

Husking Bee (1750)

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The job of harvesting corn and preparing it for use was a huge task for individual farms. One way to lighten the load was to invite neighbors to a husking bee. In addition to the actual gathering and [husking](#), there were games and competitions and the sharing of a meal and conversation.

This image is from *History of the United States* by Frederick Hiram Clark, ca. 1750. You can read a PDF copy of this book and learn more about early Colonial Life from the Library of Congress at <https://www.loc.gov/item/02005832/>.

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wrists and neck, silk stockings, diamond shoe buckles, powdered hair, and a sword by the side, made up the costume of the colonial gentlemen of leisure. Women sometimes displayed silks and brocades, high head-dresses and ostrich feathers. The majority of both men and women, however, were clothed in homespun.

171. **Amusements.**—In New England, after the decline of Puritan severity, there were some simple forms of relaxation. Sleigh rides, picnics, tea parties, quiltings, corn husk-



A HUSKING BEE

ings, and spinning-bees made a round of fun the year through. Thanksgiving Day, partly a social and partly a religious holiday, marked the great holiday season in New England, while Christmas celebration prevailed in the South. Places of public amusement came only with the growth of large cities. Theaters were resisted as evil, wherever Puritan influence extended.



Citation (Chicago Style):

Clark, Frederick Hiram. *History of the United States Sketch*. Sacramento, Cal., Printed at the State printing office [c1888]. From Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/02005832/> (accessed August 10, 2018).

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