



The First Thanksgiving, J.L.G. Ferris, 1932, LOT 4579,
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3g04961/>

Many accounts of the first “Thanksgiving” portray Native Americans as supporting players: They are depicted as nameless, faceless, generic “Indians” who merely shared a meal with the Pilgrims. The real story is much deeper, richer, and more nuanced. The Indians in attendance, the Wampanoag, played a lead role in this historic encounter, and they had been essential to the survival of the colonists during the newcomers’ first year. However, it was not long before relationships soured between the Wampanoag and the colonists who had invaded their lands, and warfare erupted in New England. Like the Wampanoag, thousands of American Indian Nations and communities across the continent have their own histories and cultures. As people living in the modern world and dealing with contemporary issues, Native Peoples continue to be an integral part of the American story.