shade of branches high;
For fragrant air and cooling breeze;
For beauty of the blooming trees,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

A Thanksgiving

For summer rains, and winter's sun,
For autumn breezes crisp and sweet;
For labors doing, to be done,
And labors all complete;
For April, May, and lovely June,
For bud, and bird, and berried vine;
For joys of morning, night, and noon,
My thanks, dear Lord, are Thine!

For loving friends on every side;
For children full of joyous glee;
For all the blessed Heavens wide,
And for the sounding sea;
For mountains, valleys, forests deep;
For maple, oak, and lofty pine;
For rivers on their seaward sweep,
My thanks, dear Lord, are Thine!

For light and air, for sun and shade,
For merry laughter and for cheer;
For music and the glad parade
Of blessings through the year;
For all the fruitful earth's increase,
For home and life, and love divine,
For hope, and faith, and perfect peace,
My thanks, dear Lord, are Thine!

- John Kendrick Bangs (1862-1922)

The Pumpkin

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

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

Ah! on Thanksgiving day, when from East and from West,
From North and from South come the pilgrim and guest,
When the gray-haired New Englander sees round his board
The old broken links of affection restored,
When the care-wearied man seeks his mother once more,
And the worn matron smiles where the girl smiled before,
What moistens the lip and what brightens the eye?
What calls back the past, like the rich Pumpkin pie?

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

Then thanks for thy present! none sweeter or better
E'er smoked from an oven or circled a platter!
Fairer hands never wrought at a pastry more fine,
Brighter eyes never watched o'er its baking, than thine!
And the prayer, which my mouth is too full to express,
Swells my heart that thy shadow may never be less,
That the days of thy lot may be lengthened below,
And the fame of thy worth like a pumpkin-vine grow,
And thy life be as sweet, and its last sunset sky
Golden-tinted and fair as thy own Pumpkin pie!

- John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

The Corn Song

1st stanza:

Heap high the farmer's wintry hoard!
Heap high the golden corn!
No richer gift has Autumn poured
From out her lavish horn!

2nd stanza:

Let other lands, exulting, glean
The apple from the pine,
The orange from its glossy green,
The cluster from the vine;

3rd stanza:

We better love the hardy gift
Our rugged vales bestow,
To cheer us when the storm shall drift
Our harvest-fields with snow.

4th stanza:

Through vales of grass and meads of flowers
Our plows their furrows made,
While on the hills the sun and showers
Of changeful April played.

5th stanza:

We dropped the seed o'er hill and plain,
Beneath the sun of May,
And frightened from our sprouting grain
The robber crows away.

6th stanza:

All through the long, bright days of June
Its leaves grew green and fair,
And waved in hot midsummer's noon
Its soft and yellow hair.

7th stanza:

And now, with Autumn's moonlit eves,
Its harvest-time has come;
We pluck away the frosted leaves,
And bear the treasure home.

8th stanza:

Then shame on all the proud and vain
Whose folly laughs to scorn
The blessing of our hardy grain,
Our wealth of golden corn!

9th stanza:

Let earth withhold her goodly root,
Let mildew blight the rye,
Give to the worm the orchard's fruit,
The wheat-field to the fly;

10th stanza:

But let the good old crop adorn
The hills our fathers trod;
Still let us, for his golden corn,
Send up our thanks to God!

- John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

Thanksgiving

WE walk on starry fields of white
And do not see the daisies;
For blessings common in our sight
We rarely offer praises.
We sigh for some supreme delight
To crown our lives with splendor,
And quite ignore our daily store
Of pleasures sweet and tender.

Our cares are bold and push their way
Upon our thought and feeling.
They hang about us all the day,
Our time from pleasure stealing.
So unobtrusive many a joy
We pass by and forget it,
But worry strives to own our lives
And conquers if we let it.

There's not a day in all the year
But holds some hidden pleasure,
And looking back, joys oft appear
To brim the past's wide measure.
But blessings are like friends, I hold,
Who love and labor near us.
We out to raise our notes of praise
While living hearts can hear us.

Full many a blessing wears the guise
Of worry or of trouble.

Farseeing is the soul and wise
Who knows the mask is double.
But he who has the faith and strength
To thank his God for sorrow
Has found a joy without alloy
To gladden every morrow.

We ought to make the moments notes
Of happy, glad Thanksgiving;
The hours and days a silent phrase
Of music we are living.
And so the theme should swell and grow
As weeks and months pass o'er us,
And rise sublime at this good time,
A grand Thanksgiving chorus.

- Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850-1919)

The Mayflower

"The Mayflower," a sturdy,
little, merchant ship
set sail in 1620
on a great, big trip.

Leaving Plymouth England,
on the sixteenth day,
in the middle of September,
it just sailed away!

Swish, swash across the Atlantic Ocean,
bobbing up and down,
making rocking motions,
to the frantic rolling,
of the splashing waves,
the Mayflower floated on
and sailed for days!

Filled to the brim with Pilgrims,
who were on their way,
to start a new colony in Virginia,
a half a world away,
Where they could worship, live
and pray as they may,

free of King James the First's
persecutions
for their religious ways!
And so ...

Splish, splash, across the Atlantic Ocean,
tossing up and down,
making swirling motions,
to the frantic heaving,
of the cresting waves,
the Mayflower's voyage lasted 66 days!

On November 21,
they spotted land
but, were nowhere
near Virginia,
as they had planned!

Instead ...

Sailing into the harbor
of what would become
Province Town,
they came to 'Cap-Codd',
and laid their anchor down!

Yet, they were still not idle,
after their lengthy trip,
writing the "The Mayflower Compact",
while still aboard their ship.

On November 21, 1620,
this document of laws
to govern their new colony
became
the first governing agreement
ever to be
written in America, though still at sea!

Then one month later,
to the very day,
having sailed across ,
the waters of Cape Cod Bay,
They finally stopped
at the place they'd stay!

On December 21, 1620
The Mayflower docked.
And 'The Pilgrims' stepped
onto Plymouth Rock!

Founding the "Plymouth Colony"
where one year later,
it came to be.

They and their Native American friends,
in peace and harmony,
shared corn, gave thanks ,
and ate turkey!
Making their "Thanksgiving Feast"
a part of history!

- Linda A. Copp (November 3, 2001)