



Thanksgiving

This editorial is being written as we prepare for the Thanksgiving holiday that takes place here in the United States on November 23. For us this is always a family holiday and we look forward to having our family with us—and we will not worry about *Optical Engineering!*

Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday in the United States. The first Thanksgiving Day was officially celebrated in this country in the fall (autumn) of 1621 by the Pilgrims by decree of Governor William Bradford. It was, and is, a family and religious thanksgiving for the harvest and the successes of the year. As a celebration it was based on the Harvest Festivals that the Pilgrims had known in their original homeland. I grew up in England and the Harvest Festival and the Harvest Suppers were important parts of our family and religious life. I know that such festivals are held in many countries and cultures throughout the world.

It occurred to me as I was thinking about Thanksgiving that times have certainly changed since agriculture was *the* major enterprise of all peoples and success of the harvest was vital to their future survival and prosperity. There is a significant fraction of the world where that is still true. For the rest of the world agricultural success is taken for granted.

We do need to give thanks for our intellectual harvest, which is more often than not vital for our future survival and prosperity as a world economy. So I do give thanks for that small part of the intellectual harvest that appears between the covers of our journal *Optical Engineering*. I give thanks for

the significant talents of the many people who contribute to the success of our journal. (Because Thanksgiving is also a religious festival, I personally recognize those talents as God-given.)

Without the international authors, the editorial staff in Bellingham, the worldwide panel of reviewers, and the extensive readership, we would not have the first-class journal that it is my privilege to edit. This is an opportune time to thank them all and wish them and our readers much success in 1996.

Editor's Anecdote

On July 3 of this year, I received a letter from Professor Banerjee, guest editor of our August special section on photorefractive nonlinear optics. This letter contained the following paragraph.

"On another (lighter) note, you may be interested to know that your first communication to me as you started receiving the edited papers for the special issue, which included a copy of your Guest Editorial on "invited papers" and was apparently lost in the mail, finally showed up a week ago. I attach a copy of the envelope which is stamped 'MIS-SENT TO MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA'! Accordingly in this letter, I am writing this mail with the address Rochester, USA."

I reproduce the envelope here so you can tell that my anecdotes are true. I know my handwriting is not the greatest...but really!

Brian J. Thompson
Editor

