

## Night-Time in Mid-Fall

It is a storm-strid night, winds footing swift through the blind profound;  
I know the happenings from their sound;  
Leaves totter down still green, and spin and drift;  
The tree-trunks rock to their roots, which wrench and lift  
The loam where they run onward underground.

The streams are muddy and swollen; eels migrate to a new abode;  
Even cross, 'tis said, the turnpike-road;  
(Men's feet have felt their crawl, home-coming late):  
The westward fronts of the towers are saturate,  
Church-timbers crack, and witches ride abroad.

- Thomas Hardy 1840 - 1928



Before the 16th century, “*harvest*” was the term usually used to refer to the season. However, as more people gradually moved from working the land to living in towns (especially those who could read and write, the only people whose use of language we now know), the word *harvest* lost its reference to the time of year and came to refer only to the actual activity of reaping, and “*autumn*”, as well as “*fall*”, began to replace it as a reference to the season.<sup>[8][9]</sup>

The alternative word *fall* for the season traces its origins to old Germanic languages. The exact derivation is unclear, the Old English *fiæll* or *feallan* and the Old Norse *fall* all being possible candidates. The term came to denote the season in 16th century England, a contraction of Middle English expressions like “fall of the leaf” and “fall of the year”.<sup>[1]</sup>

During the 17th century, English emigration to the British colonies in North America was at its peak, and the new settlers took the English language with them. While the term *fall* gradually became obsolete in Britain, it became the more common term in North America.<sup>[11]</sup>

- Wikipedia