

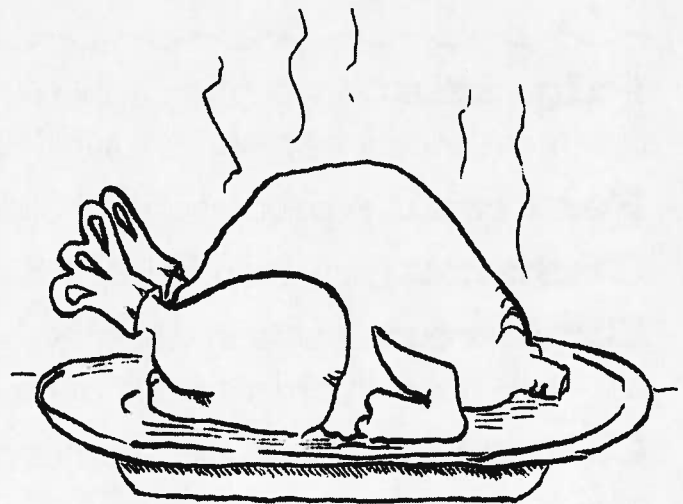
A Canadian Thanksgiving

When talking about the first Thanksgiving celebration, most people mention the **Pilgrims** and Plymouth, Massachusetts. In 1620, the Pilgrims sailed to North America and spent a very stormy winter with little food. The next year they had a very good harvest and celebrated with a **festival**. The **custom** continued and Thanksgiving became an American holiday.

But giving thanks has a long history behind it, and the North American holiday has roots in Canada. Long before Europeans arrived in North America, people were already giving thanks. In Europe, thanksgiving festivals often followed special events, such as recovering from an illness or bringing in a good harvest. First Nations people in North America had similar celebrations.

Many people believe that the **explorer** Martin Frobisher started the practice of celebrating Thanksgiving in 1578. He had just landed in Canada after a long and dangerous journey by ship, and he wanted to celebrate his safe arrival. He gathered people together to have a special church service of thanks to God for the safe trip.

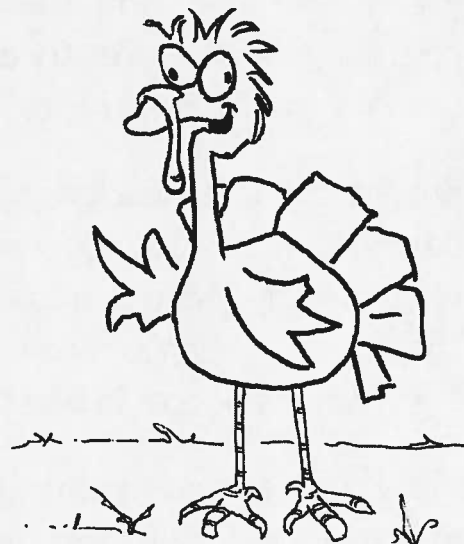
French settlers, led by the explorer Samuel de Champlain, also held similar celebrations. In French, Thanksgiving is l'Action de Grâces.



Thanksgiving became a national holiday in Canada in 1879 and was celebrated on November 6. In 1957, the government changed the holiday to the second Monday in October. This made the holiday closer to harvest time in Canada's northern **climate** and further from Remembrance Day celebrations on November 11.

Thanksgiving has become a time for families to get together and eat special dinners of turkey or ham, together with pumpkin pie and some of the vegetables available in the fall, such as squash. Many people also take time to be thankful for the **blessings** in their lives, such as family and good health.

How do you give thanks for all the good things in your life?



Pilgrims: A group of people who left England because of cruel treatment and came to America in 1620.

Festival: A celebration or holiday.

Custom: A tradition, belief, or habit in a culture or society.

Explorer: A person who travels to a region that is unknown or not well known in order to find out more about it.

Climate: The average weather conditions of a place over a period of years.

Blessing: Anything that brings joy or comfort.

Canadian Thanksgiving Questions

1. When talking about the first Thanksgiving celebration, most people mention the _____ and Plymouth, Massachusetts.
2. In Europe, what did thanksgiving festivals often follow?

3. Who do many people believe started the practice of celebrating Thanksgiving in 1578?

4. French settlers, led by the explorer _____, also held similar celebrations.
5. When did Thanksgiving become a national holiday in Canada?

6. Why did the government change the holiday to the second Monday in October?

7. Thanksgiving has become a time for families to get together and eat _____ of turkey or ham.
8. Many people also take time to be thankful for the _____ in their lives.