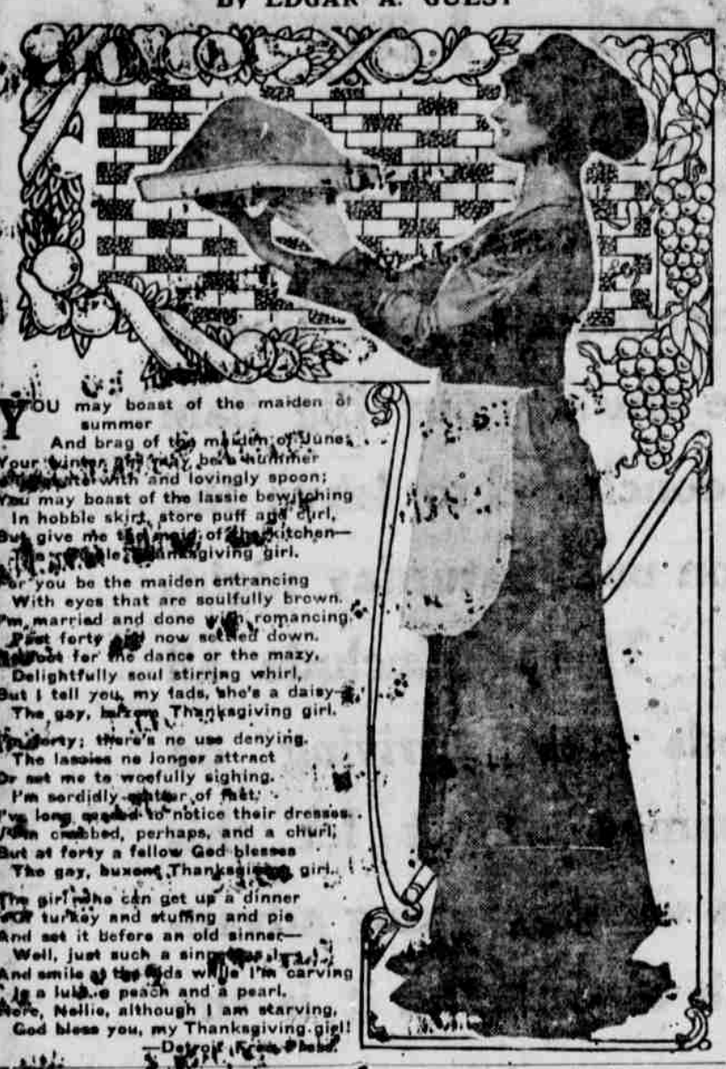
THE THANKSGIVING GIRL

By EDGAR A. GUEST



YOU may boast of the maiden of summer
And brag of the maiden of June;
Your winter girl may be a mummer
Compared with and lovingly spoon;
You may boast of the lassie bewitching
In hobble skirt, store puff and curl,
But give me the maid of the kitchen—
The capable Thanksgiving girl.

For you be the maiden entrancing
With eyes that are soulfully brown.
I'm married and done with romancing
Past forty and now settled down.
I'm not for the dance or the mazy,
Delightfully soul stirring whirl,
But I tell you, my lads, she's a daisy—
The gay, buxom Thanksgiving girl.

I'm forty; there's no use denying.
The lassies no longer attract
Or set me to woefully sighing.
I'm sordidly sober of fact;
I've long ceased to notice their dresses
Can crabbed, perhaps, and a churl,
But at forty a fellow God blesses
The gay, buxom Thanksgiving girl.

The girl who can get up a dinner
With turkey and stuffing and pie
And set it before an old sinner—
Well, just such a sinner am I—
And smile at the kids while I'm carving
Is a lulu e peach and a pearl.
Here, Nellie, although I am starving,
God bless you, my Thanksgiving girl!

—Detroit Free Press.

JOB TANNER'S THANKSGIVING DINNER

By HOPE DARING.

"YOU can't give a Thanksgiving dinner this year, Brother Job. It's hard times, I know, but I'd like to know what's to hinder."

Mrs. Abigail Skinner raised her hands in horror. "Sakes alive, don't you know the minister's Thanksgiving dinners are not easily among our relatives? You don't mean to tell me that you are to give a dinner to our family—the Tanners—while Sally Long does your housework? The idea is outrageous."

Mr. Tanner made no reply. For the space of two minutes silence reigned in the sitting room of the Tanner farmhouse—a silence broken only by the ticking of the clock and the drowsy snoring of the big Maltese cat as she arched her back to the slow stroking of her master's hand.

Mrs. Skinner spoke with a degree less than her usual assurance. "Of course I'd do most anything for you. My place of service to you [illegible] ed, though under the circumstances I'm sure Mr. Skinner will consent to overseeing the preparations. I will come early and"—

"Oh, I wouldn't think of putting you to that trouble," her brother interrupted her to say. "You tell about years of service. That's enough."

Mrs. Skinner's thin, dark face flushed, and she moved uneasily in the cushioned rocker. "You'll have to have my help, Job. Sally can't cook a dinner fit to set before our family."

"See here," Abigail, looking into the shrewd but kindly blue eyes of Job Tanner came a look his sister understood, "there's no use talking about this matter. I shall give my usual Thanksgiving dinner, and I shall not need your services."

Job Tanner had never married. In his early manhood his only sister had been left a widow with four small children. Her offspring called their father

"STAY HERE AS MY WIFE."

prosperous and gone, so Job unhesitatingly offered herself and family a home. For twenty years he had cared for them, educating the children and submitting to Abigail's exactions.

At last the boys and girls were all settled in life. Then their mother married Mr Skinner. She was a grasping, avaricious woman and upon learning that her new husband was a far less wealthy man than she had supposed tried to retain her olden sway over her brother's domestic affairs.

"I don't see my way out of it," Job admitted to himself. "Thanksgiving is only ten days off. Sally's good enough in her way, but she is a poor cook and no kind of a housekeeper. That was Abigail's strong point—she kept my house well. I'd as soon have Sally's work, though, as to have Abigail's scolding and whining. But it will never do to set company down to a Thanksgiving dinner cooked by Sally. Let me see."

The November sunshine lay warm and mellow over the brown fields, heaps of russet leaves bordered the roadside, and the voices of the men at work in a field near by came ringing in the clear air. His eyes swept the familiar landscape. Suddenly he started. "If she only would! Mary is a prime cook, and they say she is glad of a chance to earn a little money. Poor Mary! It's a shame Clemens didn't leave her enough to take care of herself. Well, I'll go over and see, here goes anyhow."

The Will Clemens farm adjoined Job's acres. There had been a time when he had hoped that they might be still more to each other, but a misunderstanding had arisen between them, and before it was explained she was the wife of Will Clemens.

The door was opened by Mrs. Clemens herself. She was a plump little woman with soft dark eyes and a sweet face.

"Why, Job, I am glad to see you. Walk in. I'll have to give you a seat in the kitchen, for there is no fire in the other room."

"How cozy you are here, Mary!" Then he plunged at once into his trouble. He told of his firm determination to give his usual Thanksgiving dinner and his still firmer resolve not to accept Abigail's proffered help.

"I want you to come and plan it all," he said in conclusion. "You can have all the money to spend and all the help you want. I don't mean that you shall work hard. Will you help me, Mary?"

A delicate pink colored her cheek. "Mrs. Skinner—what will she say?"

"It's none of her business. Say yes, Mary. I'll pay you anything you like."

She raised her head a little proudly. "Of course I will ask you no more than any one else"— she began, but he broke in gladly:

"Which means that you will come. Thank you, Mary."

All the way home Job Tanner was contrasting the cozy little house he had just left with his own spacious, but lonely abode. Meanwhile Mrs. Clemens was assuring herself that she was regarded by her brother-in-law only in the light of a capable servant.

She went to her field of labor early on the morning before Thanksgiving. Sally was a warm admirer of Mrs. Clemens and helped in her usual careless fashion. All things for which they asked were provided, even to a box of cut flowers from a neighboring city.

Thanksgiving morning dawned, gray and overcast. About 8 o'clock Job entered the house from the barn.

"Miss Clemens, she said for you to come in the dinin' room and see how things looked," was Sally's greeting.

Where he opened the door he stood speechless. The old room was transformed into a bower of beauty. The bay window was filled with evergreens and adorned with yellow chrysanthemums and silver leaved begonias from Mary's home. The quaint old mahogany sideboard was filled with choice bits of china and silver, quivering molds of amber jelly, a massive silver cake basket filled with slices of rich dark fruit cake and a bowl of scarlet carnations. The long table was spread with fine linen and ornamented with smilax and roses. On a low vine draped stand between the side windows was a pyramid of apples, oranges and bananas.

"It all looks good enough to eat. And so do you, you look well on, neting has well fitting brown gingham dress, white apron and pink ribbon at her throat. "Mary, you make my home a paradise. Stay here as my wife."

She grew very pale. Twice she essayed to speak, but the words died on her lips. It was not until he cried impatiently that she found her voice.

"No, no. You ask me because you are sorry for me and your house is lonely. I cannot be your wife on these terms."

"I do not see why you cannot. I will be good to you, Mary."

She smiled, although her lips quivered piteously. "I know you would, Job. There is something else."

"Not another man?"

"Oh, no. Please don't ask any more."

"I have a right to know. You must tell me why you cannot be my wife."

There was a grave dignity in his voice that she could not gainsay. She must tell him the truth.

"Because I love you, Job Tanner. Nay, do not interrupt me. You would indeed be good to me, but I know, too, well the result of a union where the love is all on one side, and so I will not be your wife. Now, not a word more on the subject. I have outraged my sense of womanly pride that you made me speak." And before he could recover from his astonishment she had taken refuge in the kitchen.

The guests began to arrive in a short time. Job had no opportunity for another word with Mrs. Clemens. One fact was plain to him—Mary had refused him.

Dinner over, there was an hour of social intercourse. Then the guests departed. When Job re-entered the house, after seeing the last load drive off, he found Sally washing the dishes.

"Where is Mrs. Clemens, Sally?" he asked.

Sally paused, dishcloth in one hand and a half washed plate in the other. "Where, indeed?" He recognized the tone as one that marked the height of Sally's displeasure. "She's gone home, driv off by that sister of yourn! Humph! I'd jest like to give Abigail Skinner a piece of my mind. I come right near doin' it, but Miss Clemens—the lamb—she begged me to keep still."

A little skillful questioning put Job in possession of the facts. Mrs. Skinner had entered the kitchen and plainly expressed to Mrs. Clemens the surprise and indignation of the family concerning the widow's presence.

"Said as how they were all sayin' as how she was a-throwin' of herself at your head," Sally went on. "Mary Clemens wouldn't marry you nohow if she would, you'd jest a bigger fool than you are now not to take her."

Job did not tarry for any more words. Pulling his hat well down over his eyes, he opened the door and set off toward the Clemens cottage.

Upon reaching the home of Mrs. Clemens he walked in without knocking. The lamp was lighted and Mary was in the sitting room. She sprang hastily wiping her eyes.

"I know all about it, Mary," he began. "There is not a word of truth in Abigail's gross speech. She is jealous, and, Mary, there is something else."

She looked at him wearily. "Please don't say anything more. After my mad words of this morning the greatest kindness you can do me is to spare me the mortification of seeing you."

"But this is what you call your mad words that I must speak about—once, Mary," he said gently, yet in such a masterful way that she could not but listen. "I've made a discovery since morning. I came to ask you to be my wife not because I am sorry for you, not because I long for the comfort your presence will bring into my home, but because I love you."

He took both her trembling hands in his strong clasp. "I've loved you all these years, Mary, but never understood until today what made my life so empty. Ah, this is a real Thanksgiving!" And Job Tanner gathered the woman he loved close in his arms.

The Real National Bird.

Many vain regrets have been expressed over the selection of the eagle in preference to the turkey as the national bird. If the matter could now be put to a vote there is but little doubt that the turkey bird would wear the crown. The feelings of our forefathers may have revolted at the idea of eating the bird of freedom, but the patriotism of the past was made of different clay from that of the present practical patriotism. Economical principles at once suggest the advisability of combining love of country and love of turkey.

Meeting Trouble.

When Trouble knocks at his door, to come and see you it's no use to bar the door, but in case he tries to come down the chimney you'd best have a fire there to give him a warm welcome.—Atlanta Constitution.

Wishes Back the Money.

"There's something uncanny about that lawyer."

"Why?"

"When his client was defeated he didn't make a motion for a new trial."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Anticipating Failure.

"She is going to marry him to reform him."

"In that case I will be careful about selecting the wedding present. I'll pick out something that she can pawn when the lean days come."—Exchange.

THANKSGIVING THE YEAR ROUND

A WOMAN who has an almost old fashioned faith in Providence keeps what she calls her "thank offering box." Into this goes through the year, from one Thanksgiving to the middle of the following November, a sum of money for every accident escaped, calamity averted or special joy.

These offerings are not confined to her own escapes, but each time some member of her family bobs up from some threatened woe into the box goes the money offering of thanks.

Not the same amount is given each time, and rarely large sums, for the woman is not rich, but a nice little sum is realized.

This is devoted to giving some one a happy Thanksgiving day. It does not always go into the regular channels. As the woman says, the poor and hospitals are usually well cared for in holiday seasons.

Sometimes a homesick girl in a strange city is given car fare home for the Thanksgiving gathering she would otherwise miss. Once a music lover was given a season ticket to the symphony concerts. Again a doctor's bill that had worried a young stenographer who had her mother to support was quietly paid.

In speaking of her pretty custom the owner of the thank offering box said, "Never have I known what thankfulness really meant until I started my box and saw the joy my thankfulness brings to others."

Such a box, besides cultivating one's bump of gratitude and making others equally grateful, cannot but afford great pleasure and interest in the spending. It is a gracious thought one more woman could profitably put into practice.

Thanksgiving In the Country

By JOE CONE.

BRING on the turkey, mother, an' the fixin's one an' all.
Pile 'em high upon the table for the big an' fur the small.
It is time to set the dinner, it is time to set a-house-lean,
An' my appetite I reckon is the biggest thing in town.
Bring on the sass an' dressin'. Don't leave anything behind,
Cuz today we want to sample, mother, each an' every kind.
So don't forget the puddin', an' please don't forget the pie.
Today's Thanksgivin', mother, an' we're goin' to trade high.

Ain't that turkey jest a daisy? Ain't he juicy, plump an' brown?
Don't he make you hungry, mother? Ain't he fit fat any town?
See! His glossy skin is bustin', an' the stuffin's runnin' out.
Oh, I tell you, mother, children, this is heaven, jest about!
Draw your chairs around the table; button on your bibs; button where you kin;
You don't want your highest collars interferin' with your chin.
Now I'm goin' to carve the turkey. Pass your plates, you youngsters five.
Today's Thanksgivin', mother. Ain't it good to be alive?

—Baltimore Herald.

Some Eventful Thanksgivings.

Among the days set apart for thanksgiving which in reality have been days of national sorrow may be numbered that of 1875, when the entire country was mourning over the death of Vice President Henry Wilson, whose remains on the Thanksgiving day of that year were lying in state at Washington; that of 1878, when the German steamer Pomerania, from New York, crowded with passengers, sank off Folkestone, England, carrying to a watery grave fifty souls; that of 1881, the morning of which found the country grieving over the death of President Garfield; that of 1882, when another terrible loss at sea set the country mourning, the steamer Ocean Grove striking on the rocks of Cape Canso and proving a coffin ship to many on board; that of 1885, when the country mourned over the death of Vice President Thomas Hendricks, sleeping his last sleep at his Indianapolis home.

A Thanksgiving Monologue.

A, I want that drumstick there
An' some raisin sauce to-o.
Uncle Jim, I bet'a pear
Fixed with pickles. Say, don't you?
Aunt Marie, I might you'd pass.
Mo th' lef—that ain't enough!
What's that in that big green glass?
Oh, I mean some frosty stuff!
Kin I have some white meat, pa?
Gosh, I'm goin' to be
Cheerful. Ma, I want some slaw.
Gee, you're always stintin' me!
Whoop — whoop — ouch! I never meant
To upset that gravy boat.
Guess that stuffin' must 'a' went
Down my Sunday clothin' throat!
Pa, ain't there one more drumstick?
Huh! Eat three if I'd jest try!
Um-yum! Sure, I won't be sick!
Gimme 'nother piece o' pie!

—Charles C. Jones in Puck.

In a Gastronomic Way.

"Do you think Thanksgiving turkeys will go down?"

"I am sure of it."

"That's good. Do you think they will fall much?"

"I didn't say anything about their falling; I said they would go down."—Baltimore American.

A Dinner Jingle.

Ef no turkey dish you view
Possum's good enough fer you!
Ef no possum's on the plate
Rabbits overrun the state
Anyway, in light we're livin',
An' we're willin' fer Thanksgivin'!

—Atlanta Constitution.

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