

# SHONEY'S® The First THANKSGIVING



# The First THANKSGIVING



**The Shoney's experience,  
of families at  
America's Dinner Table,  
this month brings you  
the story of  
The First Thanksgiving.  
From all of us at Shoney's,  
have an enjoyable  
Thanksgiving.**

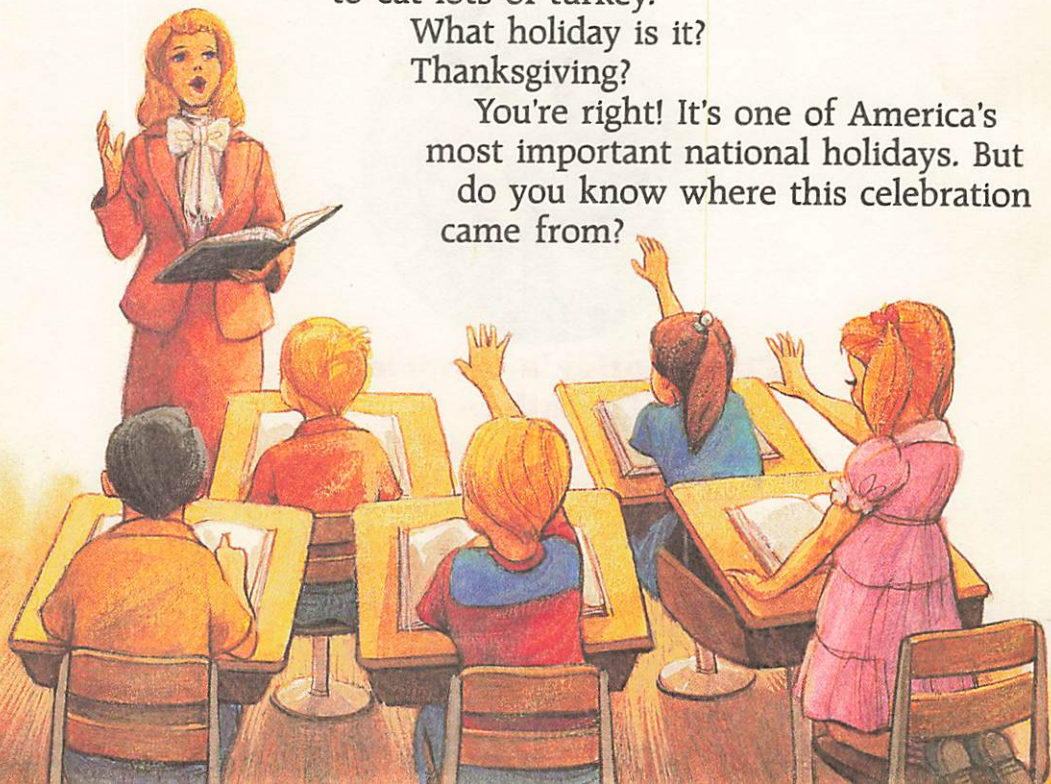
I'm thinking of a holiday, a very special holiday.

It falls on the last Thursday in November. Children don't have to go to school on this day. There's a big parade with floats, huge balloons, and marching bands. And everyone gets to eat lots of turkey.

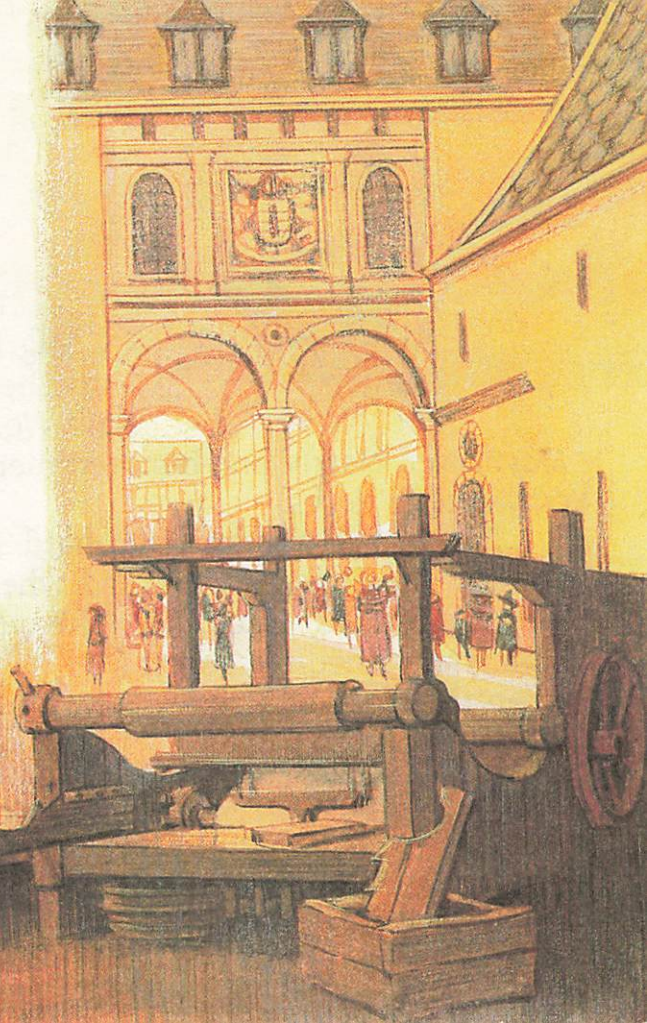
What holiday is it?

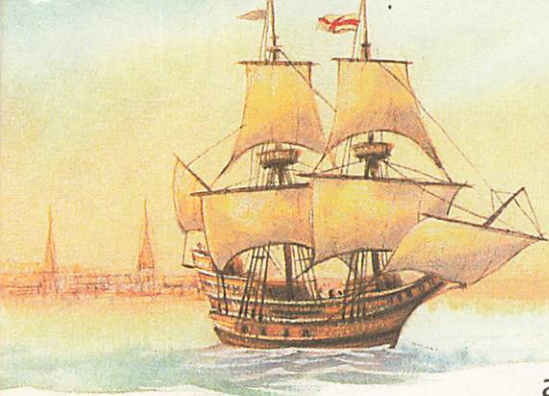
Thanksgiving?

You're right! It's one of America's most important national holidays. But do you know where this celebration came from?



Thanksgiving began over 350 years ago when a group of people called Pilgrims came to this country. They left their home to find a land where they could govern themselves and worship as they chose. They had heard stories about the New World and decided that's where they would build a settlement.

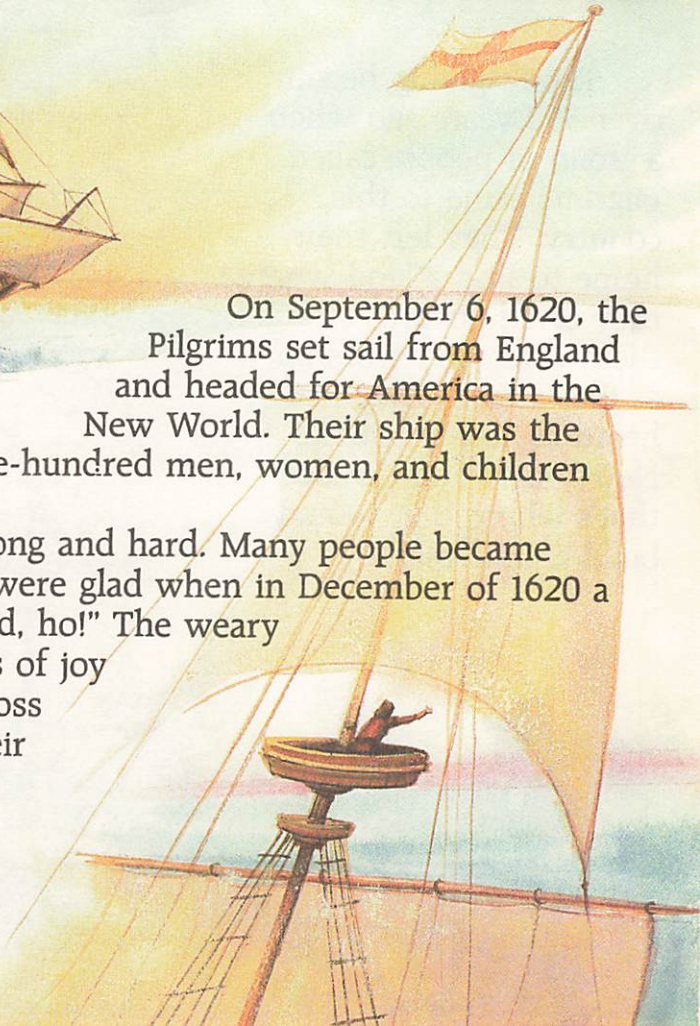




On September 6, 1620, the Pilgrims set sail from England and headed for America in the New World. Their ship was the

*Mayflower*. Nearly one-hundred men, women, and children crowded its decks.

The voyage was long and hard. Many people became seasick. The Pilgrims were glad when in December of 1620 a lookout shouted, "Land, ho!" The weary immigrants cried tears of joy when they looked across the water and saw their new home.



The *Mayflower* was anchored a long way from land, far away from the shallow water near the coast. When a proper landing site was found, the Pilgrims came ashore in rowboats.

When they stepped out onto land, the people fell to their knees. They gave thanks for reaching America safely. They called their new home Plymouth.

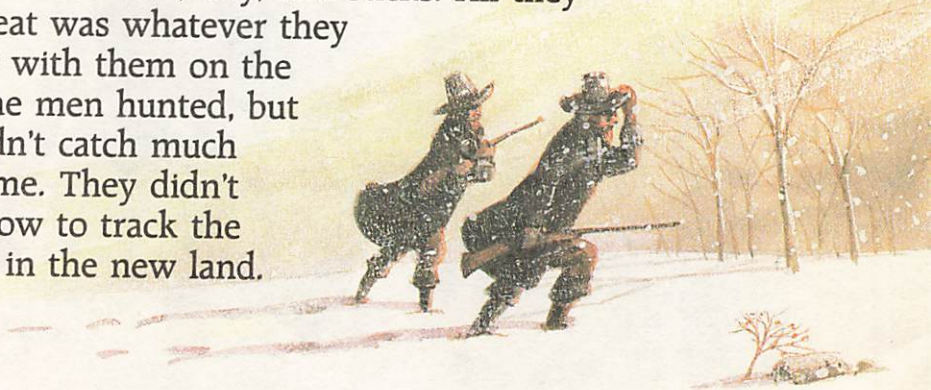





Since winter was coming, the Pilgrims had to quickly build homes for shelter. Everyone had to help — men, women, boys, and girls. They didn't have much time before the first snowfall.

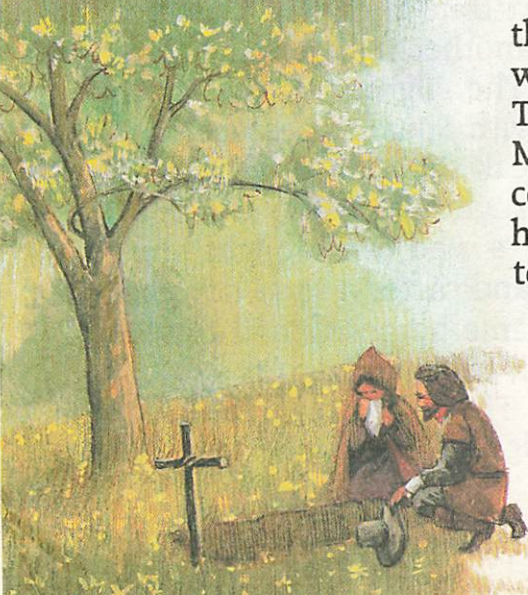
That winter was very hard. The Pilgrims were nearly always cold and hungry.

The bitter wind blew right through their huts, which were made of mud, clay, and sticks. All they had to eat was whatever they brought with them on the ship. The men hunted, but they didn't catch much wild game. They didn't know how to track the animals in the new land.





The Pilgrims often felt lonely, too. They hadn't met any of the New World natives yet. They only saw the Indians from a distance. And most of the Pilgrims missed friends and relatives who lived across the ocean in England.



By the time spring arrived, the Pilgrim settlers wondered why they ever came to America. The winter had been so hard. Many people had died from the cold and sickness. And their new home still seemed so strange to them.



Then one day an Indian man walked into Plymouth settlement. He raised his hand in greeting. He had come to meet the white-skinned people from across the great water — the ocean. His name was Samoset.

From that day on, life in the New World started changing for the Pilgrims.

A short time later, Samoset brought with him another Indian named

Squanto. The Pilgrims had no trouble talking with Squanto because he

could speak their language. He had

been taught English by earlier settlers who had brought him to

England. After a time however, he became homesick and traveled back to America.

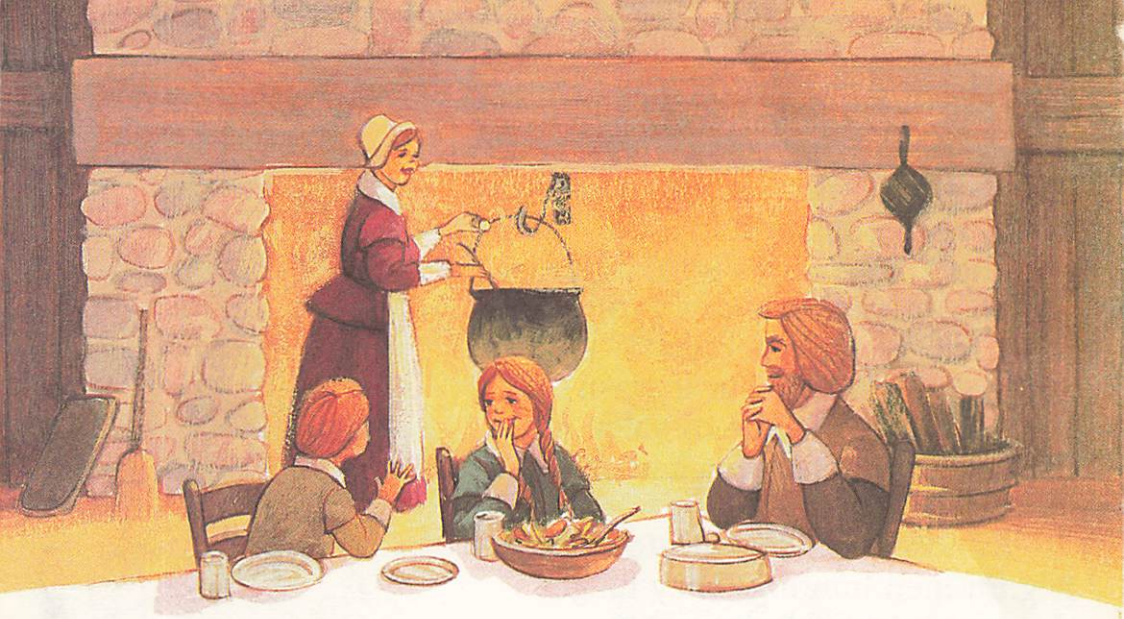
The two Indian men saw the Pilgrims' mud and stick shelters



and their small food supply and decided to help them. They showed the settlers how to build warm, sturdy homes that would keep out the cold wind. They told them what crops would grow well in America. One crop, corn — or maize, as the Indians called it — was new to the settlers. But it wasn't long before they came to value its golden goodness as much as the Indians did.

Samoset and Squanto took the Pilgrim men hunting. They taught them how to track deer, bear, fox, goose, duck, and — wild turkey. The settlers even learned how to set traps for lobsters, collect clams and oysters, and how to fish for eels, cod, and other sea life.





The Pilgrims followed their Indian friends' suggestions. Their hard work rewarded them with warm homes, plenty of meat and seafood for their tables, and crops sprouting in the fields. And by setting up their own government, the settlers had the freedom they'd longed for back in England. At last, the Pilgrims were feeling comfortable and welcome in their new home.



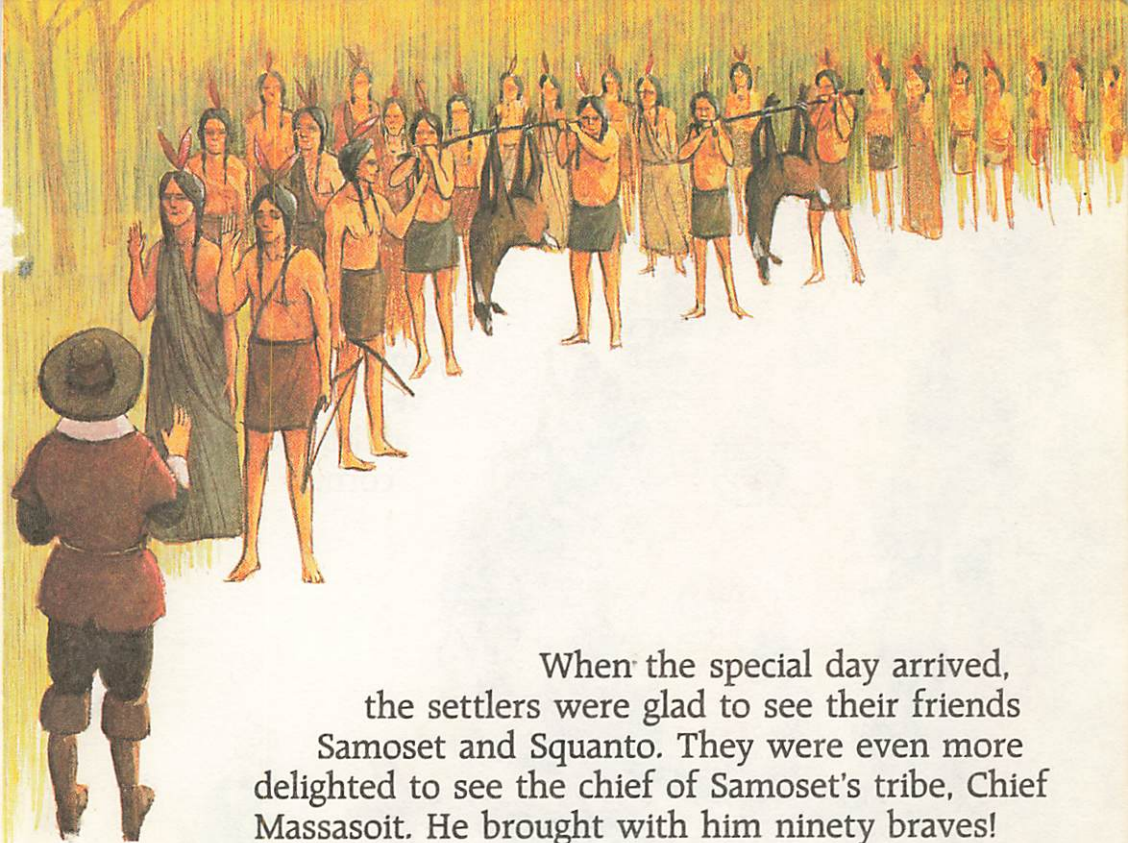
By autumn, the harvest from the fields was so bountiful that the Pilgrims could not believe their good fortune. They no longer feared the winter ahead. By drying and preserving much of the meat, grains, vegetables, and fruits, the settlers made sure that in the coming cold months they would be well-fed.



"So many blessings," the Pilgrims thought, "deserve a special celebration — a thanksgiving celebration! And what better way to celebrate than by inviting all our Indian friends to a great feast!"

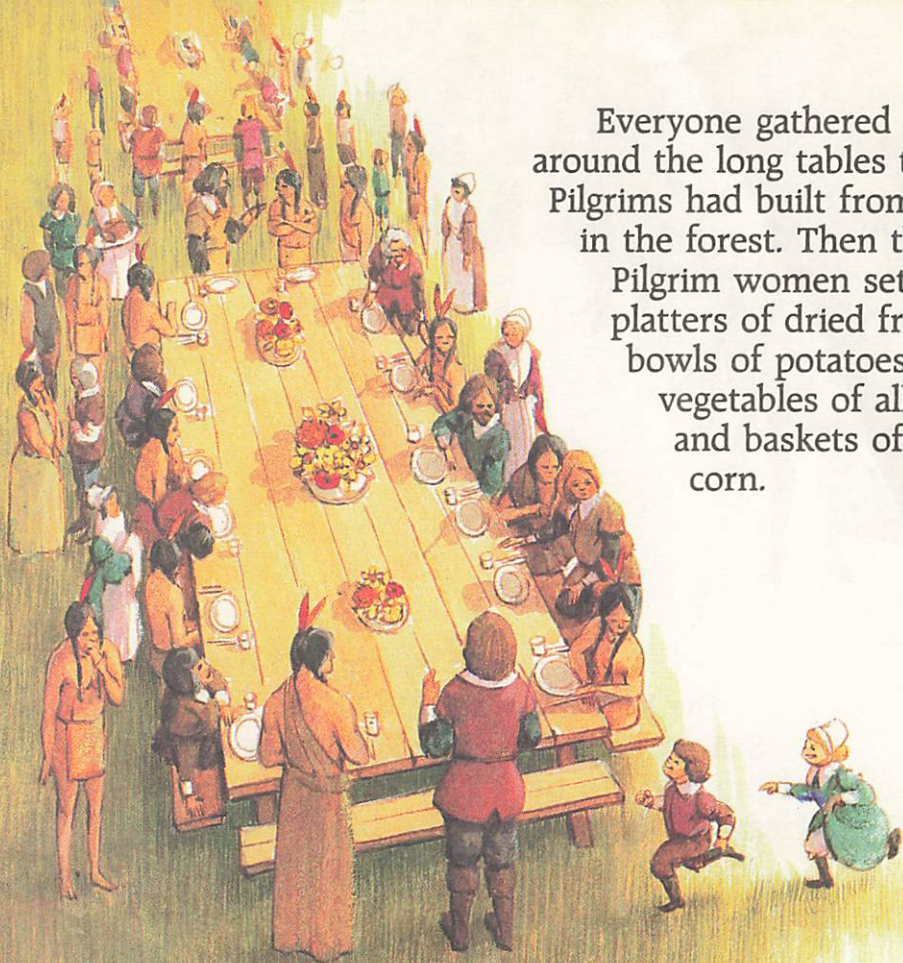
The Pilgrims prepared for their great harvest celebration in a flurry of excitement. They wondered how many of their Indian friends would come.





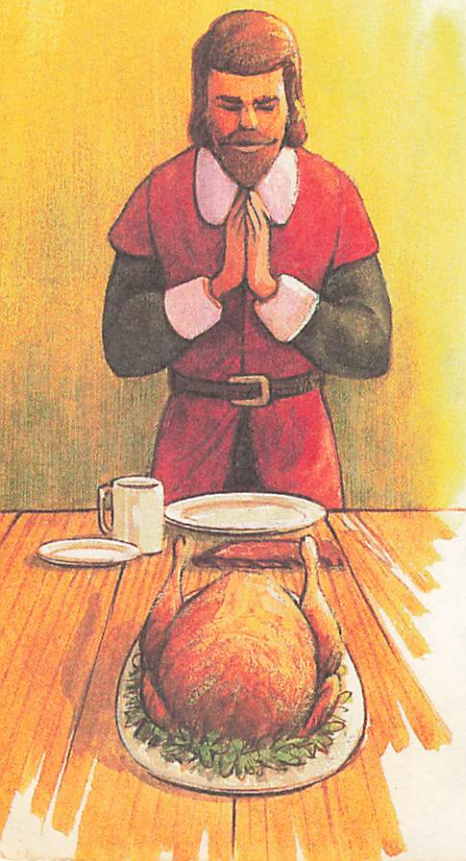
When the special day arrived, the settlers were glad to see their friends Samoset and Squanto. They were even more delighted to see the chief of Samoset's tribe, Chief Massasoit. He brought with him ninety braves!

Everyone gathered around the long tables the Pilgrims had built from trees in the forest. Then the Pilgrim women set down platters of dried fruit, bowls of potatoes and vegetables of all kinds, and baskets of roasted corn.



They brought out cooked turkeys, geese, ducks, clams, oysters, lobsters, along with pots of venison (deer) stew, baskets of bread and biscuits, and, of course, pumpkin and apple pies. They even set out a bowl of "Indian pudding", made from boiled corn and molasses, and a basket of popcorn!



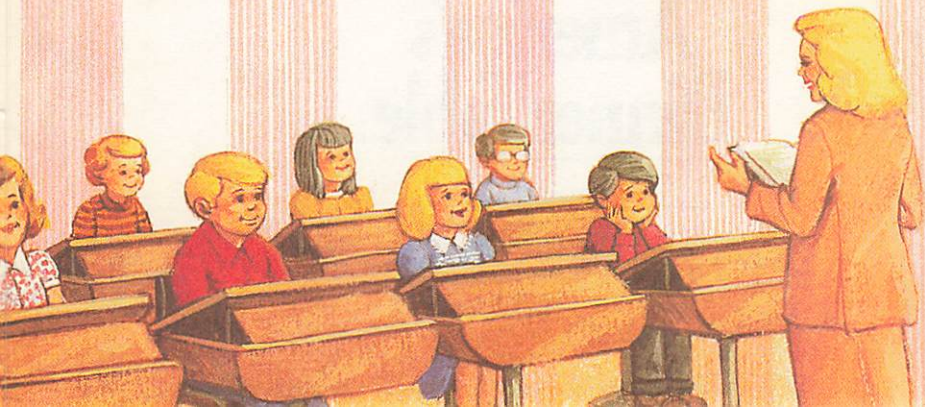


Everything looked so good and so delicious. But before anyone could raise a fork or grab a biscuit, the governor of Plymouth stood up and raised his hands for silence. Then he said, "Let us give thanks for all that we have — food, shelter, and, most importantly, good and helpful friends — all in great supply!"

Then everyone, Pilgrims and Indians alike, shared the fruits of their labors.



And today, we remember the hardships the Pilgrims suffered through so that their descendants might have a home in America. And we give thanks that because of those first settlers, we can live in this great land!



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**SHONEY'S**<sup>®</sup>  
America's  
Dinner Table<sup>™</sup>

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