



Another



LET'S ALL BE THANKFUL!

1683



1780

The first Official notice of a day of Thanksgiving in New Jersey was a Proclamation by Dutch Governor General Anthony Calve. He declared November 15, 1673, to be a "universal day of fast, humiliation and thanksgiving. . . . We do hereby strictly prohibite and forbide on the said day of humiliation, all manner of labour and exercising of hunting, fishing, gaming, excess in drinking and the lyke." All Innkeepers and Ordinaries are prohibited "to retayle any licquors, or drinks under penalty of Corporal punishment." The religious devotions of the "holy day," included a one- or two-hour sermon, fireside prayer and scripture, etc. All "secular conversation" was denied the household.

After the brief rule of the Dutch, the Puritans in the East Jersey Assembly issued a proclamation containing similar instructions and set apart the second Wednesday in November as a day of public Thanksgiving. At Elizabeth Town the General Assembly, in 1679, declared it a day of thanks to God for deliverance "from that infectious disease of small pox and other deseases and from the trouble of the Indians." Under the Royal Governors, the day commemorated special events and there were no restrictions against secular activities.

The Quakers believed that there was something to be thankful for ev-

ery day in the year and their assembly declined to observe a special day even after the Royal Governors took over. This so upset Old English customs and prerogatives that it was some years before there was general thanksgiving in West Jersey on any day.

Price Control — Bread

When the Quakers discovered that the bakers were not observing "the due assize of bread," (profiteering) the Assembly of West Jersey made it unlawful "for any baker to bake or offer for sale any other corn but what is good;" or to sell any Bread except at certain specified weights based upon the market price of wheat at the time. Bread was of three kinds: White Loaf made from wheat flour, entirely free from bran; wheaten loaf, made from wheat flour which contained a small amount of bran or husks; household loaf, made from a coarse grade of wheat flour.

"When wheat is at three shillings per bushel, one penny loaf white shall weigh eleven ounces; a wheaten, sixteen and three-quarter ounces; a household, twenty-one and one-half ounces." Proportionately lower weights are specified for each six pence advance in the price of a bushel of wheat. The penalty for underweight was the forfeiture of the bread to the use of the poor.