

IN THE SHADOW OF HOGAN'S MOUNTAIN

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The First Thanksgiving: The Women's Perspective

Note: This story contains conjecture about the interaction between the four remaining Pilgrim women still alive at the time of the first Thanksgiving celebration in Plymouth, Massachusetts. According to eyewitness accounts by October, 1621, there were only 22 men, just 4 women and over 25 children and teenagers remaining of the 102 who came on the Mayflower.

The story opens with Mary Brewster, Susanna Winslow, Elizabeth Hopkins, and Eleanor Billington, the four surviving Pilgrim women, sitting in one of the homes in Plymouth. The year since arriving hundreds of miles north of the planned landing in Virginia had been exceedingly difficult as they dealt with the move off the Mayflower, planting crops, avoiding the pestilence, and the many other issues of setting up a colony of immigrants.

Susanna Winslow, being deeply religious, had asked

the women to join her in prayer to provide guidance for the coming days of preparing for a Thanksgiving feast. Susanna was speaking about her husband telling her about writing in his journal that the Governor William Bradford expected the women to organize and prepare a Thanksgiving feast. The feast was to honor the completion of the harvest of the Indian corn, barley, and vegetables. Mrs. Winslow said not only did he want a single day feast, but a feast that would last three days. The women's immediate reactions were what they would use to prepare the feast. Mary said we don't have kitchens or ovens to prepare meals for a large number. Elizabeth also reminded the group that they had used all their wheat, spices, and sugar. Eleanor chimed in to say the lack of butter would limit some of the traditional dishes.

Remarkably resourceful, the ladies set out to find food for the Thanksgiving

celebration. All four ladies were quick to point out the lack of foodstuffs to Governor Bradford. He chose to send four men fowling (bird hunting), so they might offer special meats. The ladies were delighted with the results of the hunt as they brought back numerous ducks and geese. They planned to crush and grind corn for cornbread, make stuffing with onions, herbs, and chestnuts, send children out to gather mussels and others to fish and search for shellfish, and use greens like collards and spinach. They even located some pumpkins and late season squash which they planned to hollow out and roast in the open fires.

The date for the start of the Thanksgiving activities was set and the ladies began the task of preparing the meal. Each of the four women took on the challenges of certain parts of the meal. Teenagers and children were recruited to help with the process. They

knew the men would not be much help because all they wanted to do was play games, hold shooting contests, sing songs and eat. Mary, Susanna, Elizabeth, and Eleanor put their preparation plan in motion and were pleased with the outcome of the meal for the first day.

The shooting and games created a significant ruckus. Then, just like back in England, unexpected visitors showed up. By chance, a group of Wampanoag Indians and their King Massasoit were passing by inspecting planting grounds. These native Americans had been helpful to the settlers by teaching them planting and survival skills and were able to communicate through Squanto. When they arrived, they decided to join the festivities since they had their own version of Thanksgiving.

The four food preparation ladies suddenly realized that they were not only expected to feed

the 53 pilgrims, but also the 90 visiting native Americans. Thankfully, the Wampanoag band had some women within the party. King Massasoit, with the encouragement of the Wampanoag females, sent out a hunting party that killed five deer. These deer were quickly skinned and put on splits over open fires to roast. So, instead of providing some small food resource, the visitors provided a large supply of meat to supplement the Thanksgiving fare. The Native Americans believed that the harvest was the generosity of the Creator as well and were accustomed to holding their own days of prayer and thanksgiving. Unfortunately, the cooperation of the Wampanoag and pilgrims did not carry forward for future generation of immigrants. The treatment of immigrants overrunning the land and culture of native Americans is well documented.

Remarkably, the four remaining women left in

the Pilgrim population managed to coordinate feeding 143 people without kitchens, ovens, wheat, and many of the basics for a Thanksgiving meal. They were all deserving of sainthood for their planning and organizing a three day feast with such limited material.

During the succeeding four centuries, women have taken the major role of providing the centerpiece meals for giving thanks for what God has provided. Hopefully, the significant efforts of today receive the same accolades as those provided by Governor Bradford and King Massasoit four centuries ago.

Postscript: This story of individual interaction is pure conjecture but is very plausible in terms of the Pilgrim culture. In fact, most modern men seldom hold shooting contests but do often wind up watching football, discussing politics, or seeking other entertainment outside the kitchen.

Will Hunting Retain its Standing in Future Generations?

By DR. WARREN HOLLAR

When I was a boy, hunting was a yearly ritual for the men and boys who lived in Alexander County farming communities. Many hunting tales were told around the potbellied stove at the local stores, during ax handle-making sessions, and during long days working tobacco and truck crops. Every boy looked forward to the day he could manage a shotgun and gain enough funds to buy his own gun. Boys were then off to the woods with their friends and beagles to chase rabbits, squirrels, and other small game.

Unfortunately, small game and bird numbers have decreased because of lack of habitat often resulting from suburban sprawl and different agriculture methods. Pesticides have also reduced numbers. The prevalence of additional coyote populations have affected deer populations and quail have all but disappeared from many areas because of the advent of larger turkey populations and the above mentioned issues. Rabbit populations have shown an uptick because of less hunting pressures but are still impacted by increased predators and environmen-

tal issues. Squirrels seem to be the exception with their ability to climb trees and avoid predators.

Today, hunting's popularity has faded across much of the country as housing developments replace woodlands, seasoned seniors hang up their guns and youngsters sit down in front of computer games rather than seeking outside activities. As large numbers of hunters age out of the sport without enough newcomers to replenish the ranks, state wildlife agencies need to consider new ways to manage wildlife populations and to find the money to pay for wildlife conservation, according to a leading wildlife researcher. The number of hunters is dwindling. Licenses dropped from a peak of roughly 17 million in the 1980s to 15 million in 2019. This trend is likely to continue. Although there appears to be an uptick which may be the result of the pandemic and the higher cost of meats. Almost 50% of hunters are over age 50. The sharp decrease in hunter numbers can be credited to several reasons including habitat reduction, mounting prices, complex laws, other forms of recreation, changing social mores,

demographic changes, and negativity from the media. Others in the wildlife field say the reason for the drop is that the tradition is not being passed from one generation to the next at the rate it has in the past.

Today's American family life is packed with school and work obligations, as well as an array of recreation options. Not only is there more competition, but our nation has become more suburban with activities such as soccer, baseball, and other team sports having higher priority. Even scouting, where many boys learn outdoor skills is seeing reduced numbers. As we moved away from an agricultural society, Americans chose to have fewer children, thus a smaller pool of new potential hunters. Also, the demographics in the United States has made a major shift. Nationally, over 98% of hunters are white and middle class. In the south, this dips to the 80's. Young minorities are not being given the experience of hunting. Hunting for food is still an accepted activity for many Americans. Hunting for sport takes a hit in mainstream media.

Another major factor is the loss of habitat. There are 100 million more

people living in the United States than 40 years ago. Suburban sprawl has consumed prime hunting land, forcing many hunters to choose between driving for hours to get to the woods or staying home. Hunting is often a solitary sport when in the woods and more hunters in the remaining habitat means less solitude. The danger element is also greater with higher hunting densities. Higher deer densities in suburban areas also increase the number of vehicle-deer collisions.

Cost of hunting has gone up with an increase in cost of all outdoor equipment. And let's face it, the cost of hunting club membership precludes many people from access to prime hunting ground and less likelihood of bagging game. Hunting regulations are also more complicated as state law is changed to limit access to certain properties and areas. Unfortunately, the lack of hunting access and reduced numbers of deer in available hunting areas have affected the success rate of hunters and created less desire for people to go afield.

Recent years have also seen a decrease in some deer populations. The arrival of coyotes to the Eastern United States and North Carolina has also had an impact on deer populations in many areas. For example, a recent study at Fort Bragg found that coyotes killed one out of every two deer fawns born. With such low survival, the deer population inevitably is in decline. Both North Carolina and South Carolina have bounty programs for coyotes.

Many people are not into any activity that takes a great deal of exercise. Many young people are not into going into the field where patience and woods-manship are key virtues of the sport. Unfortunately, our society values instant gratification which is not a part of hunting. Who wants to go sit in the freezing woods when they can go on successful virtual hunts on video games? Small game hunting participation today is down 12% and waterfowl hunters decreased 22% in the past 20 years. Turkey hunting and archery hunting are on the rise.

Many wildlife agencies and even big box outdoor stores such as Gander Mountain are offering programs to get kids involved in hunting. Some moderate success has been noted with these programs. Many internet sites are also providing "how-to" informa-

tion for prospective hunters.

If you are a seasoned hunter, you probably remember fondly the first time you went into the woods. Maybe your father, uncle or grandfather guided you to bagging your first deer, turkey, or squirrel. Unfortunately, that familiar rite of passage — the adult taking the youth hunting — doesn't happen too often anymore.

Will hunting regain its predominance seen during past centuries? Presently, the economy is also changing attitudes about hunting for food in more rural areas. More people see hunting, especially deer hunting, as a cheaper source of protein. A successful deer hunt can put 50 or 60 pounds of meat in the freezer. The demographics of North Carolina have made dra-

matic changes in recent decades with the influx of people from many different areas. Many of these new residents do not see hunting as an area of interest. Hunting has been around for ions and will change and re-change as the environment adjusts to the needs in future decades and centuries.

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Leonard's Express named 2022 top workplace for women in transportation

Leonard's Express — a leading transportation services provider offering refrigerated trucking, dry van, warehousing and freight brokerage services — has been recognized as a 2022 "Top Company for Women to Work For in Transportation" by Redefining the Road, the official magazine of the Women In Trucking Association (WIT). The industry association's mission is to encourage the employment of women in the trucking industry, promote their accomplishments, and minimize the obstacles they face.

There are a number of characteristics that distinguish companies recognized on this list, according to Brian Everett, group publisher and editorial director of Redefining the Road magazine. These characteristics include corporate cultures that foster gender diversity; competitive compensation and benefits; flexible hours and work requirements; professional development opportunities; and career advancement opportunities. Identifying the companies on this list involves a two-step process,

said Everett. First, nominations of the companies are received and carefully reviewed to ensure they qualify by meeting a minimum threshold of qualifications. Then the companies are voted on by individuals in the industry. This is the fifth year of this prestigious recognition program. It garnered more than 22,000 votes to identify the final companies named to the list.

"As competent, talented women continue to rise through the ranks in the transportation industry, we are excited to feature companies like Leonard's Express that make the strategic effort to attract and retain a more gender-diverse workforce," said Everett. "This distinction of their impressive efforts legitimizes the recognition they deserve."

This year, the list is comprised of a diverse range of business sectors in the commercial freight transportation marketplace, including motor carriers, third-party logistics companies, and original equipment manufacturers. These companies will be recognized at the

upcoming WIT Accelerate! Conference & Expo November 13-16 in Dallas. Navistar is the sponsor of this year's program.

"We're proud to be one of the best places for women to work in transportation and logistics," said Leonard's Express CEO Ken Johnson. "My mother, Patricia Johnson, was a co-founder of Leonard's Express and a pioneer in this industry. She was an advocate for women in the workplace and an equal partner in our company's success. To be recognized with this prestigious award is a direct result of her efforts and a testament to our employees, who demonstrate our family values every day."

Ellen Voie, President and CEO of the Women in Trucking Association recently joined Ken Johnson on the podcast "Leading the Way" at Leonard's for an in-depth conversation about gender diversity in the North American transportation industry. They covered a wide range of topics, including what makes an organization a great place for women to work.

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