THE FIRST THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATION - JUNE 20, 1676

By Miscellaneous

"The Holy God having by a long and Continual Series

of his Afflictive dispensations in and by the present Warr

with the Heathen Natives of this land, written and brought

to pass bitter things against his own Covenant people in this

wilderness, yet so that we evidently discern that in the midst

of his judgements he hath remembered mercy, having remembered

his Footstool in the day of his sore displeasure against us for

our sins, with many singular Intimations of his Fatherly Compassion,

and regard; reserving many of our Towns from Desolation Threatened,

and attempted by the Enemy, and giving us especially of late with

many of our Confederates many signal Advantages against them,

without such Disadvantage to ourselves as formerly we have been

sensible of, if it be the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed,

It certainly bespeaks our positive Thankfulness, when our Enemies

are in any measure disappointed or destroyed; and fearing the

Lord should take notice under so many Intimations of his

returning mercy, we should be found an Insensible people, as

not standing before Him with Thanksgiving, as well as lading

him with our Complaints in the time of pressing Afflictions:

The Council has thought meet to appoint and set apart the

29th day of this instant June, as a day of Solemn Thanksgiving

and praise to God for such his Goodness and Favour, many

Particulars of which mercy might be Instanced, but we doubt not

those who are sensible of God's Afflictions, have been as diligent

to espy him returning to us; and that the Lord may behold us as

a People offering Praise and thereby glorifying Him; the Council

doth commend it to the Respective Ministers, Elders and people

of this Jurisdiction; Solemnly and seriously to keep the same

Beseeching that being perswaded by the mercies of God we may all,

even this whole people offer up our bodies and soulds as a

living and acceptable Service unto God by Jesus Christ."

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The First Thanksgiving Proclamation (June 20, 1676)

On June 20, 1676, the governing council of Charlestown,

Massachusetts, held a meeting to determine how best to express

thanks for the good fortune that had seen their community

securely established. By unamimous vote they instructed

Edward Rawson, the clerk, to proclaim June 29 as a day of

thanksgiving, our first. That proclamation is reproduced here

in the same language and spelling as the original.

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