

## THANKSGIVING

No family can have fonder memories of old fashioned Thanksgivings than ours has. For weeks before that holiday, which we also used as the J.B. Hudgens' Family reunion, preparations were being made. My older brothers were hunting quail, and long strings of birds hung on the porch, waiting to be prepared. The butchering was usually done by then and the smoke house and the pickling jars were full of meat. Moma made homemade mince meat and we cut up the pumpkins and cooked them. Kids today somehow think pumpkin has always come from cans. I can remember peeling and dicing it for hours.

All the family returned for that holiday. Each brought arm loads of food. The kitchen hummed with excitement. Chicken or turkey, dressing, plain and with oysters, cranberries, fruit salad, pies of all kinds....we'd never even heard of calories and weight watching. The family was so large that we had to 'set a second table'. The usual round 'quarter sawed oak dining table' that day changed shape with the addition of leaves and became a huge oval. Children were kept in their place in those days. None of that knocking thir parents down to get to the table first! We waited until our turn came, and that was after the adults had eaten. There were ways one could compensate for this handicap however we'd slip into the pantry and 'pick'. My niece, Annie Lou, and I were the champion 'pickers' in the family, and our delight was to hit the fruit salad bowl in the pantry. A little poem expresses my feelings perfectly:

It may be I am getting old, and like too much to dwell,  
Upon the days of bygone years, the days I loved so well;  
But thinking of them now, I wish somehow that I could know,  
A simple old Thanksgiving Day like those of long ago!

Our dimensions were not too unlike those of the dining table, by the time we got our fill. We who were round were rounder, and some even were oval shaped, but those were the days.....yes those were the days, my friend!