

The first Pilgrim Thanksgiving_William Bradford_from *The Christian History of the Constitution of the United States of America* – with adjustments in spelling, etc – and as originally written

Locate the book and publishers: http://www.facebookstore.net/product_p/choc1.htm

Excerpt from “Of Plimoth Plantation” by William Bradford (with adjustments in spelling, etc.)

Of the first Pilgrim Thanksgiving and events leading to it – written 1647

Taken from: *The Christian History of the Constitution of the United States of America**

pp. 176, 215

William Bradford was chosen governor after the death of Carver, a few months after the arrival at Plymouth. He had left England for Holland with the rest of the Scrooby church, when he was 18. When he was first chosen governor of Plymouth Colony, he was still a young man, and ruled as governor almost continuously for thirty seven years until his death.

He wrote the following account in 1647, several years after the event of their first Thanksgiving. I have replaced & with and, ye with the and changed some spellings to be able to read this smoothly. The exact text is typed on the next page.

“I may not here omit how, notwithstanding all their great pains and industry, and the great hopes of a large crop, the Lord seemed to blast, and take away the same, and to threaten further and more sore famine unto them, by a great drought which continued from the third week in May, til about the middle of July, without any rain, and with great heat (for the most part), insomuch as the corn began to wither away, though it was set with fish, the moisture whereof helped it much. Yet at length it began to languish sore, and some of the drier grounds were parched with withered hay, part that was never recovered. Upon which they set apart a solemn day of jubilation, to seek the Lord by humble and fervent prayer, in this great distress. And he was pleased to give them a gracious and speedy answer, both to their own, and the Indian’s admiration, that lived amongst them. For all the morning, and greatest part of the day, it was clear weather and very hot, and not a cloud or any sign of rain to be seen, yet toward evening it began to overcast, and shortly after to rain, with such sweet and gentle showers, as gave them cause of rejoicing, and blessing God. It came, without either wind, or thunder, or any violence, and by degrees in great abundance, so the earth was thoroughly wet and soaked by it. Which did so apparently revive and quicken the decayed corn and other fruits, as was wonderful to see, and made the Indians astonished to behold; 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. This being overslept in its place, I thought it proper to insert it here...”

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As originally written by Governor William Bradford:

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