

The NATION'S GREATEST FEAST DAY

ONCE more the liberal year laughs out
O'er richer stores than gems of gold;
Once more with harvest song and shout
Is Nature's greatest triumphs told.



PILED FOR THE THANKSGIVING FEAST

THE BIRD OF THE DAY



MAKING FOR THANKSGIVING



TO MAKE HAPPY HEARTS AMONG THE POOR

THANKSGIVING DAY! Personally it conjures up visions of roast turkey and plum pudding and pies and all that go to make it an annual occasion of feasting; historically one sees "pilgrims on a rock-bound coast" and, invariably, it is regarded as about the oldest national holiday of the land! As a matter of fact it is the youngest! Practically every yearly observance of a patriotic nature is more ancient than the celebrating of Thanksgiving day as a regular official ceremony.

It is so customary in America for one person to do the pioneering and another to get the credit that it is no surprise to learn that even the Mayflower band were really not entitled to all the praise as original thanksgivers, which they have been receiving ever since 1620. Not that there is anything disparaging to be uttered about those stern moralists—who seem to have been adepts in loading a cargo of furniture that would tax an ocean liner into a little sailing ship!

They were brave and they deserve the nation's remembrance. But 13 years before they landed at Plymouth a group of future colonists had stood on American soil and given thanks at their deliverance from the perils of the sea. This was on Sunday, August 9, 1607, at the Island of Monhegan and an English minister and a priest jointly conducted a service of thanksgiving. The twin ships, Mary and John, and the fly boat, Gift of God, found their way to the island after a long, terrible voyage of storms and helplessness. They had neither turkey, nor cranberry sauce, but there was never a more genuine Thanksgiving day.

This was along the coast of Maine and yet Massachusetts has, through all the years, been honored among states as the home of the first Thanksgiving service.

Of course the Bay state may be said to have taken the idea and in the words of a capitalist, "developed it and put it on a paying basis." In Massachusetts such a day was set apart for special services, continued fasting and rigorous giving of thanks almost from the time the Pilgrim Fathers first landed. But, without meaning to be facetious, it is obvious that these common sense folk never believed in giving thanks unless they had something to be thankful for.

Thus, in 1633, 13 years after the landing at Plymouth, the governor of that state officially appointed a day of thanks and another in the year following. But then there was a jump of three years during which the colonists did not celebrate. Why? Certain historians insist it was because they were "lean" years. If so, they must have been followed by three "fat" ones, as the day was observed regularly until 1639. Again an interval of fateful 13 years and then, in 1651, the governor once more declared in favor of Thanksgiving. In 1680 the day was set apart as an annual state holiday and has been ever since.

But only New York adopted the practice of having such a day until well into the eighteenth century! As early as 1644 the Dutch governor of New York issued an official proclamation for a day of thanksgiving, but it was not followed each year—varying probably with the governor's ideas or the conditions of the crops. Like the famous pagan feast of autumn, it originally was meant chiefly as a public offering of prayer in gratitude for the bountiful output of grain and fruits which would see the settlers through the winter.

The other states were being more slowly settled and in Maryland and Virginia there was not so much of a strong religious atmosphere noticeable as a debonaire enthusiasm for whatever of the good things of life could be had.

The day was observed but not officially. And always, in the south, it was a day of feasting. From the time slavery entered the land the Maryland or Virginia colonist pictured Thanksgiving dinner as a scene of expectant waiting diners and a round grinning black face to the rear of the huge roast turkey on a platter.

About the time of the struggle of '76 it came into its own as a regular holiday and in 1789 was, for the first time, declared a holiday by congress and so observed. So that, really, it is quite a youthful, immature holiday after all!

Gradually, as the free air and broadmindedness of this clime began to leaven the witch-burning dogmas of the Pilgrims, the fasting of the day was tempered by moderate feasting. People ceased partaking in solemn silence of a meal just about the same as that served on Sunday—on which day of the week all early Thanksgiving used to be observed—and had a few friends or relations in to help give proper thanks. This necessitated more elaborate preparations and what the college-bred young man of the household today would term "a bigger feast."

It would not be correct to dine in everyday clothes when guests were present, so elaborate costuming came into vogue for the occasion. Many guests came from a long distance—maiden sitting demurely behind men riders on horseback, or else in clumsy old road-coaches. It was not hospitable to suggest that these return the same day. So started the country house party which still flourishes wherever there is a hostess, a house in the country and a fireplace.

For weeks beforehand preparations for the great day went on. Especially at a place like Mount Vernon did Thanksgiving almost outweigh Christmas in culinary importance—which was as it should be since the host of Mount Vernon signed the first official proclamation making Thanksgiving a holiday. And always the turkey has been its emblem—just as the eagle is of freedom. Like the Indian it is typically American.

Of course with such tempting menus as turkey, roast pig, home-cured hams and mince and pumpkin pies—to say nothing of imported plum pudding—feasting rapidly took the place of abstinence. And it is remarkable that amid all the changes of this vast country during the past 123 years that menu has remained practically unchanged. Everywhere in America on this Thanksgiving day—save in the homes of the poor and the multi-millionaire—turkey and cranberry sauce will have places of importance and be served from the table. The high cost of living debars the city poor from much turkey and the ultra-rich have long since determined that a few thin un-gravied slices of white meat are sufficient to introduce amid the various cosmopolitan dishes of the meal.

Back in revolutionary days no such thought troubled the mistress of the governor's mansion at Albany, the exclusive hostess of Boston, or the chataine of a Virginia estate. There was only one proper place for the huge golden-brown, savory and beautiful turkey—and that was the exact middle of whatever end of the table was designated "head." No courses annoyed the guests and irritated eager juveniles. The dinner services had to be extensive and complete. Dinner was served at midday and began with a soup, taken from an immense tureen placed before the hostess. She ladled it out into soup plates, whose depth would astound a fastidious diner of today. All over the broad expanse of white cloth were various dishes and plates and cruets and receptacles for needed seasonings.

Nor were these of a thickness meant to endure rather than charm the eye. Gazing upon a collection of them now at the National Museum at Washington one marvels what magic of housewifery skill ever prevented their breakage. Where is the bride of yesterday who can point today to an intact after-dinner coffee set—much less that sufficient for a dinner party? Yet these are displayed in all the purity of outline and quaintness of a long gone period, bringing very near to the visitor the era of genuine hospitality.

In those revolutionary Thanksgivings there was no time to hastily wash certain dishes and use them over again. Everything had to be where it was in evidence all the time. And one

can vividly picture the powdered hair of the grown-ups, the eager faces of the youngsters, the grinning darkies in the south, or cheery white "help" of the north.

At the museum imagination is stimulated by a sight of the very garments and jewels worn at Thanksgiving dinners just about the time the holiday received its christening as a national event. Dainty and suggestive of the beauty of youth is a pale blue ribbed silk empire gown with short puffed sleeves, a cowbeby white hand embroidered kerchief and a plain fall of wide skirt. Near it are the ridiculously little high-heeled white satin shoes, the gay colored fan, immense tortoise shell combs and gold beads and miniature locket worn by the revolutionary maiden.

Looking at her footgear one smiles in reminiscence of the fairy tales of grandmothers who always insist upon the sensibleness of the way THEIR grandmothers dressed. A flaming red cloak, with Red Riding Hood cape, and a beautiful beaded hand bag completed the toilette in which the girl probably rode many miles horseback with her arms clasped tight around the body of a male relative, or, perhaps rested warmly inside one of the lumbering road coaches which the museum contains. From a family long famed in history comes down a rarely beautiful gold engraved snuff box and lace wristlets and handkerchief, which the owner was wont to display on such occasions as that of a stately Thanksgiving. In every detail of china and silver the costumes there is evidenced this suggestion of dignity and caste.

And yet, very gay and festive must have appeared a gathering of well-known folk of the late revolutionary period, when Thanksgiving was sufficiently new as a national holiday to be observed with particular enthusiasm.

A complete full dress costume of a man of affairs of Maryland, displayed behind glass at the museum, reveals the dandyism prevailing. The knee breeches are of corded tan silk, with gem encrusted buckles; the coat, of the same material, is on the frock variety—with many plaits at the back, self-covered buttons and a high turnover collar of the Robespierre style. The gloves, silken hose, three-cornered hat and caped great coat are all delicate of texture and in marked contrast to the somber garb now thought appropriate for wear at a Thanksgiving dinner.

But it was not all "beer and skittles" then! Amid the display of old mahogany table, candelabra, cushioned dining chairs and array of costly old china and glass used on Thanksgiving days at Mount Vernon is the camp outfit of George Washington from which he partook of so many frugal meals.

One distressing winter of the struggle he ate his Thanksgiving dinner "in the field" and it is recorded that he had nothing except the regulation soldierly provender.

His little camp chest still contains the numerous pewter forks and spoons and dishes that served him in lieu of silver and porcelain. Over a fire that could be built in the open one picture bread being toasted for him on the iron toaster which is still intact. There were bottles of seasonings, such as salt and pepper and a few shallow pewter plates.

If ever one needed faith in order to be thankful it was then, and yet he who heeded the first national proclamation of Thanksgiving came through it to leave a visible evidence that not all early Thanksgiving dinners were sumptuous feasts.

At least, though, they were events—not merely annual meals—regarded by the very rich of today as a maudlin tribute to the national spirit and by the very poor as a merciful pause in the starvation of winter.

Easy Lessons in Cooking and Baking

By EMILY RIESENBERG

HOW TO BAKE ROLLS AND BUNS.

So many different varieties of rolls and buns can be made of one kind of dough, by merely changing the method of shaping or the trimmings, that only a few formulas will be given in this lesson, as it is best to learn how to make the simpler kinds of dough at first, until you are perfectly successful in handling yeast dough. (When baking with compressed yeast it is well to immerse the yeast in a cup of cold water over night or at least long enough to dissolve. This eliminates the strong odor without impairing its strength, as the yeast germ lies dormant while under water. When ready to use, pour off the water; the yeast will have settled to the bottom of the cup. Now add a spoonful of sugar. This awakens the process of fermentation, and when yeast is added to the warm liquid, you have a reliable, sweet raising power which, if treated right, will never fail you. All ingredients must be lukewarm, and dough kept in a warm place while raising. All measurements are level. Use a graded half-pint measuring cup and sift flour before measuring. Do not pack flour into cup, just slide it in lightly and level off.)

PARKER HOUSE ROLLS.

Ingredients for Sponge.
Two cupfuls of sifted bread flour.
Two tablespoonfuls of lard and butter (equal parts).
One teaspoonful of salt.
One cake of compressed yeast.
Two teaspoonfuls of sugar.
One and one-half cupfuls of warm milk and water.
One egg.

Method.
Soak yeast in cold water over night or long enough to dissolve. When ready to use pour off the water and add sugar, rub shortening and salt into the flour, beat egg well and add to liquid, stir this and yeast into flour and beat until it bubbles, cover pan and set aside until sponge has doubled its size.

Method for Second Mixing.
Have two and one-half cupfuls of sifted flour and stir into sponge gradually, and when dough leaves sides of pan take onto floured board and with floured hands begin to knead in the rest of the flour. As the dough becomes elastic, take up and drop onto the board a few times, then place in pan and let raise again until doubled.

Method of Shaping.
Take dough onto a floured board and with the rolling pin rubbed with flour, roll and pat into a sheet one-half inch thick. With a cutter or sharp edged glass, cut into rounds. When all are cut, rub each with a little melted butter, then take knife and with the handle score each roll a little to one side. Now fold the shorter side over, forming a fold, press and lay one inch apart on flat greased tins. Let stand from 30 to 40 minutes, or until light, then place in a very hot oven so the rolls will crust before they lose their shape. After a few minutes reduce the heat and bake until done, then rub with a little melted butter.

PLAIN MILK ROLLS.

Method.
Take some dough as for Parker House rolls. When ready to shape divide into small pieces and roll each into a smooth ball; lay well apart on a greased tin and brush with milk before putting into oven and after taking out. If you want to keep them soft for a second day, lay them so they touch. They will run together. When done let them cool without separating. When ready to use break apart and you have soft, flaky rolls.

POPPY SEED ROLLS.

Method.
Proceed as directed for milk rolls. Set well apart, and before putting into oven brush with melted butter and strew poppy seed over.

WALNUT FINGERS.

Method.
Take some dough, roll one-half inch thick, brush with melted butter, strew chopped walnuts over and run rolling pin over lightly. Now cut into strips one inch by three, lay well apart on greased tins, let raise 20 minutes, then bake in moderate heat.

SWEET CURRANT BUNS.

Ingredients for Sponge.
One and one-half cupfuls of sifted flour.
Four tablespoonfuls of lard and butter.
Four tablespoonfuls of sugar.
One cake of compressed yeast.
Method.
(Set sponge as directed for Parker House rolls.)

Ingredients for Second Mixing.
One-half cupful of cleaned currants
Two cupfuls of sifted flour.
Method.
Stir the currants and pour into the

light sponge and when dough leaves sides of pan take onto floured board and knead in rest of flour; set aside again in covered pan until light. Now take onto floured board and work into smooth little balls and set in greased tins to raise about 30 minutes. Bake in moderate heat until a golden color. When done spread with a little icing made of confectioner's sugar rubbed smooth with boiling water.

HOW TO BAKE HOT BREADS.

A plate of tender golden corn bread or light muffins is a fine addition to a simple breakfast or luncheon, and if the cook will give a little care and thought to the planning of menus she can make them on short notice as they should be served warm. Hot breads require a hot oven and iron gem, or muffin pans are better than those made of tin or granite ware.

Remember all measurements are level, use a graded half pint measuring cup and sift flour before measuring. Do not pack or shake flour into cup, just fill lightly, then level off. Also refrain from rounding your spoonfuls of baking powder and don't neglect thorough beating of eggs if you want good results.

GOLDEN CORN BREAD.

Ingredients.
One and one-half cupfuls of yellow corn meal.
One-half cupful of sifted bread flour.
Two teaspoonfuls of baking powder.
One teaspoonful of salt.
Two tablespoonfuls of sugar.
Two eggs.
One and one-half cupfuls of milk or part water.
Two tablespoonfuls of melted butter and lard.

Method.
Mix all dry ingredients, beat eggs well, then add to liquid and beat into meal, add the melted shortening and beat hard, pour into greased flat tins about one to two inches deep, and bake in brisk oven until a rich golden color and a toothpick if inserted comes out clean.

CINNAMON BUNS.

Method.
Use same dough as for currant buns. When ready to shape roll into a thin sheet, brush with melted butter, strew a little sugar and cinnamon over, then roll firmly like a jelly roll, cut into rounds about one inch thick, lay flat on greased pans, and after letting them stand 30 minutes bake as other rolls.

These buns can be iced, or confectioner's sugar sifted over after they are baked.

(When baking any of these rolls or buns, never try to hasten the process by setting in too warm a place or putting in oven before they are quite light, or you lose the proper expansion and the buns will be flat and heavy.)

EGG MUFFINS.

Ingredients.
Two and one-half cupfuls of sifted bread flour.
Two teaspoonfuls of baking powder.
One teaspoonful of salt.
One tablespoonful of sugar.
Three eggs.
One cupful of milk.
Two tablespoonfuls of melted butter.

Method.
Sift all dry ingredients together, beat the eggs very well, add to milk, then beat into flour, add the melted butter and beat again, fill well greased heated, muffin tins over full half and bake in brisk oven until nicely browned and toothpick comes out clean.

GERMAN PUFFS.

Ingredients.
One and one-half cupfuls of sifted bread flour.
One and one-half cupfuls of milk.
One scant teaspoonful of salt.
Two eggs.

Method.
Sift flour three times before measuring, place in a deep round bottomed bowl, add the salt and stir in the milk very lightly just so flour is moistened, then drop in the unbeaten egg, and with a strong Dover egg beater or perforated spoon—preferably the egg beater—beat the mass until full of bubbles and frothy. Have ready some very hot greased iron or earthenware muffin cups, fill each about two-thirds full, and bake in a very hot oven. As these puffs get their expansion from the eggs, the beating and hot oven are both needed to puff up the material. After a time when puffs are getting high, the heat must be abated some, for the puffs must bake very thoroughly, so as to dry out the centers, which must be hollow, and the puff will be a mere shell, very tasty and delicate. If puffs have not baked enough they get soft and unpalatable, so if this happens remember to bake them longer at the next trial.

ENTIRE WHEAT MUFFINS.

Ingredients.
Two cupfuls of entire wheat flour.
Two teaspoonfuls of baking powder.
Two teaspoonfuls of sugar.
One teaspoonful of salt.
Two eggs.
One cupful of cold milk and water.
Method.
Do not sift the flour. Mix all dry ingredients together, beat egg well, then add to liquid and beat into meal, fill heated and greased muffin pans two-thirds full and bake in brisk oven until a toothpick if inserted comes out clean.
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