



Thanksgiving

More than Turkeys and feathers!



Painting by David Bradley

How did Thanksgiving as we know it today
start?

*A woman named Sarah Josepha
Hale created Thanksgiving.*



Who was Sarah Josepha Hale?

Sarah was a very unusual woman. She was educated and worked as an editor of a national magazine. During the 1800's, editors were men and most women weren't educated. Sarah was an exception to the times.

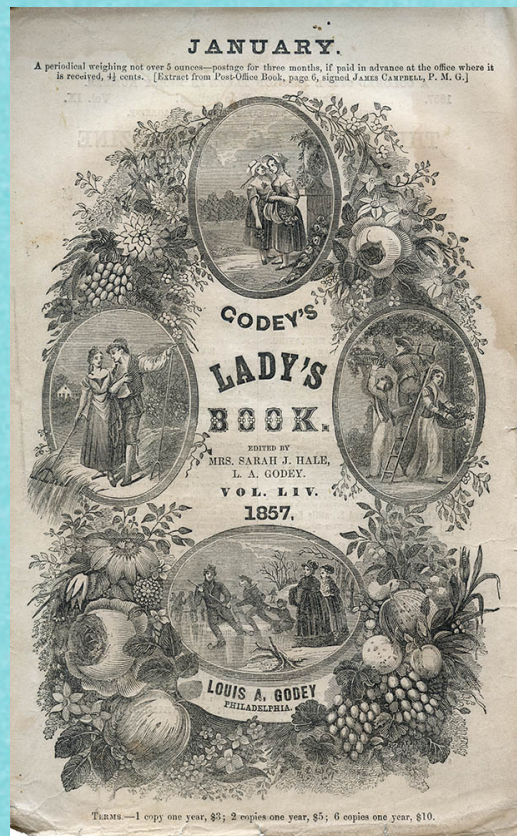
Sarah believed all women should have the opportunity to become educated and became an activist for women's education.

She was also one of the first American women to write a novel.

Sarah was one of the first few in the United States to write a book about slavery.

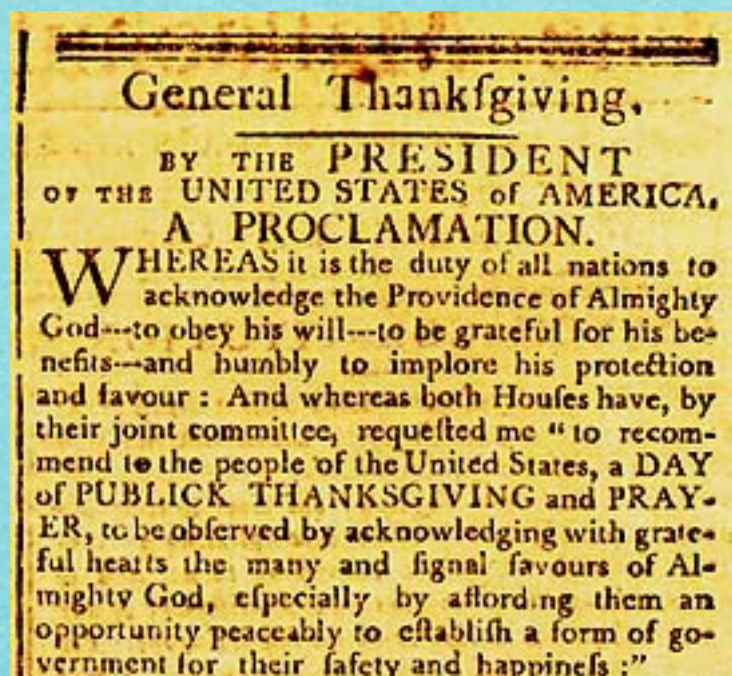
The premise of her book was that while slavery first and foremost hurts and dehumanizes slaves, and as a consequence it also dehumanizes the masters and retards the psychological and moral development of their world.

How did Sarah become responsible for the creation of our modern day the Thanksgiving?



Sarah was the editor of Godey's Lady's Book. She used this position of power to begin a campaign in her editorials and then followed with personal letters to various politicians and presidents to petition Thanksgiving as a National Holiday.

Responding to Sarah's numerous letters and influenced by issues of a country divided by civil war, President Lincoln in an attempt to unify the Nation, proclaimed Thanksgiving as a national holiday in 1863.





What does all of this have to do with Pilgrims and Indians?

In creating her ideas for a National Thanksgiving Day, Sarah thought of the Mayflower and the Pilgrims and used part of a letter from Edward Winslow a governor of Plymouth Colony, which mentioned a meal between the Plymouth settlers and the Wampanoag native people.

In his letter Edward Winslow said:

“Our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might, after a special manner, rejoyce together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors... At which time, amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us [including] their greatest King, Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted; and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the plantation, and bestowed on [us]...”



And now we can begin with the historic Thanksgiving