

Fleet Corporation and allied interests. Other vacant property filled rapidly. It was a quick shift from slow to war-time activity.

The tremendous wages paid by the shipyards induced extravagant living among Government workers, and naturally this had an effect upon all lines of local business. Rents advanced; the cost of living continued to rise, and the charge of profiteering was frequently heard. The high cost of living fell heavily upon the lower-salaried employees, men and women, not engaged in Government work. The cost of commodities continued to rise until it was checked with respect to food essentials by the Federal Food Administration, which began to function in September, 1917; but not before food prices had reached a 60% rise above those of 1914. In November, 1917, a food-pledge campaign was started; 16,500 Jacksonville families signed pledge cards, promising conservation of food by the use of substitutes, mainly for white flour and granulated sugar, in order that the "boys" in uniform might not be denied these. Most families conformed to the pledge strictly, and their tables were supplied with no white bread, and but little white sugar, for a year. The hotels and high-class restaurants did likewise. The stores had white flour for sale, but they could not sell it without an equal amount of some substitute to be used with it. Many combinations of part flour and part substitute were tried with success. It has been proven since that this change in diet produced no ill effects upon health, and in fact, the tendency was otherwise.

The "wheatless" days (when no flour at all was sold) and the "meatless" days, the "heatless" days and the "lightless" nights (to conserve fuel) were familiar terms in Jacksonville during the war; they were not local, but a part of the national program. The Federal Food administration, beginning in September, 1917, and the Federal Fuel Administration, in the following December, were important factors in keeping prices regulated, as is shown in the Government's report of October 1, 1918, for Jacksonville, namely:

Based on prices of December, 1914, the cost of food in Jacksonville has increased 60%; fuel and light, 27%; clothing, 128%, furniture 131%.

Upon the release of the Government's administration, late in 1918, the prices of foodstuffs again began to rise, reaching the peak in the summer of 1920.