

## THE BRITISH EMPIRE 1650s–1880s

This list consists of special acts of worship in England and Wales or Britain which were also observed in overseas colonies, dominions and British India, as described in *National Prayers*, volumes 1–3, and supplemented by further colonial observances identified by Joseph Hardwick. The participating territories were chiefly American colonies until the war of independence from 1776, before their number increased again from the 1790s onwards.

The main sources for overseas observances are online collections of proclamations, government gazettes and newspapers. Further evidence is scattered and not readily available, so additional occasions and observances in further territories are likely to be identified as research proceeds.

\* indicates occasions ordered or encouraged from London for observance in the overseas colonies and dominions

Other English or British occasions were commonly observed in overseas imperial territories on the initiative authorities within these territories, after they had received official or unofficial notification of the event that had prompted their appointment, or news of the British act of worship, or copies of the English form of prayer.

The overseas territories also had their own special acts of worship, appointed for reasons specific to their regions. These occasions are given in the lists for particular areas of the empire.

In some cases, occasions in England and Wales had two dates of observance, first for the London area and then for churches elsewhere. Occasions marked by special prayers in England might be observed as special days in overseas territories.

Until the early 1880s, dates of observance varied because of slowness in communication over long distances; where dates are known, these are indicated.

code	description	occasion	English date	comments	places and date(s), where known
1651–1*	thanksgiving day	English victory at battle of Worcester	24 Oct	copies of British council order sent to colonies	New England: ?
1683–EIr	thanksgiving days	discovery of Rye House plot	9 Sept		Jamaica: after 26 Sept New Hampshire: Wed 10 Oct New Plymouth: Th 15 Nov
1685–EIr	thanksgiving days	defeat of Monmouth and Argyll risings	26 July		Jamaica: Fri 24 July Barbados: Sun 18 Oct Virginia: Sun 8 Nov

					New York: Sun 13 Dec
1688–EIr1	thanksgiving days	pregnancy of Queen Mary	15 + 29 Jan		Jamaica: ? 4 Apr New York: Wed 11 April Dominion of New England: Fri 20 Apr Nevis: ? before 28 Apr
1688–EIr2*	thanksgiving days	birth of Prince James	17 June + 1 July	royal order to governors 10 June	Barbados: Sun 19 Aug New York: Sun 2 Sept Dominion of New England: Sun 16 Sept Bermuda: ? Sept Maryland: 11 Oct (St Mary's) + 1 Nov (rest) Virginia: ? Dec Pennsylvania: Wed 26 Dec or asap
1692–E3	thanksgiving days	naval victories at the battles of Barfleur and La Hogue	prayers 26 May +		New York: Th 24 Aug (town) + Wed 7 Sept (rest) Virginia: Sun 25 Sept (town) + Sun 9 Oct (rest) Maryland: Th 13 Oct (St Marys), Th 20 Oct (Marys county) + Th 27 Oct (rest) Massachusetts: Th 23 Feb 1693
1695–EIr2	thanksgiving days	victory at Namur	8 + 22 Sept		Massachusetts: Th 16 Jan 1696 New York: Th 16 Jan (town) + Mon 20 Jan (rest) Virginia: Sun 19 April (town) + 3 May (rest) Maryland: Ths 8 May (town) and 3 June (rest)
1696–EIr1*	thanksgiving days	William III's escape from assassination plot	16 Apr	royal notice to governors 10 Mar	Maryland: Th 21 May, Th 18 June Virginia: Tu 2 June New York: Th 4 June Rhode Island: ? early June New Jersey: Th 11 June Connecticut: Wed 17 June Massachusetts/New Hampshire: Th 18 June: Jamaica: ? Leeward Islands: ?
1697–EIr	thanksgiving days	peace of Ryswick	2 Dec		New Hampshire: Wed 30 Dec Connecticut: Wed 23 Feb 1698 New York: Ths 10 Mar (town) + 24 Mar (rest) Virginia: Suns 13 Mar (town) + 20 Mar (rest) Maryland: ? Apr

1702–EIr2*	thanksgiving days	victories in Spain and the Low Countries	12 Nov + 3 Dec	royal order to governors 11 Nov	Jamaica: Fri 8 Feb 1703 Bermuda: ? Mar Massachusetts/New Hampshire: Th 8 Apr New York: Th 15 Apr Maryland: Sat 1, 29 May Virginia: Tu 4 May Rhode Island: ? late June
1704–EIr2*	thanksgiving days	victory at the battle of Blenheim	7 Sept	royal order to governors 25 Aug	Maryland: before 20 Feb 1705 New York: before 25 Feb Connecticut: before 15 Mar Massachusetts/New Hampshire: Th 12 Apr Virginia: Tu 6 May 1705
1705–EIr2*	thanksgiving days	victories in the Low Countries	23 Aug	royal order to governors 28 July	Bermuda: ? Nov Jamaica: ? Nov New York: ? Dec Pennsylvania: Th 10 Jan 1706 Massachusetts/New Hampshire: Th 24 Jan Virginia: Th 23 Apr
1706–EIr1*	thanksgiving days	victories at Ramillies and in Spain	27 June	royal order to governors 31 May	Jamaica: ? by Aug Leeward Islands: 29 Aug Barbados: ? September Massachusetts/New Hampshire: Th 17 Oct Rhode Island: ? by Nov Virginia: Th 12 Dec Maryland: ?
1713–1	thanksgiving days	peace of Utrecht	7 July		Virginia: Th 10 Sept New York: ? September Massachusetts: Th 12 Nov New Hampshire: Th 26 Nov Maryland: Tu 1 Dec
1715–1	thanksgiving days	Hanoverian succession	20 Jan		Maryland: Th 25 Nov 1714 Massachusetts: Th 25 Nov Virginia: Th 25 Nov New York: Th 7 Apr 1715
1716–1	thanksgiving days	defeat of Jacobite rebellion	7 June		New York: ? June

					New Hampshire: Th 16 Aug Barbados: Fr 18 Aug Massachusetts: Th 23 Aug
1745–2	fast days	Jacobite rebellion	18 Dec		South Carolina: Fr 7 Feb 1746 Virginia: Wed 26 Feb Massachusetts: Th 13 March New Hampshire: Fr 18 Mar
1746–EIr	thanksgiving days	defeat of Jacobite rebellion	9 Oct	(on news of victories, before the English thanksgiving)	Maryland: Sat 14 June Pennsylvania: Th 24 July New York: Th 31 July Massachusetts: Th 14 Aug
1756-1	fast days	Lisbon earthquake	6 Feb		Massachusetts: Th 8 Jan (also local earthquake) South Carolina: Fr 14 May Pennsylvania: Fr 21 May New York: Fr 21 May
1759–2*	thanksgiving days	capture of Quebec (in addition to independent American thanksgivings from Oct to Dec)	29 Nov	royal order to governors 13 Nov	Leeward Islands: Th 14 Feb 1760 Connecticut: Th 6 Mar New Hampshire: Th 13 Mar South Carolina: Th 13 Mar Maryland: Mon 17 Mar Virginia: Tu 8 Apr
1763–1*	thanksgiving days	peace of Paris	5 May	royal order to governors 29 Apr	Connecticut: Wed 6 July Pennsylvania: Tu 9 Aug Massachusetts: Th 11 Aug New Hampshire: Th 11 Aug New York: Th 11 Aug Maryland: Tu 23 Aug Rhode Island: Th 25 Aug New Jersey: Th 25 Aug Virginia: Th 25 Aug Jamaica: Fr 2 Sept South Carolina: Th 8 Sept Georgia: Th 15 Sept Nova Scotia: Wed 28 Sept

1789-1*	thanksgiving days	recovery of George III from illness	1 Mar +	English form of prayer sent to governors 4 Mar	Nova Scotia: Wed 20 May Cape Breton: Tu 26 may St John's Island: Wed 27 May Quebec: Sun 14 June Port Jackson (Australia): Wed 9 June 1790
1793-1	fast days	war against revolutionary France	19 Apr		Nova Scotia: Fr 10 May New Brunswick: Wed 3 June (+ probably other Canadian maritime colonies)
1794-1	fast days	war against France	28 Feb		Nova Scotia: Fr 25 Apr Cape Breton: Fr 25 Apr St John's Island: Sat 10 May New Brunswick: Fr 25 July
1795-1	fast days	war against France	25 Feb		Nova Scotia: Wed 13 May (+ probably other Canadian maritime colonies)
1796-1	fast days	war against France	9 Mar		Cape Breton: Fr 3 June Newfoundland: Fr 3 June New Brunswick: Wed 6 July (probably other Canadian maritime colonies)
1797-1	fast days	war against France	8 Mar		Nova Scotia: Wed 21 June Cape Breton: Wed 21 June St John's Island: Wed 21 June (+ probably other Canadian maritime colonies)
1798-1	fast days	war against France	7 Mar		Nova Scotia: Th 31 May (probably other Canadian maritime colonies)
1798-2	thanksgiving days	victory at the battle of the Nile	29 Nov		Lower Canada: Th 10 Jan 1799 Upper Canada: Tu 12 Mar (+ probably Canadian maritime colonies)
1799-1	fast days	war against France and its allies	27 Feb		Nova Scotia: Fr 28 June (+ probably other Canadian maritime colonies)
1800-1	fast days	war against France and its allies	12 Mar		Nova Scotia: Fr 27 June (+ probably other Canadian maritime colonies)
1801-1	fast days	war against France and its allies	13 Feb		Nova Scotia: Fr 19 June New Brunswick: Tu 14 July (+ probably other Canadian maritime colonies)
1802-1	thanksgiving days	peace treaty of Amiens	1 June		Nova Scotia: Th 8 July

					Cape Breton; Fr 16 July New Brunswick: Tu 27 July Lower Canada: Th 12 Aug Madras: Th 7 Oct Bombay: Wed 1 Dec Bengal: Wed 19 Jan 1803
1803–1	fast days	war against France	19 Oct		Nova Scotia: Th 15 Dec Cape Breton: Fr 23 Dec New Brunswick: Wed 11 Jan 1804 Lower Canada: Wed 1 Feb Upper Canada: Fr 16 Mar
1804–1	fast days	war against France	25 May		Nova Scotia: Fr 10 Aug Cape Breton: Wed 15 Aug New Brunswick: Fr 7 Sept (+ probably other Canadian colonies)
1805–1	fast days	war against France and its allies	20 Feb		Nova Scotia: Fri 21 June Cape Breton: Wed 26 June New Brunswick: Fr 26 July (+ probably other Canadian colonies)
1805–2	thanksgiving days	victory at the battle of Trafalgar	5 Dec		Nova Scotia: Th 6 Feb 1806 (+ probably other Canadian colonies) New South Wales: Sun 20 Apr Van Diemen's Land: Fr 22 Aug
1806–1	fast days	war against France and its allies	26 Feb		Nova Scotia: Fri 20 June New Brunswick: Wed 27 Aug (+ probably other Canadian colonies)
1807–1	fast days	war against France and its allies	25 Feb		Nova Scotia: Fr 12 June (+ probably other Canadian colonies)
1808–1	fast days	war against France and its allies	17 Feb		Nova Scotia: Fr 10 June (+ probably other Canadian colonies)
1809–2	thanksgiving prayers or days	jubilee of George III	25 Oct		Nova Scotia: 25 Oct St Vincent: Th 28 Dec Bombay: Mon 4 June 1810
1810–1	fast days	war against France and its allies	28 Feb	(anticipating the British fast day)	Nova Scotia: Fr 23 Feb New Brunswick: Wed 7 Mar

					(+ probably other Canadian colonies)
1811-1	fast days	war against France and its allies	20 Mar	(anticipating the British fast day)	Nova Scotia: Fr 15 Feb New Brunswick: Wed 6 Mar (+ probably other Canadian colonies)
1812-1	fast days	war against France and its allies	5 Feb	(Nova Scotia anticipated the British fast day)	Nova Scotia: Wed 19 Feb Lower Canada: Fr 8 May Upper Canada: Fr 19 June (+ probably other Canadian colonies)
1812-2	thanksgiving prayers	victories in Spain, esp battle of Salamanca	23 Aug +		Lower Canada: Nov Upper Canada: late Dec (+ probably other Canadian colonies)
1813-2	fast days	war against France and its allies	10 Mar	(Nova Scotia and New Brunswick anticipated the British fast day)	Nova Scotia: Fr 19 Feb New Brunswick: Fr 19 Mar Lower Canada: Fr 28 May Upper Canada: Fr 18 June (+ probably other Canadian colonies) Cape of Good Hope: Wed 1 Sept
1813-3	thanksgiving prayers	victories in Spain, esp battle of Vittoria	25 July +		Cape Town: Jan 1814 (probably elsewhere)
1814-1	(fast days)  thanksgiving days	(war against France and its allies)  British and allied victories	  13 Jan	(mistaken anticipation of a British fast day)  (news from Britain)	Nova Scotia: Fr 25 Feb New Brunswick: Fr 15 Apr  Lower Canada: Th 21 Apr Upper Canada: Fr 3 June
1814-2	thanksgiving days	end of the war against France and its allies	7 July		Lower Canada: Th 20 Oct Nova Scotia: Th 27 Oct British India: Th 13 Apr 1815
1815-1	thanksgiving prayers	victory at the battle of Waterloo	2 July +		Lower Canada: Oct Upper Canada: ?
1816-1	thanksgiving days	peace treaty of Paris	18 Jan		Lower Canada: Tu 21 May Upper Canada: Tu 18 June (very probably elsewhere)
1832-2	fast days	cholera in Britain, and fear of its arrival elsewhere	21 Mar	(Canadian churches used the English style of services)	Lower Canada: Wed 4 May Upper Canada: Wed 16 May New Brunswick: Wed 23 May

					Nova Scotia: Wed 23 May Newfoundland: Fr 26 Oct
1840-1	thanksgiving prayers	failure of attack on Queen Victoria	21 June +	(use of English form of prayer)	diocese of Toronto: Sun 3 Jan 1841 British India: late Sept
1840-2	thanksgiving prayers	birth of Princess Victoria	29 Nov +		diocese of Toronto: Sun 30 Aug diocese of Australia: during Mar 1841
1841-1	thanksgiving prayers	birth of Prince Albert Edward	14 Nov +		diocese of Australia: during Mar 1842
1842-2	thanksgiving days	abundant harvest in Britain	2 Oct	(prayers in Britain)	Nova Scotia: Sun 20 Nov New Brunswick: Sun 20 Nov
1849-1	days of humiliation	cholera epidemic	16 Sept +		Nova Scotia: Wed 29 Aug (+ probably in all areas affected)
1849-2	thanksgiving days	end of cholera epidemic, in Britain and colonies	15 Nov		Nova Scotia: Thus 20 Dec (+ probably in all areas affected)
1854-1	services/days of humiliation	war with Russia	26 Apr	governors saw the British orders in copies of the <i>London gazette</i> , sent to them with the purpose of reporting new trade regulations	province of Canada: during May Nova Scotia: Wed 17 May New Brunswick: Wed 31 May Newfoundland: Fr 9 June British India: Sun 16 July Cape of Good Hope: Fr 28 July Ceylon: Fr, 28 July South Australia: Fr, 28 July Victoria: Fr 4 Aug Van Diemen's Land: Fr 11 Aug New South Wales: Fr 18 Aug New Zealand: late Aug to Nov
1855-1	days of humiliation	war with Russia	21 Mar		province of Canada: Wed 18 Apr Bombay: Tu 10 July
1856-1	thanksgiving days	peace treaty of Paris	4 May		province of Canada: Wed 4 June Leeward Islands: Sun 8 June Cape colony: Fr 4 July Tasmania: Wed 9 July + Sun 13 July other Australian colonies during July Natal: Th 10 July British India: Sun 20 July



1857–2	day of humiliation	revolt in India	7 Oct	(Indian dates earlier, from July)	Gibraltar: Wed 14 Oct Nova Scotia: Fr 30 Oct all Canadian provinces: Fr 27 Nov
1859–1	thanksgiving days	suppression of revolt in India	1 May		India: Th 28 July Singapore: Th 28 July
1868–1	thanksgiving days	failure of attack on Prince Alfred	28 June (prayers)	(the attack was in Australia; earlier dates in antipodes than in England)	Victoria: Sun 22 Mar Tasmania: Th 2 Apr Western Australia: Fr 24 Apr New South Wales: Th 28 Apr Queensland: Tu 28 Apr South Australia: Sun 3 May New Zealand: various
1872–1 1872–2	thanksgiving prayers or days	recovery of the prince of Wales from illness	21 Jan (prayers) + 27 Feb (St Paul's service)		Calcutta: prayers Sun 4 Feb Adelaide: prayers Sun 18 + 25 Feb Victoria: day Tu 20 Feb Tasmania: prayers 18 Feb, day Th 22 Feb New South Wales: day Tu 27 Feb India: day Tu 27 Feb Queensland: day Mon 4 Mar Bermuda: day 10 Mar Cape colony: day Th 3 Apr province of Canada: day Mon 15 Apr New Zealand: day Th 9 May Natal: day Th 9 May
1882–E3	thanksgiving services	victories in Egypt	24 Sept		Montreal: Sun 17 September some churches in Australia and New Zealand