

**Chapter 1 : Celebrating Thanksgiving in a Civil War Hospital in - National Museum of Civil War Medicine**

*Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart the last Thursday in November next as a day which I desire to be observed by all my fellow-citizens, wherever they may then be, as a day of thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God, the beneficent Creator and Ruler of the Universe.*

Celebrating Thanksgiving in America The tradition introduced by European Americans of Thanksgiving as a time to focus on God and His blessings dates back well over four centuries in America. For example, such thanksgivings occurred in at Palo Duro Canyon, Texas with Coronado and 1, of his men; 1 in at St. The Pilgrims set sail for America on September 6, , and for two months braved the harsh elements of a storm-tossed sea. Upon disembarking at Plymouth Rock, they held a prayer service and then hastily began building shelters; however, unprepared for such a harsh New England winter, nearly half of them died before spring. A week later, Samoset returned with a friend named Squanto, who lived with the Pilgrims and accepted their Christian faith. Squanto taught the Pilgrims much about how to live in the New World, and he and Samoset helped forge a long-lasting peace treaty between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag Indians. Ninety Wampanoag Indians joined the fifty Pilgrims for three days of feasting which included shellfish, lobsters, turkey, corn bread, berries, deer, and other foods , of play the young Pilgrim and Wampanoag men engaged in races, wrestling matches, and athletic events , and of prayer. This celebration and its accompanying activities were the origin of the holiday that Americans now celebrate each November. However, while the Pilgrims enjoyed times of prosperity for which they thanked God, they also suffered extreme hardships. In fact, in they experienced an extended and prolonged drought. Significantly, shortly after that time of prayer “ and to the great amazement of the Indian who witnessed the scene “ clouds appeared in the sky and a gentle and steady rain began to fall. As Governor Bradford explained: It came without either wind or thunder or any violence, and by degrees in abundance, as that ye earth was thoroughly wet and soaked therewith, which did so apparently revive and quicken ye decayed corn and other fruits as was wonderful to see, and made ye 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. The Pilgrim practice of designating an official time of Thanksgiving spread into neighboring colonies and became an annual tradition. The New England Colonies therefore developed a practice of calling for a day of prayer and fasting in the spring, and a day of prayer and thanksgiving in the fall. The Thanksgiving celebrations so common throughout New England did not begin to spread southward until the American Revolution, when Congress issued eight separate national Thanksgiving Proclamations. Congress also issued seven separate proclamations for times of fasting and prayer, for a total of 15 official prayer proclamations during the American Revolution. According to the Congressional Record for September 25 of that year, the first act after the Framers completed the framing of the Bill of Rights was that: With this view, therefore, he would move the following resolution: Resolved, That a joint committee of both Houses be directed to wait upon the President of the United States to request that he would recommend to the people of the United States a Day of Public Thanksgiving and Prayer. Roger Sherman justified the practice of thanksgiving on any single event not only as a laudable one in itself but also as warranted by a number of precedents in Holy Writ. This example he thought worthy of a Christian imitation on the present occasion. Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor. Now, therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the 26th day of November []. In fact, by , the various state governments had issued at least 1, official prayer proclamations, almost half for times of thanksgiving and prayer and the other half for times of fasting and prayer. For two decades, she promoted the idea of a national Thanksgiving Day, 20 contacting president after president until Abraham Lincoln responded in by setting aside the last Thursday of that November. The Thanksgiving proclamation issued by Lincoln was remarkable not only for its strong religious content but also for its timing, for it was delivered in the midst of the darkest days of the Civil War, with the Union having lost battle after battle throughout the first three years of that conflict. Yet, despite those

dark circumstances, Lincoln nevertheless called Americans to prayer with an air of positive optimism and genuine thankfulness, noting that: The year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the Source from which they come, others have been added which are of so extraordinary a nature that they can not fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God. No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, Who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. Three months earlier, the Battle of Gettysburg had occurred, resulting in the loss of some 60,000 American lives. It had been while Lincoln was walking among the thousands of graves there at Gettysburg that he first committed his life to Christ. As he later explained to a clergyman: I was not a Christian. When I buried my son, the severest trial of my life, I was not a Christian. But when I went to Gettysburg and saw the graves of thousands of our soldiers, I then and there consecrated myself to Christ. In 1863, President Franklin D. Roosevelt began celebrating Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of each November, and in 1941, Congress permanently established that day as the national Thanksgiving holiday. Below are representative examples of the scores of Thanksgiving proclamations penned by various Founding Fathers. And [to] present our supplicationsâ€”that He would forgive our manifold sins and. Benson Lossing, *Our Country*. Bailey, , Vol. Jim Kimball Wiggin, ; reprint of original , p. See also William S. George Coolidge, , p. See also Ashbel Steele, *Chief of the Pilgrims: Russell, Odiorne and Metcalf*, , Vol. Dana, editors New York: Appleton and Company, , Vol. See, for example, H. International Printing Co, , pp. Deloss Love, in his work *The Fast and Thanksgiving Days of New England*, lists some 1,000 proclamations issued between 1620 and 1800, in a non-exclusive list. Of those, 500 were issued by churches and 500, by civil authorities. Of the civil proclamations, 100 were issued prior to July 4, 1776, and from July 4, 1776, to 1800. Of the church issued proclamations, 500 were issued before July 4, 1776, and six afterwards. While the exact number of government-issued prayer proclamations is unknown, it is certain that they certainly number in the thousands. Miller, editors New York: University Society Inc, , Vol. Abraham Lincoln, *The Lincoln Memorial: Oldroyd*, editor New York: Journals of the Continental Congress Washington: Government Printing Office, , Vol. Princeton University Press, , Vol. John Hancock, *Proclamation for a Day of Public Thanksgiving Boston*, , from an original broadside in possession of the author.

**Chapter 2 : Thanksgiving | Beyond the History Textbooks**

*In , the Union League decided to raise a fund to supply Thanksgiving dinner on November 24, for the Union soldiers and sailors fighting in the East. The reaction of the Northern public to this plan was overwhelming.*

Learn more about Tori and The History Kitchen. Give thanks, all ye people, give thanks to the Lord, Alleluias of freedom with joyful accord: Let the East and the West, North and South roll along, Sea, mountain and prairie, one thanksgiving song. The savior of our union, Lincoln guided our nation through the resolution of the Civil War. His leadership helped bring an end to slavery and peace to our war-torn nation. In addition to these historical achievements, few know that Lincoln also helped turn Thanksgiving into a nationally observed holiday. Abraham Lincoln, at age 54 – November 8, Photographed by Alexander Gardner. Library of Congress, Washington, D. Lincoln is responsible for the Thanksgiving holiday we celebrate today, but he was not the first government official to recognize a day of gratitude. The Continental Congress declared a Thanksgiving holiday in for the 13 original colonies; George Washington called for a repeat of the celebration in for the newly formed United States. Periodic days of Thanksgiving were observed in the following years, particularly in the states of New England, until when the tradition seemed to fade from the national consciousness. Her cause became popular throughout the country. In fact, Lincoln himself shared an unofficial Thanksgiving meal with his family on November 29, , just after being elected president. The celebration featured a roasted turkey, one of his favorite meals, followed by a church service focused on giving thanks for health, good fortune, and family. Though the national cause was put on hold, smaller days of Thanksgiving were celebrated throughout the war. Individual Union states continued to observe days of Thanksgiving on their own, though not as a united national effort. The Confederacy had their second and final Thanksgiving celebration on Thursday, September 28, after their second victory at Bull Run. In , President Lincoln declared not one, but two separate Thanksgiving celebrations. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. In , Lincoln declared that the holiday would once again be observed on the last Thursday in November. Thanksgiving that year focused heavily on honoring and thanking the Union troops, and shows early evidence of the feast being the highlight of the holiday. What better way to give thanks to the Union soldiers than to fill their empty bellies with a festive meal? The Union League Club of New York made efforts to ensure that no soldier, on land, water or elsewhere, went without a Thanksgiving dinner. They asked for donations from the public, and many restaurants offered to cook the food. The soldiers feasted on turkey, cranberries and many of the other traditional foods we now associate with Thanksgiving. The response from the public was so outstanding that the list of donations in the Union League Report was 37 pages long. Americans embraced the concept of a day of gratitude and feasting, and the tradition continues to this day. Every American president since Abraham Lincoln has declared Thanksgiving a national holiday, set aside to observe the many blessings our land and country have offered us. Mary Todd Lincoln taught herself to cook with this historical book. There is no way to know if Abraham Lincoln enjoyed this particular recipe, though he very well may have. At the very least, it was likely served at many Thanksgiving meals in America during this time period. Research Sources Baker, James W. The Biography of an American Holiday. Leslie, Eliza , reprint Directions for Cooking in its Various Branches. Mayhaven Publishing, Mahomet, IL. Follow Tori on Facebook: Tori Avey , Twitter:

**Chapter 3 : Lincoln's Proclamation of Thanksgiving - Prayer, Plain and Simple**

*"Many, we know, cannot offer joyful thanks today," Reverend Robert H. Williams told his congregation on November 24, Newly re-elected President Abraham Lincoln had set aside the fourth Thursday of the month as a day of thanksgiving.*

Perhaps she is best known as the author of the poem "Mary Had a Little Lamb. On September 28, , Hale wrote to Lincoln and urged him to have the "day of our annual Thanksgiving made a National and fixed Union Festival. In his diary Gideon Wells, Secretary of the Navy, wrote that Seward "read me the draft of a proclamation for Thanksgiving. I complimented the paper as very well done, and him for his talent in the preparation of such papers, which pleased him. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the City of Washington, this Third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States the Eighty-eighth. During his presidency Abraham Lincoln issued a total of nine proclamations of prayer, fasting, or thanksgiving. The first one was issued on August 12, , in response to a request from Congress. Whereas a joint Committee of both Houses of Congress has waited on the President of the United States, and requested him to "recommend a day of public humiliation, prayer and fasting, to be observed by the people of the United States with religious solemnities, and the offering of fervent supplications to Almighty God for the safety and welfare of these States, His blessings on their arms, and a speedy restoration of peace: And whereas, when our own beloved Country, once, by the blessing of God, united, prosperous and happy, is now afflicted with faction and civil war, it is peculiarly fit for us to recognize the hand of God in this terrible visitation, and in sorrowful remembrance of our own faults and crimes as a nation and as individuals, to humble ourselves before Him, and to pray for His mercy, to pray that we may be spared further punishment, though most justly deserved; that our arms may be blessed and made effectual for the re-establishment of law, order and peace, throughout the wide extent of our country; and that the inestimable boon of civil and religious liberty, earned under His guidance and blessing, by the labors and sufferings of our fathers, may be restored in all its original excellence: And I do earnestly recommend to all the People, and especially to all ministers and teachers of religion of all denominations, and to all heads of families, to observe and keep that day according to their several creeds and modes of worship, in all humility and with all religious solemnity, to the end that the united prayer of the nation may ascend to the Throne of Grace and bring down plentiful blessings upon our Country. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed, this 12th. On November 28, , Lincoln ordered government departments closed for a local day of thanksgiving. The Municipal authorities of Washington and Georgetown in this District, have appointed tomorrow, the 28th. On April 10, , the president asked Americans to give thanks to the armed forces fighting in the Civil War. It has pleased Almighty God to vouchsafe signal victories to the land and naval forces engaged in suppressing an internal rebellion, and at the same time to avert from our country the dangers of foreign intervention and invasion. It is therefore recommended to the People of the United States that, at their next weekly assemblages in their accustomed places of public worship which shall occur after notice of this proclamation shall have been received, they especially acknowledge and render thanks to our Heavenly Father for these inestimable blessings; that they then and there implore spiritual consolations in behalf of all who have been brought into affliction by the casualties and calamities of sedition and civil war, and that they reverently invoke the Divine Guidance for our national counsels, to the end that they may speedily result in the restoration of peace, harmony, and unity throughout our borders, and hasten the establishment of fraternal relations among all the countries of the earth. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the City of Washington, this tenth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-sixth. On March 30, , Lincoln proclaimed "a day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer" for Thursday, April 30, This was in response to a request from the United States Senate. Whereas, the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the Supreme Authority and just Government of Almighty God, in all the affairs of men and of nations, has, by a resolution, requested the President to designate and set apart a day for National prayer

and humiliation: And whereas it is the duty of nations as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions, in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord: And, insomuch as we know that, by His divine law, nations like individuals are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war, which now desolates the land, may be but a punishment, inflicted upon us, for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole People? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us! It behooves us then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness. Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do, by this my proclamation, designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th. And I do hereby request all the People to abstain, on that day, from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite, at their several places of public worship and their respective homes, in keeping the day holy to the Lord, and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion. All this being done, in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the Divine teachings, that the united cry of the Nation will be heard on high, and answered with blessings, no less than the pardon of our national sins, and the restoration of our now divided and suffering Country, to its former happy condition of unity and peace. Done at the City of Washington, this thirtieth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty seventh. It has pleased Almighty God to hearken to the supplications and prayers of an afflicted people, and to vouchsafe to the army and the navy of the United States victories on land and on the sea so signal and so effective as to furnish reasonable grounds for augmented confidence that the Union of these States will be maintained, their constitution preserved, and their peace and prosperity permanently restored. But these victories have been accorded not without sacrifices of life, limb, health and liberty incurred by brave, loyal and patriotic citizens. Domestic affliction in every part of the country follows in the train of these fearful bereavements. It is meet and right to recognize and confess the presence of the Almighty Father and the power of His Hand equally in these triumphs and in these sorrows: Now, therefore, be it known that I do set apart Thursday the 6th. Done at the city of Washington, this fifteenth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-eighth. On May 9, , Lincoln asked for thanksgiving and prayer for recent successful operations of the army. Enough is known of Army operations within the last five days to claim our especial gratitude to God; while what remains undone demands our most sincere prayers to, and reliance upon, Him, without whom, all human effort is vain. I recommend that all patriots, at their homes, in their places of public worship, and wherever they may be, unite in common thanksgiving and prayer to Almighty God. This was done at the request of Congress. Whereas, the Senate and House of Representatives at their last Session adopted a Concurrent Resolution, which was approved on the second day of July instant, and which was in the words following, namely: I do, hereby, further invite and request the Heads of the Executive Departments of this Government, together with all Legislators, all Judges and Magistrates, and all other persons exercising authority in the land, whether civil, military or naval, and all soldiers, seamen and marines in the national service, and all the other loyal and law-abiding People of the United States, to assemble in their preferred places of public worship on that day, and there and then to render to the Almighty and Merciful Ruler of the Universe, such homages and such confessions, and to offer to Him such supplications, as the Congress of the United States have, in their aforesaid Resolution, so solemnly, so earnestly, and so earnestly, and so reverently recommended. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the

seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the City of Washington, this seventh day of July, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixtyfour, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-ninth. Lincoln issued his last Thanksgiving Proclamation on October 24, This again set the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving. It has pleased Almighty God to prolong our national life another year, defending us with his guardian care against unfriendly designs from abroad, and vouchsafing to us in His mercy many and signal victories over the enemy, who is of our own household. It has also pleased our Heavenly Father to favor as well our citizens in their homes as our soldiers in their camps and our sailors on the rivers and seas with unusual health. He has largely augmented our free population by emancipation and by immigration, while he has opened to us new sources of wealth, and has crowned the labor of our working men in every department of industry with abundant rewards. Moreover, He has been pleased to animate and inspire our minds and hearts with fortitude, courage and resolution sufficient for the great trial of civil war into which we have been brought by our adherence as a nation to the cause of Freedom and Humanity, and to afford to us reasonable hopes of an ultimate and happy deliverance from all our dangers and afflictions. Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do, hereby, appoint and set apart the last Thursday in November next as a day, which I desire to be observed by all my fellow-citizens wherever they may then be as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to Almighty God the beneficent Creator and Ruler of the Universe. And I do farther recommend to my fellow-citizens aforesaid that on that occasion they do reverently humble themselves in the dust and from thence offer up penitent and fervent prayers and supplications to the Great Disposer of events for a return of the inestimable blessings of Peace, Union and Harmony throughout the land, which it has pleased him to assign as a dwelling place for ourselves and for our posterity throughout all generations. Done at the city of Washington this twentieth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty four, and, of the Independence of the United States the eighty-ninth. Source for the text of documents: The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln is often credited with giving a turkey pardon at Thanksgiving. However, it actually happened at Christmas. Thank you to James Warner for sending me his sketch. This is not a commercial website. None of the photographs and artwork exhibited herein are being sold by the webmaster. Some photographs and artwork are believed to be in the public domain. Any copyrighted photographs and artwork are used in the context of this website strictly for educational, research and historical purposes only, under the "Fair Use" provisions of the Copyright Act, US CODE: Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair Use Section Anyone claiming copyright to any of the posted photographs or artwork please inform the webmaster of such and it will be duly noted or removed. This page is part of the Abraham Lincoln Research Site. Questions, comments, corrections or suggestions can be sent to Roger Norton , the creator and maintainer of this site. It is unlawful to copy, reproduce or transmit in any form or by any means, electronic or hard copy, including reproducing on another web page, or in any information or retrieval system without the express written permission of the author. The website was born on December 29,

**Chapter 4 : Thanksgiving Proclamation - Lincoln Thanksgiving Day Proclamation**

*Date: October 20, By: Abraham Lincoln It has pleased Almighty God to prolong our national life another year, defending us with his guardian care against unfriendly designs from abroad, and vouchsafing to us in His mercy many and signal victories over the enemy, who is of our own household.*

Pastor of the Congregational Church, Cheshire, Conn. The subject which I present to you today, is one authorized by the text and demanded by the times. It is the relation of the citizen to the government. Civil government, like the family and the church, is a Divine institution. Ordained of God, whosoever resisteth it, resisteth the ordinance of God. If any think that an apology is needed for the discussion of this subject in the pulpit, they will find one in its gospel associations. Two preliminary inquiries demand our attention: What is the life of a nation? The life of a nation is something more than the aggregate, or united, or concentrated life of its people. It is that which gives it vitality, which secures growth and greatness. It consists, if I mistake not, of three different elements combined and assimilated into that one mysterious principle, which we call life. The first is found in its civil institutions, its constitution, laws, and the modes of their administration. The second is in its physical resources, embracing climate, soil, minerals, facilities for manufactures and trade, and perfection of the mechanic arts. The third is in the industry, intelligence and virtue of its people. The nation which has the largest share of these in their greatest perfection, will enjoy the most vigorous and the longest life. Its influence will predominate in the counsels of the nations. It is that form of fundamental rules and regulations by which a nation is governed, which are embodied in its constitution and laws, written and unwritten. This is the true meaning, though in common language, the right to govern, and the person or persons governing are called the government. What, for example, is the government of these United States? Is it the President and his cabinet? Is it the congress? Is it the judiciary? Or is it all these combined? The Constitution of the United States and the laws made in conformity therewith constitute the government of this country. For the administering of this government, legislative power is vested in the congress, judicial power in the courts, and executive power in the President. This government was made by the people and for the people. This is evident from the Preamble to the Constitution: In the sixth article you will find these words: Do we not see here, standing out in bold relief, the fallacy of the much vaunted doctrine of State rights—the doctrine that each state may secede at pleasure? Though the people reserved to their respective State governments all rights not specified in the Constitution, did they not explicitly say that that should be supreme? But if the general government is supreme, what are the others but subordinate. The dogma that each State may secede at pleasure, if true, would destroy our government superstructure and foundation. Our constitution and laws would be as worthless as the waste and sand thrown up by the ocean in a storm. What now is the relation of the citizen to the government; a citizen of our country to our general government? The distinguishing feature and crowning glory of a republican government is the right of suffrage, the proper use of which, in this country, will solve the problem whether such a government can be permanent. If, as we believe, a republican form of government will most effectually secure the good of the people, and will the soonest elevate the nations to the highest civilization; if, as we are assured, the oppressed of the world are now looking to the success of our government as their chief hope, and if the failure of free institutions here will roll back the sun of liberty beneath the horizon, and give to decaying despotisms a new lease of life for centuries to come, is it not evident that the right of suffrage involves momentous responsibilities? The citizen who violating his solemn oath to vote for those men whose election he believes will be for the best good of the nation, gives his suffrage for men whom he knows to be unworthy, is he not largely guilty of the curse which such rulers bring upon the land? And does the citizen who refuses to vote, escape his responsibility or materially lessen his guilt? Every elector is bound to study and understand, as far as him lies, the nature of our government, and the principles which will best sub serve its high ends—he is bound, so far as possible, to qualify himself for the selection of suitable men for office. Especially is he under obligation to acquire that virtue which will lift him above bribery, fraud, and every dishonorable motive. And the fact that many unworthy men have received this inestimable privilege, increases the obligation of every true citizen to use his

right more intelligently and conscientiously. Again, the citizen is a subject bound to obey the laws. The laws made according to the collective will of the electors are obligatory upon all alike. The obligation to obedience is two-fold. It exists in the nature of things. A nation cannot live without government, and government cannot continue without obedience. Without this there will be speedy anarchy and ruin. This obligation arises also from the will of God. Government is His institution; rulers are his ministers; obedience to them He regards as to Himself. Therefore, every citizen is bound to obey the laws. The only exception is when a person believes that compliance with a particular requisition will violate his conscience. He may then disobey, but must submit to the penalty. It has also been held that when the laws become cruelly oppressive, and there is no remedy, if a majority of the people believe that success is probable, they may unite in resisting the laws. Happily, under our constitution there is a peaceable remedy for all oppressive laws and therefore, a justifiable revolution in this country is hardly within the limits of possibility. Once more the citizen is eligible to office. Hence, it is the duty of each elector, so far as his opportunities will allow, to qualify himself for office, and when this is tendered to accept, unless other duties prevent. True loyalty and patriotism require some persons to make sacrifices in this service of their country. Whoever accepts an office, high or low, should remember that he is the minister of God, that he is to labor in it with fidelity, seeking, alike, the glory of God, the safety of the government, and the welfare of the people. Besides the peculiar obligations which spring from these three special relations of the citizen to the government, there are others more general, yet too important to be overlooked. By a decree of the ancient Roman Senate, the Consuls were commanded to see that the republic received no detriment. This duty is now laid upon every American citizen. Providence, philanthropy and true self-interest, make each elector a conservator and defender of our country. Each one is bound to aid in the enforcement of the laws, for laws unexecuted are a source of weakness and of danger. Personal obedience is not enough, we must do what we can to secure the obedience of others. We are bound therefore, to labor for the extension of right principles, for the creation and sustaining of a public sentiment, which will frown down all violations of law, which will demand and ensure the punishment of criminals of every grade. Each elector is also obliged to give his effective influence against all practices which tend to increase ignorance and vice, and for every institution which will promote knowledge and virtue. These duties, comprehensive and important, follow necessarily from the text and other scriptures, and are as binding upon us as any Divine precept. Its possibilities appall us. Seven hundred millions of people might dwell here and not equal in proportion the population of Great Britain and Ireland. Its probabilities oppress us. Its certainties surpass belief. One hundred millions are soon to bless God for a home in this land. And then with every material resource developed, every mental gift employed, a government, free and perfect, and these all sanctified; this nation shall be the power and glory of the world; the white robed angel of peace shall continually hove above and guard this land, while rays of light and life shall spread over the earth, hastening the true millennium of the ages. My subject furnishes some important practical inferences. It affords a triumphant justification of those who have supported the government in this war. It has been thought strange that good men, and especially the ministers of Christ, should be so strenuously earnest in advocating the putting down of this rebellion by force of arms. In view of the truths presented above, the answer is obvious. Good citizenship required this, good citizenship made this a religious duty. The nation must attempt to conquer the rebellion or give up its life. If, without a struggle, it had permitted one third of its subjects to revolt, and take with them its ships, forts and arsenals, what prestige or power would have remained? It was, undoubtedly, incumbent on those who administered the government to conquer the rebellion, if possible. What other course was open? Who negotiates with armed traitors? When a burglar opens your safe and takes your valuables, do you leave it to referees to decide what part he shall restore? What trust could we have placed in those who had violated their oaths of allegiance? Would they have abided by any arbitrament, if opposed to their wishes? Again—could we not have granted the traitors all which they wished, and so have allowed them to remain? There was no desire on the part of the leaders to remain, they sought occasion to rebel. No terms would have kept them in the Union except those which would have made the mass of Northern freeman the subjects of a Southern oligarchy. But you might have let the seceding States go in peace. These solemn oaths would have been, where? Broken, violated, trodden in the dust. And then the guilty violators, office holders, electors, all,

would they not have stood forth before the world, their fair fame blackened and disgraced, their meanness despised of men, and abhorred of God, themselves worthy of the infamy which would have immortalized their names? Would not the very statutes and portraits in our national halls have blushed for shame? Let the seceding States go in peace, and you destroy the government; for then other States may separate when they shall please. Let Oregon and California request it, the Western Empire rises upon the shores of the mighty Pacific. Let the ingathering crowds of hardy adventures demand it, the Rocky Mountain Empire exists, the Switzerland of America, rich beyond estimate, in mines of gold and silver. Let the dwellers in the great valley wish it, the Mississippi Empire, with its teeming multitudes will claim supremacy over the continent. Let the Middle States agree, the Central Empire is before you bidding for the trade of the world.

**Chapter 5 : Religious views of Abraham Lincoln - Wikipedia**

*This is the proclamation which set the precedent for America's national day of Thanksgiving. During his administration, President Lincoln issued many orders similar to this. For example, on November 28, , he ordered government departments closed for a local day of thanksgiving.*

He drafted a pamphlet incorporating such ideas but did not publish it. After charges of hostility to Christianity almost cost him a congressional bid, he kept his unorthodox beliefs private. James Adams labeled Lincoln as a deist. William Barton, Lincoln likely had written an essay something of this character, but it was not likely that it was burned in such a manner. Johnson, New Salem schoolteacher Mentor Graham, with whom Lincoln boarded, reported in that the manuscript was "a defense of universal salvation. Harvey Lee Ross, mail carrier who lived in New Salem with Lincoln in , asserts that this was a fictional story by Herndon. Herndon was 16 years old in and lived 20 miles away in Springfield and did not have contact with Lincoln. There was not a copy of *The Age of Reason* on the bookshelf at the tavern where Herndon said Lincoln had read it. Finally, Ross states he was very well acquainted with everyone in the community of New Salem and he would have known about any conversations regarding a document of this nature. I remember well his argument. In a letter written to Martin M. Morris in , Lincoln wrote: There was the strangest combination of church influence against me. My wife had some relations in the Presbyterian churches, and some in the Episcopal churches; and therefore, wherever it would tell, I was set down as either one or the other, while it was everywhere contended that no Christian ought to vote for me because I belonged to no Church, and was suspected of being a Deist and had talked of fighting a duel. Responding to accusations that he was an "infidel", Lincoln defended himself, publishing a hand-bill to "directly contradict" the charge made against him. The declaration was released as follows: A charge having got into circulation in some of the neighborhoods of this District, in substance that I am an open scoffer at Christianity, I have by the advice of some friends concluded to notice the subject in this form. That I am not a member of any Christian Church, is true; but I have never denied the truth of the Scriptures; and I have never spoken with intentional disrespect of religion in general, or of any denomination of Christians in particular. It is true that in early life I was inclined to believe in what I understand is called the "Doctrine of Necessity"â€”that is, that the human mind is impelled to action, or held in rest by some power, over which the mind itself has no control; and I have sometimes with one, two or three, but never publicly tried to maintain this opinion in argument. The habit of arguing thus however, I have, entirely left off for more than five years. And I add here, I have always understood this same opinion to be held by several of the Christian denominations. The foregoing, is the whole truth, briefly stated, in relation to myself, upon this subject. I do not think I could myself, be brought to support a man for office, whom I knew to be an open enemy of, and scoffer at, religion. Leaving the higher matter of eternal consequences, between him and his Maker, I still do not think any man has the right thus to insult the feelings, and injure the morals, of the community in which he may live. If, then, I was guilty of such conduct, I should blame no man who should condemn me for it; but I do blame those, whoever they may be, who falsely put such a charge in circulation against me. At the conclusion of the service, the fiery pulpiteer called for all who intended to go to heaven to rise. Naturally, the response was heartening. Then, he called for all those who wished to go to hell to stand. Unsurprisingly there were not many takers. Lincoln had responded to neither option. Lincoln, you have not expressed an interest in going to either heaven or hell. May I enquire as to where you do plan to go? I intend to go to Congress. In a written statement to Herndon, James W. Keyes said Lincoln believed in a Creator of all things, who had neither beginning nor end, who possessing all power and wisdom, established a principal, in Obedience to which, Worlds move and are upheld, and animal and vegetable life came into existence. A reason he gave for his belief was, that in view of the Order and harmony of nature which all beheld, it would have been More miraculouis to have Come about by chance, than to have been created and arranged by some great thinking power. Lincoln had hoped to resolve the conflict peacefully without a civil war. During the address, Lincoln stated "Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty.

After the funeral, he attempted a return to his routine but was unable. One week after the funeral, he isolated himself in his office and wept all day. Several people reported that Lincoln told them that his feelings about religion changed at this time. Willie is reported to have often remarked that he wanted to become a minister. He was too good for this earth. The good Lord has called him home. I know that he is much better off in Heaven. She used the services of mediums and spiritualists to try to contact their dead son. Lincoln allegedly attended at least one seance at the White House at this time with his wife. Next came Robert E. The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time. I am almost ready to say that this is probably true -- that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet. By his mere great power, on the minds of the now contestants, He could have either saved or destroyed the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And, having begun He could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds. Both [North and South] read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. Gettysburg[ edit ] In late and early Lincoln would endure more agonies. The Battle of Gettysburg in July was the first time that Lee was soundly defeated. Reflecting on the successes of the past year, Lincoln said, No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. There he gave his celebrated speech, the Gettysburg Address , wherein he hoped that the nation shall, "under God," have a new birth of freedom. The words, "under God," may not have been in his written manuscript, but it is posited by some sources that he added them extemporaneously from the podium. Lincoln in reporting some insane remarks supposed to have been made by him, in , on the presentation of a Bible to him by the colored people of Baltimore. No sane man ever uttered such folly, and no sane man will ever believe it. According to one report, Lincoln replied: In regard to this great book, I have but to say, it is the best gift God has given to man. All the good the Saviour gave to the world was communicated through this book. But for it we could not know right from wrong. We hoped for a happy termination of this terrible war long before this; but God knows best, and has ruled otherwise Surely He intends some great good to follow this mighty convulsion, which no mortal could make, and no mortal could stay. One entry, written by a well-known Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Barrows , claimed that Lincoln had become a Christian in but provided no evidence. In the anxious uncertainties of the great war, he gradually rose to the heights where Jehovah became to him the sublimest of realities, the ruler of nations When the clouds lifted above the carnage of Gettysburg, he gave his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. The pastor said that Lincoln buried his face in his handkerchief as tears came to his eyes and then answered: When I left home to take this chair of state, I requested my countrymen to pray for me. I was not then a Christian. When my son died, the severest trial of my life, I was not a Christian. But, when I went to Gettysburg and looked upon the graves of our dead heroes who had fallen in defense of their country, I then and there consecrated myself to Christ. Yes, I do love Jesus. This quote appeared on page one of the Freeport Weekly Journal on December 7, . Some versions of this have Lincoln using the word "crosses" instead of "graves", and some have him saying "Christ" instead of "Jesus". Oldroyd has endeavored to learn for me in what paper he found it and on whose authority it rests, but without result. He does not remember where he found it. It is inherently improbable, and rests on no adequate testimony. It ought to be wholly disregarded. The earliest reference I have found to the story in which Lincoln is alleged to have said to an unnamed Illinois minister, "I do love Jesus" is in a sermon preached in the Baptist Church of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, April 19, , by Rev. Whitcomb, which was published in the Oshkosh Northwestern, April 21, , and in issued in pamphlet form by John E. James Armstrong Reed, in preparing his lectures on the religion of Lincoln, asked a number of people if there was any evidence of Lincoln being an "infidel" in his

later life. I do not believe a word of it. It could not have been true of him while here, for I have had frequent and intimate conversations with him on the subject of the Bible and the Christian religion, when he could have had no motive to deceive me, and I considered him sound not only on the truth of the Christian religion but on all its fundamental doctrines and teaching. And more than that: In addition to what has appeared from my pen, I will state that I have had many conversations with Mr.

**Chapter 6 : How Lincoln Transformed Thanksgiving | The History Kitchen | PBS Food**

*Proclamation for a Day of Prayer. July 7, The President Of The United States Of America. A Proclamation. as a day of thanksgiving and praise to almighty God.*

This changed when, due to the tireless efforts of Sarah Josepha Hale, President Lincoln issued a proclamation declaring November 24, to be a day of Thanksgiving for the Union. Upon hearing this news, wealthy, influential New Yorker George W. Blunt made a proclamation of his own. Writing to Lincoln, Blunt explained that he wished to supply the Union soldiers and sailors: It would be a grand sight to see that army of brave men, loyal to the flag, feeding on the good things of the land they have fought for, whilst the miserable traitors, if they still hold out, are crouched behind their defences sic hungry and starving. Will not all who feel that we have a country worth defending and preserving do something to show those who are fighting our battles that they are remembered and honored? We desire that on the twenty-fourth day of November there shall be no soldier in the Army of the Potomac, the James, the Shenandoah, and no sailor in the North Atlantic Squadron who does not receive tangible evidence that those for whom he is periling his life, remember him. These words began the effort that resulted in the most unusual and successful morale booster of the Civil War: All loyal states quickly picked up the idea and issued requests in local newspapers for donations. The Northern press enthusiastically trumpeted the project, lauding local efforts and explaining how every citizen could add their support, whether a little or a lot. Because soldiers in the Union Army regularly got newspapers, they knew what was coming. The excitement mounted in the camps! As the idea spread, the good feelings spread also. The real trick was how to provide a Thanksgiving feast for the Union soldiers and sailors not stationed near a civilian center, and those whose units were within the geographical Confederacy. Again, New York City led the way! The Union League requested that New York hoteliers, restaurateurs, cooks and bakers, and anyone else who could do so roast twenty or more turkeys and chickens and send them to a central location. From there, the food would be shipped south. The reaction was instantaneous! Fulton Market, the great wholesale marketplace, contributed most of the poultry, along with enormous quantities of other Thanksgiving dinner ingredients. Supply ships and steamers left the ports of New York filled with over , boxes of packaged goodness. Trains left moment by moment, carrying carefully and lovingly packed meat, vegetables, fresh fruit, cakes and cookies, nuts, cranberriesâ€”everything a soldier or sailor could want from home. The food went first to City Point, and from there to the camps. Normal supply systems were disrupted, causing General Rutherford B. We have the best of times. We have a football and we have a good deal of fun with it. The boys are in a game now. Several units did not get their food on November 24, causing a few to write complaints in their letters and diaries. Sometimes the amount was insufficient for the number of men, and sometimes the food did not arrive in good condition, but soldiers made do. One artillery regiment that felt it had been shortchanged compensated by consuming unlimited quantities of liquids, to the extent that the evening brigade dress-parade was quite a spirited affair. The efforts from the homefront were always appreciated, and few more so than those offered in the fourth year of a grinding war. It was a testament to the Union as a whole that food was available, transportation was effective, and communication was efficient. Ultimately, it was this strength that would win the war. From the New York Times, December 6, a soldier writes: The American Armed Forces continues this tradition. On Thanksgiving, every Soldier, Sailor, Marine. Air Force and Coast Guard member on active duty will receive a holiday meal. It is usually traditionalâ€”turkey with all the trimmings! From all of us at emergencivilwar.

**Chapter 7 : Sermon - Thanksgiving - Connecticut - WallBuilders**

*President Abraham Lincoln issued the following proclamation on Oct. 20, , setting aside the last Thursday in November as "a day of thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God."*

During his administration, President Lincoln issued many orders similar to this. For example, on November 28, , he ordered government departments closed for a local day of thanksgiving. Sarah Josepha Hale, a year-old magazine editor, wrote a letter to Lincoln on September 28, , urging him to have the "day of our annual Thanksgiving made a National and fixed Union Festival. President Lincoln responded to Mrs. The document below sets apart the last Thursday of November "as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise. On October 3, , fellow Cabinet member Gideon Welles recorded in his diary how he complimented Seward on his work. A year later the manuscript was sold to benefit Union troops. By the President of the United States of America. The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle or the ship; the axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom. No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity and Union. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the City of Washington, this Third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States the Eighty-eighth. Abraham Lincoln William H.

**Chapter 8 : The Union Gives Thanksâ€”The Soldierâ€™s and Sailorâ€™s Thanksgiving of â€”Part I | Em**

*thanksgiving day BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA - A PROCLAMATION It has pleased Almighty God to prolong our national life another year, defending us with His.*

Williams told his congregation on November 24, Newly re-elected President Abraham Lincoln had set aside the fourth Thursday of the month as a day of thanksgiving. The wife will tell of her husband, who fell in the bloody strife. Some will tell of friends, who suffered many months from fearful wounds. Weir to suitably mark the occasion. The hospital had been serving the wounded, sick, and dying since the autumn of I was peculiarly impressed with the capacity and conveniences of this well ordered receptacle of disabled patriots. It is situated in the southern precincts of the cityâ€” The grounds are ample, checkered with plain and gravel walks and enclosed with a neat and substantial fence. The buildings are commodiousâ€” The balance are wooden, nicely painted and perfectly clean within and without, presenting altogether a picture of architectural uniformity and neatness. There are accommodations for perhaps 1, patients. Every consistent and attainable accommodation, every appliance for the mental or physical comfort of sick and wounded men may be found there. Union armies were victorious throughout the theater of war, slavery in Maryland had been peacefully extinguished, and the terrible hand of war appeared to have retreated from Frederick forever. As Reverend Williams at the Presbyterian Church concluded his message on Thanksgiving Day , he alluded to the hopes and fears of future events. He eloquently summarized the thoughts and feelings surely felt by those in his divided community: During the past four years great changes have taken place. The changes of the next four years, no doubt, will be as great as those through which we have just passed. Who can tell what shall be the result of the next year? Probably, even in hostile territory, tears of real, earnest sorrow may be shed over the graves, and uncoffined and buried bones, of our patriot soldiers. Probably, the scars received in battle may command the respect of all, and be one qualification for honorable positions. Happy day when the peans of victory and the sweet notes of peace shall blend beautifully together â€” when a mighty people shall lay aside their discord, and man meet man as brothers of a noble race, and sons of a free, united, and prosperous nation.

**Chapter 9 : Abraham Lincoln: Proclamation | Thanksgiving Day | Allen & Company**

*Thanksgiving did not become a national holiday in the United States until the fall of when President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation declaring that the last Thursday in November would be a day of national thanksgiving.*