


# Thanksgiving's long-forgotten song

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**Considering there's likely not** to be much in the way of meaningful public policy pronouncements during this holiday week, a lighter tone is most apropos to begin it.

And we'll do so once again with a consideration of what we'll call "the lost song of Thanksgiving."

For more than a few generations, "Over the River and Through the Wood" — yes, "wood," not "woods" — pretty much was standard fare in the grade-school chorus this time of year.

And while perhaps a few of us might have had the family singalong on the way to our Thanksgiving feast, more than a few of us likely hummed it to ourselves as we made the trip.

Many of you remember how the song goes (and this is just one of its *12 verses*) that began its musical life titled "The New-England Boys Song About Thanksgiving Day":

*Over the river and through the wood,*

*To Grandfather's house we go;*

*the horse knows the way to carry the sleigh*

*through the white and drifted snow.*

*Over the river and through the wood,*

*to Grandfather's house away!*

*We would not stop for doll or top,*

*for 'tis Thanksgiving Day.*

Lydia Marie Child was responsible for the words, from her original 1844 poem, "A Boy's Thanksgiving Day," later put to music.

But the song pretty much has been lost to history, never heard on the radio now or, with “Christmas Day” and “grandmother” substituted, only very seldom during the annual Christmas music juggernaut. (And then likely only by such highbrow artists – ahem — as Alvin and the Chipmunks and Gayla Peevey of “I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas” fame).

A few years back, Kim Ruehl at About.com speculated that the song typically was relegated to children’s records “because adults don’t typically sing Thanksgiving songs” and it didn’t get much notice.

Indeed, “Over the River . . .” likely would get more traction as a Christmas song these days. But given the fond memories so many have of it, you’d think somebody out there could make it the “standard” it deserves to be for Thanksgiving.

That said, travel experts are predicting a record number of Americans will partake in their proverbial over-the-river-and-through-the-wood trek this Thanksgiving with COVID-19 left farther and farther behind in life’s rearview mirror.

However, “normalcy” being what it is, many of us still will nest and cocoon our thanks in place.

But it’s no less the golden opportunity in these still trying times of spiking inflation and bureaucrats *still* attempting to command the economy and spend our way back to “prosperity” to appreciate what we have.

For we *always* have *something* – nay, *much* — for which to be *thankful*.

A hearty and happy Thanksgiving to one and all.

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