Chowning's Tavern

Thanksgiving Dinner

Choice of one from each Course

First Course

Butternut Squash Soup
Cream Blended with Roasted Butternut Squash, Cinnamon, Cardamom
Chicken Stock and Butter

Salad of Seasonal Greens
Red Onions, Cherry Tomatoes, Cucumber, Carrots
Champagne Vinaigrette

Second Course

Sage-Rubbed Roasted Young Turkey
Savory Herb Dressing and Giblet Pan Gravy, Apple Cider Glazed Yams,
Cranberry-Orange Relish, Vegetable Bouquet

Pan-Seared Filet of Salmon
Atlantic Salmon with Crabmeat, Butter-Dill Sauce, Vegetable Bouquet,
Roasted Fingerling Potatoes

Slow-Roasted Prime Rib of Beef
The favourite English Joint, Seasoned with Colonial Spices
Sauce of Red Wine Reduction, Horseradish, Vegetable Bouquet,
Roasted Fingerling Potatoes

Mr. Chowning's Sweets

Pumpkin Pie
Cinnamon Cream

Double Layer Chocolate Cake
Raspberry Sauce and Whipped Cream

Tavern Ice Creams
Fresh Peppermint, Vanilla Bean, American Heritage Dusted Chocolate

All Dinners are served with Sally Lunn Bread
Featuring R. Charlton's Blend of American Heritage Coffee.

No THANKSGIVING in Williamsburg

SCHOLARS will search in vain for any mention of Thanksgiving Day in the 18th-century *Virginia Gazette*. Fourth Thursdays in November were no different from other days—runaway slaves, lost pocketbooks, ships departing to London. Page after page, it is always business as usual. No festivities, no turkey, no stuffing, no sleigh ride to grandmother's house. In short, no Thanksgiving Day.

There were, however, many days of thanksgiving. Bumper harvests, drought-breaking rains, safe voyages, and military victories were made frequent occasions for public prayers and celebrations during the 17th and 18th centuries. The colonists who settled Berkeley Hundred in 1619 carried instructions to give thanks "yearly and perpetually" on the anniversary of their arrival. And they did for three years—until Indians annihilated the settlement in 1622, after which it seemed prudent for surviving Virginians to proclaim another day of thanksgiving for having been spared. There were comparable observances in 18th-century Williamsburg. Days of thanksgiving were proclaimed, for instance, to commemorate Queen Anne's health and the "happy agreement" between her Majesty and the Houses of Parliament.

These were all solemn religious occasions. They have only an indirect relationship to the present Thanksgiving holiday, which we should give ungrudgingly to New Englanders. Or, better yet, to Old Englanders, for the Plymouth Colony Pilgrims were only celebrating a folk custom that they remembered from England. The Harvest Home, a time of feasting, dancing, and gaming after the crops were safely gathered, was an ancient peasant festival. Brought to all of the American colonies, it thrived best in the small farming communities of New England. Only in 1863 did President Abraham Lincoln make Thanksgiving Day a national holiday as a reminder of "peace, harmony, tranquillity, and Union" in a time of civil war. So it turns out that your Thanksgiving dinner in Williamsburg is one of history's tastier ironies.

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