

JIM C'S QUIZ OF THE WEEK

11/23/2006 – THANKSGIVING DAY

HOW DID THE TERM "THANKSGIVING DAY" ORIGINATE?

Thanksgiving and the Pilgrims seem to go together, just like Christmas and Santa Claus--but the truth is, the Pilgrims never held an autumnal Thanksgiving Feast.

The pilgrims founded Plymouth Colony on Dec. 21, 1620, and to celebrate their survival in the New World, they had a feast in 1621 after their first harvest. It is this feast which people often refer to as "The First Thanksgiving."

However, this feast was never repeated, nor was it ever termed a "Thanksgiving Feast." In fact, to these devoutly religious people, a day of thanksgiving was a day of prayer and fasting, which would be held any time an extra day of thanks was called for.

Nevertheless, the 1621 feast held in Plymouth has become a model that we think of for our own Thanksgiving celebration, which eventually was recognized as an official American holiday.

In 1863 President Abraham Lincoln set aside the last Thursday in November to celebrate Thanksgiving. President Franklin Roosevelt changed it to the 4th Thursday to help business – it guaranteed that one extra weekend to shop before Christmas.