

What kind of table manners were the children taught?

Children ate standing up at the table all through the meal. It was good manners to keep your hat on while you ate.

You could not say a word at the table unless a grown-up spoke to you first.

It was good manners to eat with your fingers. There were no forks in Plymouth and only a few wooden spoons. Clam shells were often used as spoons. You would use the same knife to cut meat that you used to cut wood.

In some homes, the cooking pot was put right on the table. Into the pot would go your clam shell—or your fingers—to take out your food.

Your plate would probably be a piece of wood, called a *trencher*. One side was flat. The other side was scooped out so it could hold soup. You would share your trencher with a brother or sister.

At the end of the meal, a basket called a *voider* was passed around. You would throw crumbs, bones, and napkins into the voider. You might use as many as three linen napkins at one meal. Eating with fingers was messy.

After dinner, the men and women smoked their pipes.

