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*A Picture Show of Puritan Days*



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BECKLEY-CARDY COMPANY, *Publishers*, CHICAGO

# A Thanksgiving Day Movie

*A Picture Show of Puritan Days*

BY

ETHELLE MANNING HERMES

BECKLEY-CARDY COMPANY  
CHICAGO

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## CHARACTERS

GRANDMOTHER

CHILD

PRISCILLA

JOHN ALDEN

MILES STANDISH

POCAHONTAS

POWHATAN, *Indian Chief, father of POCAHONTAS*

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH

PURITAN MAIDS *and* MEN

INDIANS

DUTCH MAIDS

## COSTUMES

Puritan characters in dress of their period. Dutch maids in typical Dutch frock, with caps, collars and broad, low shoes. Indians in blankets, with feathers and bead ornaments. Grandmother and child in modern dress.

## SYNOPSIS

A prologue introduces a child begging her grandmother for a story. The story of the pilgrims is recalled and the child wants to hear it again. The grandmother tells the child to get the picture book showing the pilgrim characters and the child rejoices and wants the story as a picture show. The playlet is the "picture show," an appropriate one for the Thanksgiving season.

The familiar stories of Priscilla and her lovers are combined with the story of Pocahontas and her rescue of Captain John Smith. Powhatan, the Indian chief, father of Pocahontas, is a very aggressive and warlike savage and he gives the Puritan maids a terrible fright. But when his anger is focused upon Captain John Smith, we have a thrilling climax. The inclusion of the characters in the two different episodes serves to bring before the eyes of the children a spectacle that is more broadly suggestive of pilgrim times than either alone would be, and the dances and songs enrich the entertainment feature of the sketch.

## THANKSGIVING DAY MOVIE

*Discovered: GRANDMOTHER in rocking-chair, with CHILD on low seat beside her.*

CHILD [*looking out of window*].

Oh dear! What a gloomy day!

I wish I could go out to play.

But when there isn't any sun,

Well, then, there isn't any fun.

[*Turns around.*]

Grandmother—

GRANDMOTHER.

—Now, child, don't tease.

CHILD.

But put away your knitting, please.

GRANDMOTHER.

Really, dear, I must not stop.

There, now, you caused a stitch to drop.

CHILD.

I didn't do it—it's this light.

You'll knit until you lose your sight.

Listen—

GRANDMOTHER.

—Oh, what shall I do?

CHILD.

I know, I know, and I'll tell you.

Grandmother, tell me just once more

The tale you've told so oft before.

\*GRANDMOTHER.

But, Ruthie dear, you know it all.

Hark. Didn't I hear Mother call?

CHILD.

Maybe so, but I like to hear.

So tell me again—there, that's a dear—

How the Puritans came across the sea

To America, our country free.

GRANDMOTHER.

All right, my dear, get that big book  
And through its pages we will look.

CHILD.

Goodie, goodie! Oh, I know.  
Can't we have a picture show?

GRANDMOTHER.

A picture show? That's just the thing.  
Each character to us 'twill bring.

CHILD.

So real it seems—we'll have a chance  
To hear them talk and see them dance.

GRANDMOTHER.

We must move back, we're much too near  
To see the pictures well, I fear.

*Enter DUTCH MAIDS.*

CHILD.

Little Dutch Maids—the very first thing!  
I do hope they will dance and sing.

[DUTCH MAIDS *dance the "Dutch Dance" and sing song  
as given under "Dances."*]

*Enter PURITAN MAIDS led by PRISCILLA.  
They watch the dance.*

GRANDMOTHER.

A quaint little dance, quite charming, I'm sure.  
See the Puritan maids, so sedate and demure,  
Gaze wistfully across the page  
Upon the gay, forbidden stage.

PRISCILLA [*turning to her companions*].

Come, sisters, this must be the way.

SECOND MAID [*looking about sadly*].

Oh dear! Do we have to stay?

THIRD MAID.

America! Land of the free—  
I thought the place would fairer be.



FOURTH MAID.

Well, I confess I am surprised.  
'Tis not so grand as I'd surmised.

PRISCILLA.

Sisters all, list thou to me.  
Let not thy hearts sore troubled be;  
Be not too quick to criticise;  
When fault ye find, love often dies.

SECOND MAID.

Thou mayst be right, that I allow.  
But I can't help being homesick now.

PRISCILLA.

Wouldst thou return across that sea?  
I'm still seasick as I can be!  
I'll suffer here, nor once complain;  
But I'll not take that trip again.

THIRD MAID.

Priscilla is right; I'll take her stand.  
At least we're safe upon dry land.  
So let's rejoice—but how, I pray?  
Dancing's a sin, our parents say.

PRISCILLA.

Those maids who dance from Holland came.  
Surely *we* might do the same.  
The breezes sing through the leafy bowers  
And the grasses sway with the dancing flowers.  
If God's creatures yield to music's charm,  
A little dance can do no harm.

[PURITAN MAIDS *dance the "Puritan Minuet" as given under "Dances."*

[*War whoops off stage.*]

FOURTH MAID.

Oh sister, pray, what's that I hear?

SECOND MAID.

Such awful noise fills me with fear!

THIRD MAID.

We're all alone! Which way is best?  
We really should go with the rest.

[*More war whoops.*]

PRISCILLA.

Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I'm much afraid  
We from the rest too far have strayed.  
I've often times heard father tell  
How terribly the Indians yell!  
Come, let us hide by yonder tree  
And make no sound, so quiet be.

[*All hide.*]

*Enter* INDIANS *led by* POWHATAN.

POWHATAN.

Me heap big Injun—Ha, ha, ha!  
Hear white squaw sing, "Ta, la, la."  
Me find white squaw, take her scalp.  
Her no more sing—just yelp.

[INDIANS *dance war dance.*]

SECOND MAID [*aside.*]

Priscilla dear, what shall we do?

PRISCILLA.

Quiet be, or he'll hear you.

POWHATAN.

Find white squaw in 'bout a minute.  
Make big stew—stick her in it.

SECOND MAID.

Now I wish I had not come.

THIRD MAID.

What I'd give to be back home!

POWHATAN [*with wild dance*].

There white squaw—'hind that tree!  
Big chief get her now. Who-ee-ee!

PRISCILLA [*clasps hands in prayer; other MAIDS gather round in tears*].

O Heavenly Father, send Thine aid!  
Our time has come, we're sore afraid.

POWHATAN.

White squaw cry—Ach, make me sick!  
Heap big knife, he kill 'em quick.

[INDIANS *grab MAIDS, pull them out from behind tree*].

*Enter* CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH.

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH.

What ho! You great, big lazy lout,  
What's this commotion all about?  
Let go thy hold, if thou wouldst live.  
About two minutes will I give.

POWHATAN.

Bring white squaw here, grab pale face too.  
He no tell Injun what to do.

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH.

Surely, Chief, you do not mean  
To be as cruel as it would seem.

POWHATAN.

Cruel! Bah! Your scalp I'll take.  
A heap big string that will make.

[*Seizes* CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH. *While* SMITH *is struggling to escape* POCAHONTAS *rushes in*].

POCAHONTAS.

Father, dear, spare this man's life!  
And now let there be no more strife.

POWHATAN.

Hah! Injun Princess save pale face?  
Well, let him live—but keep his place.

[*Releases* SMITH].

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH [*to* POCAHONTAS].

My place I know, 'tis by your side—  
Your friendship kind will be my pride.  
But come, we two must do our best  
To help these maidens so distressed.

*Enter* MILES STANDISH, JOHN ALDEN *and* PURITANS.

JOHN ALDEN.

Priscilla, child! Let go, my brave [*to* INDIAN *assailant*].  
We've come these maidens' lives to save.

MILES STANDISH.

Come, men, it seems we're just in time  
To avert some awful crime.  
Now, Chief, come here, be our friend;  
To all this trouble put an end.

[*Shows beads*].

See all the beads—some for your squaw—  
If you will just obey the law.  
Let these quarrels, these troubles cease.  
Come, let us smoke the Pipe of Peace.

ALL [*gather round*].

Yes! O Big Chief, be our friend;  
Please let all this trouble end!

POWHATAN.

All right, Big Chief, me good friend.  
Give me beads and fight will end.

POCAHONTAS.

Father, I am proud of you!  
Come on, braves, the Corn Dance do.

[INDIANS *dance* "*Indian Corn Dance*" *as given under*  
*"Dances."*].

MILES STANDISH.

The dance was fine! Now, can't you see  
How truly thankful we should be?  
Our crops are good, we all are strong,  
And, though the winter may be long,  
We've food and fuel to last till spring.

PRISCILLA.

Thanksgiving songs of joy we'll sing ;  
I think 'twould be the nicest way  
To have a real Thanksgiving Day.

JOHN ALDEN [*to* PRISCILLA].

To thy plan I will agree,  
If thou wilt but Dame Alden be.

PRISCILLA.

O John, how couldst thou be so bold?  
Thou wert quite shy, so I've been told.  
I feel to thee I owe my life  
And I will gladly be thy wife.

MILES STANDISH.

Captain Smith his life has won—  
A wife has bashful Brother John.  
If he had not grown so very bold  
I would not be left in the cold.  
But such is life, now sad, now gay.  
We'll celebrate Thanksgiving Day  
With feast and song, we'll take a chance.  
And all join in the Harvest Dance.

[*ALL dance "Harvest Dance" as given under "Dances."*]

[*ALL Exeunt*]

CHILD.

O Grandmother, they've gone away!  
I do wish they would longer stay.

GRANDMOTHER.

Your bedtime, child, has long since past ;  
Our pleasures cannot forever last.  
Some other day, when there's rain or snow,  
We'll have another picture show.

## DANCES

*Arranged by* GRACELYNN GLIDDEN

## DUTCH DANCE

*Music:* WHERE, OH WHERE, IS MY LITTLE DOG GONE?  
*Song and Pantomime.*

## SONG.

Ve come here to-night  
 Mit a drum and a fife,  
 To sing and to dance you vun song.  
 Ve are glad ve are Dutch,  
 You can bet you your life,  
 Mit de English ve don'd get along.

[*Exeunt*]PANTOMIME *for each line.*

1. "Ve come." Bow, with hand on stomach.
2. Play drum and fife.
3. Hopsy waltz. Right and left four waltz steps.
4. "Ve are glad." Swell up and slap chest.
5. Shake finger at audience.
6. "Mit de English." Point with thumb over shoulder and shake head.

All dance Dutch waltz around stage.

## PURITAN MINUET

*Music:* THE MINUET

I. Start in couples, inside hands joined high. Begin with outside foot (i. e., the one away from partner.) Take three steps (one measure) point inside foot and hold (one measure. Repeat two more times, starting with inside and outside foot (six measures.) Walk daintily on toes and at beginning of each group of steps raise the knee slightly and point toe downward. Face partner and curtsy (two measures). (The curtsy should be little more than a peasant curtsy. Place right foot behind left and bend both knees very modestly.) During this step the four couples should

be forming a hollow square, one couple on each side and facing each other at finish.

II. Second step done in place. Join right hands high. Balance forward on right foot (one measure); i. e., step forward on right foot, bring left behind right, rise on toes and sink.) Balance back (one measure.) Walk around partner with six steps, starting right (two measures.) Balance forward. Balance backward. Face partner lengthwise of hollow square and curtsy.

III. (To second verse.)

Here each dancer leaves her partner and passes around circle with the following steps, taking two measures to reach each girl.

Three steps and point.

Three steps and curtsy to first girl.

Repeat to second, third and fourth.

Dance ends abruptly as Indians yell.

#### INDIAN CORN DANCE

*Music:* TOM TOM *and* HARVEST SONG.

Circle the fire with hop-step, corn in hand held high (about eight counts); step, face fire, hold corn high and bend low, offering corn to fire.

Every other one take four steps toward fire, four steps to turn around, four steps backward to place.

Others do the same, holding corn high.

Circle the fire again and squat down.

Shuck corn and throw shucks into fire while singing "Harvest Song."

After song rise. Hold corn high.

Circle fire again. Stop. Take four steps to fire. Bend low and lay corn on fire. Take four steps to turn around. Take four steps backward.

MILES STANDISH *speaks.* INDIANS *step back and play proceeds.*

## HARVEST DANCE

*Music:* Any lively march.

I. Four couples in groups of four, boys on left. Even numbers in center. All cross hands, join right hands and skip around to right (eight skips). Turn and skip to left (eight skips to four measures).

II. Even numbers face each other in two rows. Odd numbers starting down center, weave around first two, between them and around second two, and down center to place (four measures).

III. Face partners. Balance forward on right foot; balance backward on left foot. Step on right, cross left over right and completely turn right. Outside four do this four times).

IV. Inside four do the same three times and turn. Face in and kneel (eight measures). Repeat weaving step with center four kneeling. At end they rise and all step back into circle.

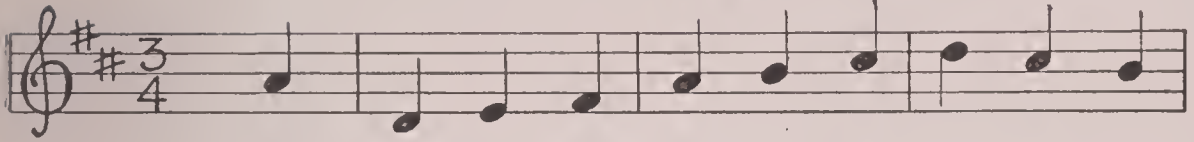
V. With skipping step do a grand right and left around circle. Dance ends and all join in joyous song. Many songs appropriate to the different seasons can be found.



## PURITAN MAIDS' MINUET

Words by ETHELLE M. HERMES

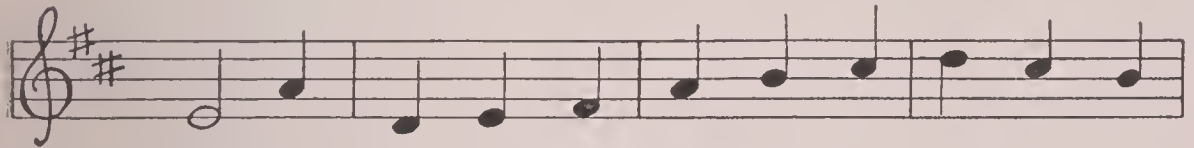
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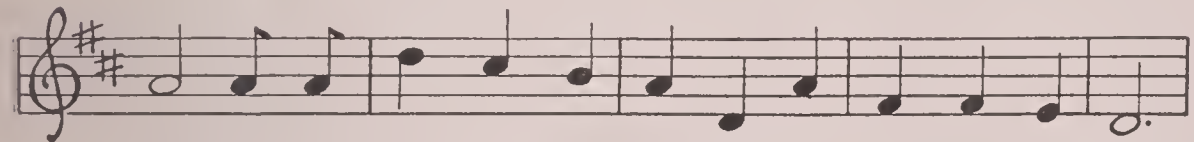
We'll dance and we'll sing tho' we're Pur - i - tan



maids; We don't wish to sin, but we're not much a-



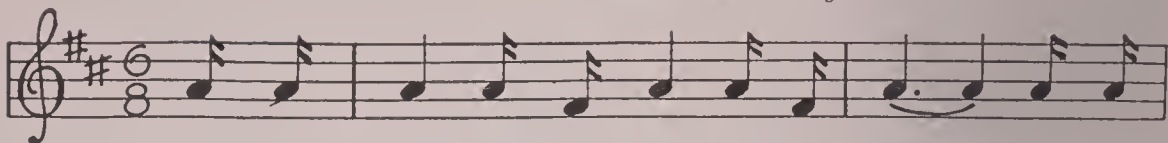
fraid. The bir - dies all sing in the trees o - ver-



head, So it can't be so wrong as our parents have said.

We came to this country our freedom to find  
 And though we are homesick we really won't mind ;  
 For if we can dance and if we can sing,  
 Much joy to our lonely hearts the music will bring.

## HARVEST SONG

*Words by* ETHELLE M. HERMES*Music by* GRACELYNN GLIDDEN

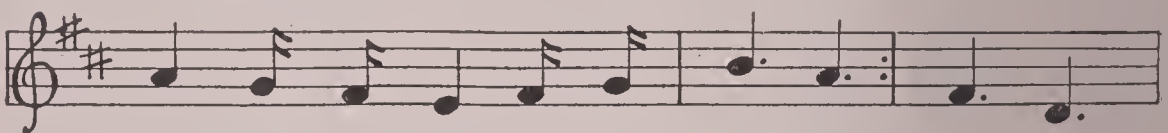
When the corn tassels wave in the breeze And our



feathered friends sing in the trees, The



hillsides with blossoms are glow - ing And



we to the wood-lands are go - ing

When the autumn winds sigh through the trees  
 And the woods have soft carpets of leaves,  
 Mandamin\*, whose heart is so mellow,  
 Waves proudly his tassels of yellow.

Then, brave youths and fair maidens all,  
 Do answer the gay harvest's call.  
 With joyous song and with laughter gay  
 The maize they gather and store away.

At the eventide 'neath starry skies,  
 When all the world in slumber lies,  
 We pitch our tents near the rippling stream  
 And by the glowing campfire dream.

\*Indian name for corn.

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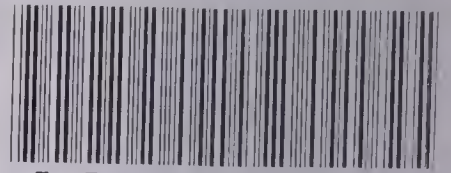
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