



FIRST THANKSGIVING DINNER

Some of the few remaining representatives of the shy wild turkeys that were once hunted by the Pilgrim Fathers. Now, paradoxically, they must be carefully penned up to keep them wild.

CONSERVATION

Wild Turkeys, Nearly Extinct, Penned to Keep Them Wild

Captured Wild Birds Pine Away in Confinement
So Specimens Were Obtained While in the Egg Stage

TURKEYS of the true North American wild species, such as supplied the first Thanksgiving feast, may some day abound again in Eastern woods, if a careful and ambitious breeding project now under way at Winewood, Va., succeeds.

For it must be realized that the holiday turkeys we buy in the market-place are not simply the old native species captured and tamed into barnyard fowls. The common domestic turkey, though closely related to the original wild turkey, is as much an immigrant as chickens and ducks and geese. Although it originated in Mexico, it came to the United States by way of Europe, having reached England through a very round-about chain of trade from Spain.

Wild Turkey Virtually Extinct

In the meantime, our wild turkey has become virtually extinct. Either it has been wiped out by hunters or, where wild birds survive, it has been mixed with domestic stock that has escaped

from farmyards and taken to life in the open again.

But now, in an area in Virginia's historic Wilderness, where Grant and Lee once locked forces in the bitterest fighting of the Civil War, a serious effort is being made to bring the old wild turkey back. And, paradoxically enough, it proves necessary to put him inside a fence to keep him "wild."

1,200-Acre Bird Preserve

About seven years ago W. E. Wine, the present owner of Winewood, became interested in locating a place where the wild turkey could be found and preserved. At first it seemed that the Wilderness area of Virginia still had some of the pure strain wild turkeys left, so Mr. Wine purchased about 1,200 acres of timber land there and had elaborate pens and feeding sheds constructed.

When these arrangements were all completed, the keeper at Winewood trapped several native turkeys, retaining only those true to the wild type. After

several years of selective breeding, however, occasional checks invariably showed domestic traits and markings in the younger birds.

Santee Swamp Searched

Mr. Wine, a true conservationist, refused to say die in behalf of the pure strain wild turkey. Instead, he secured the services of W. F. Welch, a veteran turkey raiser and a man who had devoted much time to the study of the wild birds' habits. Mr. Welch thereupon went to the Santee Swamps of South Carolina, a practically uninhabited area fifty miles from Charleston, where he spent two years securing wild birds for Winewood.

In the Santee area wild turkeys could be captured, but difficulty arose when an attempt was made to maintain them for breeding purposes. Unlike the Virginia turkeys, they either pined away in captivity or destroyed themselves. Finally this difficulty was overcome by locating nesting females, tracking them to their nests, and then placing the eggs thus secured under domestic birds imported into the Santee area for setting purposes.

Through these methods, Mr. Welch, after two years in the Santee Swamps, was able finally to return to Winewood with fifteen adult turkeys of the true wild strain. These are to constitute the nucleus of the restoration flock of genuine North American wild turkeys, such as the Pilgrim Fathers hunted.

As if carved from stone in bas-relief is the giant domestic turkey from the Winewood plantation shown on the front cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER. To obtain the strange three-dimensional effect, Science Service Photographer Fremont Davis made an extra transparent positive and superimposed it on his negative. By offsetting the positive and negative slightly and making a single print from the two, the effect of sculpture is obtained.

Science News Letter, November 21, 1936

HEREDITY

Aged Twins Have Cancer Develop at Same Time

TWO old lady twins, 91 years of age, who both had developed cancer at exactly the same time were described by Drs. Samuel A. Munford and Hugh Linder, of Clifton Springs Sanitarium and Clinic, in a report to the *American Journal of Cancer*.

Not only did the cancer develop at the same time but it was located in exactly similar spots on the left breast of each. The mother, grandmother, and a maternal aunt also had had cancer of the left breast.

Science News Letter, November 21, 1936