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†RICHARD HOSKING

It is with great regret that I tell of the death of Richard Hosking in October 2019, an editorial advisor of *PPC* since I took over at issue number 63, and whose *A Dictionary of Japanese Food* I was greatly privileged to publish, alas only in British territories. This work was a masterpiece of precision and concision. Philip Iddison has very kindly made available his notice of Richard's life, which he prepared in time for Richard's cremation in November. I print it below.

Richard Hosking, 1933–2019

It is with great sadness but also treasured memories that we assemble to remember Richard Hosking, born 31 March 1933, who passed away in London on 19 October 2019.

He was born in Australia and completed a degree in Hebrew there. Richard followed this with studies in Hebrew and Sanskrit for his MA at the University of Cambridge.

Richard took on many roles during his life. He was the Assistant Keeper of Middle East Manuscripts at the British Museum. He worked on curating an exhibition of manuscripts at the museum and during a visit by the Queen he escorted Prince Charles around the exhibits.

In 1973 he moved to Japan and for more than twenty-two years taught at Hiroshima Shudo University, becoming the Professor of Sociology and English.

After retiring to London in 1998, his voluntary efforts supported several organizations focussed on food and food studies to compliment his continuing scholarship on food culture.

Richard was a noted scholar of Japanese food and the author of *A Dictionary of Japanese Food: Ingredients and Culture* (1996). In the

Preface he states, 'it has given me enormous pleasure and stimulation to write on Japanese food'. The *Dictionary* received a special award from the Premio Langhe Ceretto in 1997, the André Simon Memorial Prize in 1998, and was shortlisted for the Glenfiddich Award in 1997. Hiroshima University had given Richard six months' leave to work on the book at the National Museum of Ethnology, a mark of their appreciation of his abilities and application.

This was not his first foray into writing about Japanese food. In 1991 he contributed a chapter on 'The Country House Kitchen in Japan' to *The Cook's Room,* a unique compendium on traditional kitchens around the world edited by Alan Davidson. In 2000 Richard's *At the Japanese Table* was published, a slim volume with a detailed appreciation of the role of food in Japanese culture.

He contributed papers to several symposia, including the Symposium of Australian Gastronomy and the Fourth International Food Congress in Istanbul (1992). At the 1991 Oxford Symposium he spoke on 'Pavement Food, Packed Meals and Picnics in Japan'. He was a regular contributor on many aspects of Japanese food in the years that followed.

This scholarship did not go unnoticed. Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) honoured Richard with the Minister's Award for Overseas Promotion of Japanese Food. The Ministry especially praised Richard's *Dictionary*, which also appears in a Spanish translation, because it was the first and only such guide to Japanese cuisine published in a foreign language. Richard was delighted with his Japanese award.

Richard was one of the Oxford Symposium's founding Trustees, devoting countless hours and energy to assist its transition from its informal constitution to a charitable trust in 2003. He was a regular attendee at the Symposiums up until 2010 and chaired many of its sessions.

He frequently hosted former students their families and friends at his flat. In particular, he formed a strong bond with Fujio Yano who was a regular visitor. He similarly offered hospitality to attendees of the Oxford Symposium coming from abroad and offered the use of his flat for numerous meetings.

He lived around the corner on Lamont Road from Symposium-founder Alan Davidson and his wife Jane. Looking in regularly on them in their later years, he provided focus and continuity that allowed the Symposium to remain true to its roots even as it grew in new directions. He was a steadfast support to Jane after Alan's death at the end of 2003.

Richard is also remembered as the editor of the Symposium Proceedings from 2003 to 2006, and again in 2009. Every year he

worried that he wouldn't receive enough submissions; every year, he was overwhelmed when proposals poured in just at the deadline. He nevertheless worked professionally with each and every author to help polish their essays for publication.

Richard contributed to Alan Davidson's *Oxford Companion to Food*, first published in 1999. Naturally he provided entries on Japan, but his broad knowledge of food culture assisted Alan in this illustrious tome.

Richard accepted the task of being one of the 'secret judges' for the Sophie Coe Prize, a role that ran for three years and culminated in him chairing the judging panel.

His attention to detail on fonts in every language was obsessive. He was always so delighted when he had another new language or script to add to his computer's font collection, and gleeful (and/or irritated) whenever he found a mistake in any language or script!

Richard was an adept musician. The harpsichord in his flat was made for him, he was very pleased with it and played it regularly. His favourite composer was Domenico Scarlatti, and it is Scarlatti that we hear at this memorial.

Richard also took up weaving, his loom commandeered a corner of his living room and he would display his latest work. It was a return to a childhood hobby, he still had a tartan scarf that he wove as a youngster. Friends received presents of scarves and coasters that he had produced.

In his later years, he added to his culinary skills, becoming an expert amateur *chocolatier,* generously distributing his delectable creations to a wide circle of friends. He also had deep love for marzipan and went to great lengths to obtain the bitter almonds that he considered were essential for making 'proper' marzipan.

He was also an enthusiastic baker of bread and cakes. Patsy Iddison remembers discussions on different flours, methods and types of bread. His Parmesan biscuits were a treat at social gatherings.

Jane Levi remembers his excellent mastery of the microwave. He would just casually say something like, 'Oh, I always microwave my porridge,' so she assumed it was the easiest thing in the world and gave it a try. Needless to say, she had not understood the extreme expansion involved, and used completely the wrong vessel, timings, stirring instructions and so on. He laughed like a drain when she sent him the picture of what happened.

Richard had a great sense of and appreciation of the ridiculous and it combined brilliantly with his knowledge of Japanese culture. For example, he loved a Reuters newsflash about the 'murder' of a

giant radish, finding it hilarious, completely understanding it as an expression of the Japanese culture he knew and loved.

Richard required help at his flat in Lamont Road and a strong friendship developed with Isabel Dios. She took on the role of his housekeeper and her efforts meant that Richard was able to enjoy his later years in his own flat, even when his short-term memory was failing. For instance, Isabel helped Richard set up his loom. As Richard's health and mobility deteriorated, she took on the role of carer and was helped by her husband Manuel.

Isabel joined informal picnics with friends around his dining table at Lamont Road. She would ensure the essential *pastéis de nata* were on the table. She also cooked a wicked tortilla which was a highlight of these events. There would be a lively exchange of news and views, all in good humour and with excellent food and drink. He was a generous host.

I remember his pride in being able to grow a prickly ash plant, *Zanthozylum piperitum,* in his flat. This plant provides *sanshō* pepper, a special flavouring in Japanese cuisine and an ingredient in the seven-spice mix *shichimi tōgarashi*. The leaves are used as a garnish and the wood from the tree is used for pestles, *surikogi*, for grinding in the traditional ribbed pottery mortar, *suribachi*. It was a living reminder of the cuisine to which he devoted so much time and effort.

My personal memories are of a quiet man; he listened attentively and spoke wisely and softly; he enjoyed all aspects of food, not least its consumption; his sense of humour was impish at times; he was a dapper man, always well dressed in a relaxed way; he was generous with his knowledge, companiable and relaxed in any social milieu, he was always pleased to see you.

He is missed.

Compiled with help from Carolin Young, Helen Saberi, Jill Norman, Jane Levi, Patsy Iddison and Richard's friends.

Philip Iddison

SOPHIE COE PRIZE IN FOOD HISTORY 2020

We have news of this year's Sophie Coe prize. The circular reads as follows:

> The Sophie Coe Prize is awarded each year to an engaging, original piece of writing that delivers new research and/or new insights into any aspect of food history. We welcome entries of up to 10,000 words on any relevant topic. The Prize is £1,500 for the winning essay, article or book chapter. Authors may submit one entry only each, and they must be delivered to us by this year's closing date of 25 April 2020.
>
> The Prize was founded in 1995 in memory of Sophie Coe 1933–

1994, the eminent anthropologist and food historian. The winner is selected by our anonymous panel of distinguished judges and announced in early July.

Published and unpublished work may be submitted. If the former, it must have been published within 12 months of the submission deadline. If the latter, it must be in immediately publishable form.

Before submitting an entry please read in full the 'How to Enter' page at our website <sophiecoeprize.wordpress.com/how-to-enter/>. Entries that do not comply fully with our conditions of entry will not be put forward to our judges. We also advise entrants to read some of the former winning entries to get a good understanding of the kind of original research work we are seeking.

For full details, and to sign up for reminders and updates on the Prize, please consult our website at sophiecoeprize.wordpress.com. Any queries not answered by the information on our website should be addressed to the Chair, Jane Levi, at <sophiecoeprize@gmail.com>.

OXFORD SYMPOSIUM 2020: HERBS & SPICES

We may have missed the call for papers, now expired, but I have received the notification of registration for this year's Symposium, which runs as follows:

We are pleased to announce that registration to attend the 2020 Symposium is now open. The weekend will run from 10-12 July. You can book your place via PayPal by visiting our website www.oxfordsymposium.org.uk under 'To Attend'. UK residents (only) can also pay by cheque, made out to Oxford Symposium on Food & Cookery and sent to: Priscilla White, 27 Hawley Square, Margate, Kent, CT9 1PQ. Regrettably we are no longer able to accept US dollar or euro cheques but if preferred you can pay by bank transfer (details on the website). The Symposium's banking arrangements have changed over the past years, so if you have not attended for some time, please ensure that you register afresh through the Symposium website and *not* via old information stored on your computer.

The price for the full weekend is £450, with student discounts available at £285. This price includes accommodation for two nights, attendance at all events, all meals and accompanying beverages as well as post dinner entertainment. Cancellations will be accepted up to 1 June 2020 (less £100 administrative fee). Thereafter, refunds will not be issued except in exceptional circumstances.

St Catherine's College offers a large number of en-suite bedrooms, which are conveniently located in close proximity to our dining and lecture rooms. These are comfortable student accommodation with

single beds, but have no air-conditioning. A limited number of twin-bedded rooms are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Details of how to book additional beds for non-attending partners can be found on our booking page. Symposiasts may also opt to find accommodation outside the College. We are, however, unable to assist with outside bookings.

We would encourage overseas Symposiasts to book extra nights for Thursday and Sunday (at B&B rates in College) as there are early afternoon activities on Friday before the Plenary address. On Sunday, the Symposium is by no means finished with lunch, as we schedule a full programme throughout the afternoon, including the all-important final Plenary when the Symposium's future subject is chosen three years in advance by popular vote. Thereafter, everything is less stressful and it's a wonderful opportunity to go to one of the many fine restaurants in Oxford with friends both old and new and reminisce about the weekend. Before any travel arrangements are made, Symposiasts should also check the website for satellite events on Friday morning, such as the Wiki-Editathon.

PETER GRAHAM

The author, whose book *Mourjou* was reprinted by Prospect Books some years ago and whose *Classic Cheese Cookery* (republished by Grub Street) is, or should be, on everyone's bookshelf, also wrote an article, 'Encounters with the Elusive Stockfish' in *PPC* number 34 (1990). This he revived and revised and then proceeded to win a well-deserved prize, as detailed below. His website <https://chez-gram.com/> we have mentioned before. It is replete with articles and information about French food. I quote its introduction and its details of his prize: 'Welcome to Chez Gram. This is a compendium of terms connected with food. It focuses on the origins of such terms, their history and, often, their etymologies (and their folk etymologies), their connotations and their usage (and misuse). The posts will tend to highlight little-known aspects of a dish, product or personality and will make no attempt to be comprehensive. That is the job of food encyclopaedias, such as the authoritative *Oxford Companion to Food*. The tone of the posts will range from enthusiasm (for tarte Tatin or for certain chefs, for example) to rants (against McDonald's and other egregious purveyors of *malbouffe*). Having lived in France for most of my life, I make no excuse for the fact that there may be a certain bias in the selection of the topics discussed. But my remit is by no means restricted to things French. To find out, I can do no more than urge you, in the manner of the best-selling Victorian (and post-Victorian) encyclopaedia, to 'enquire within'. Almost exactly a year ago, I was awarded first prize in a competition for the best article

on a gastronomic subject (written in a language other than French) organized by the state-funded tourist agency, Atout France, at the restaurant of the huge Ferrandi catering school in Paris. The article I wrote was on stockfish (wind-dried but unsalted cod). The prize was awarded to me by former ambassador, Philippe Faure. Shortly afterwards (no connection), 'je suis tombé dans les pommes' (a quaint French expression for 'I passed out'). Several months (and operations) later, I felt I had recovered enough again to resuscitate Chez Gram. My first post (just up) is on Jacques Médecin, the late mayor of Nice, who wrote an excellent book, *La Cuisine du Comté de Nice*, which I translated into English in 1983 as *Cuisine Niçoise, Recipes from a Mediterranean Kitchen*. By a curious coincidence, Médecin was a great fan of stockfish.'

HORSETAIL, A HOUSEWIFE'S FRIEND

Barbara Santich in Adelaide has told me of an interesting episode in her on-going research into Provençal food in the eighteenth century and later. She had been mystified by the occurrence of the word *écuron* in manuscript kitchen accounts from Avignon dating from 1773–4. This foodstuff (so she thought) was being purchased in July and August, with the exception of one purchase in February, in quite noticeable quantities: 30 dozen, 29 dozen and 68 dozen. In an earlier account, for 1772, the quantity purchased was 294 dozen. The word she knew not, nor therefore the commodity. She addressed an enquiry to various lexicological authorities. The first suggested it might be a dialect word from Lorraine, signifying *écureuil*, squirrel. The second agreed about the dialect word from Lorraine, but also concurred that it was some way from home in an Avignon manuscript, and who might have bought, skinned, roasted and eaten 68 dozen squirrels at a single sitting? This correspondent's suggestion was more constructive, noting a possible connection of *écuron* to the verb *écurer* (now more often *récurer*), meaning to scour (a pan). This has a Provençal equivalent, *escurar*. A colleague of this informant suggested the word *écuron* might be a variant or relative of the Provençal word *escureta* (Frenchified by the dropping of the 's' and its replacement by an acute accent). This last means a pad or block for scouring pans made up of the fronds of the horsetail plant (*Equisetum arvensis*, but there are other species of the same genus used for the same purpose). The silicaceous content of its leaves made it especially effective. Herbalists often suggest its consumption (in a powder) to strengthen the bones. In England and North America, horsetail was popular with dairymaids for scouring their milk pails. What is more remarkable is that Barbara Santich's correspondent himself remembers their use in his childhood in Marseille, where they were called *frotadors* (some relationship here with *frotter*, to rub, perhaps?).

MORE FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA

My correspondence with Barbara Santich ranged this winter from Avignon manuscripts to the annual get-together of the winemakers of McClaren Vale, south-east of Adelaide. Apart from the singing, led by her partner Tony Brooks, she also told of the menu, served to 600 diners. I reflected how much has changed in the last few years, not least the amazing emphasis on smoke, fire and burning of all sorts. All the ingredients were local, as were the wines. Consider all the various elements in each course, not piled up on a single plate, but there to pick and mix as the fancy takes you. It's quite an eye-opener.

Canapés

Cold-smoked kingfish tartare, fennel lavosh, puffed rice, heirloom beetroot terrine, linseed cracker

Entrée

Steamed South Australian Co-op prawn dumplings, smoked chilli dressing, pickled ginger, smoked parsnip, Alexandrina Cheddar brûlée, pecorino sponge, pear witlof salad

Main

12-hour smoked beef shortrib, jalapeno butter, red wine glaze, pit-fired celeriac, charcoal eggplant purée, bay leaf pickled onions, almonds, Andy Taylor's salad greens

Dessert

Charred corn husk meringue, corn mousse, burnt vanilla cream, macadamia praline, Fleurieu strawberries, almonds, cream

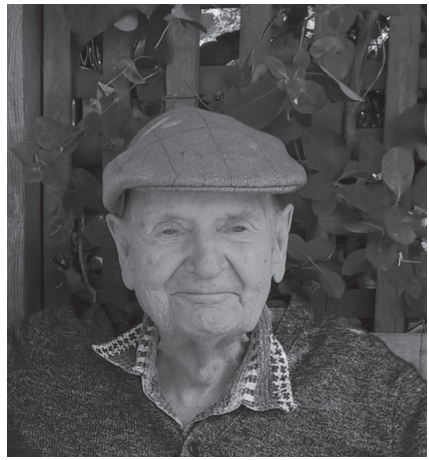
INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM AT CLERMONT-FERRAND

I have had notification of a proposed symposium on 'Junk Food and Poor Food Habits from Antiquity to the Present Day' to be held at Le Centre d'Histoire 'Espaces & Cultures on the 3 and 4 November. A call for papers has been issued, to be received by 31 March 2020. They should be sent (not more than 3000 words), together with a short resumé, to: <lachaud.stephanie@wanadoo.fr> or <stephane.lebras@uca.fr> or <corinne.marache@gmail.com> The committee of direction is distinguished and the institution organizing it is impressive. There is more information, in French and English, at <http://chec.uca.fr/>

HARLAN WALKER

We noted the death of Harlan Walker in *PPC* 110, two years ago. Last summer, the day before the 2019 Oxford Symposium, there was a heartening lunchtime

gathering of Harlan's friends and family, as well as fellow-members of the Buckland Club of Birmingham. There, we talked of Harlan, heard too of the noted naturalist and scholar Frank Buckland, and generally said our fond farewells. It was a matter of regret that Harlan's great friend from Spain, Alicia Rios, was at the last moment unable to attend. She had intended to speak herself about Harlan, but in her absence, I was deputed to read the text of her remarks. I give them here below. I also print here a short obituary of Harlan that I prepared for the 'Other Lives' section of the *Guardian* which unfortunately they had not space to print. First, then, the obituary:



My friend Harlan Walker, who died before Christmas in his ninety-fourth year, was a successful businessman and a stalwart supporter and sometime organizer of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery.

His family were nautical-instrument makers in Birmingham, famous for the manufacture of Walker's Log, the brass spinner towed along by ships to determine the distance travelled through the water. After school at Bryanston, war service as a tank captain in Italy and Greece, and a degree in PPE from Merton College, Oxford, Harlan joined the cotton company Coats, with jobs in Naples and Glasgow. Subsequently he returned to Birmingham and engineering enterprises, ending his professional career as the manager of the British outpost of the Japanese manufacturer of ball-bearings, NTN.

It was in the guise of businessman, someone acquainted with order and method, that I first met Harlan among the decidedly enthusiastic, but not invariably methodical gathering of food writers, journalists, publishers and amateurs that was the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery, for he too had a tremendous interest in food history as well

as being himself a gifted cook. It was with some relief that I handed on to him the task of organizing these annual gatherings, as well as editing (and, latterly, publishing) their Proceedings, tasks he undertook with ineffable efficiency and courtesy for fifteen years until 2003.

His form in this sort of venture had already been demonstrated by his leading role in the affairs of the Buckland Club in Birmingham. Founded in honour of the literally omnivorous Victorian naturalist Frank Buckland, its biannual banquets were invariably adventurous if not outlandish. And Harlan's skills in the kitchen were put to practical use thanks to his marriage in 1954 to the flautist Delia Ruhm. Her involvement in large-scale co-operative music-making at the summer operas at Shawford Mill in Somerset and Highnam in Gloucestershire, and particularly at the Music Camps at Pigotts near High Wycombe, had him organizing the catering in sometimes spectacularly primitive conditions.

Though never lacking a critical eye, Harlan radiated calm and benevolence while smoothing the ruffled feathers of countless Symposiasts. His presence each year was a given, his absence will be marked.

Delia died in 2014. Their children Philip, Becca and Ben survive him.

And now, to the text of Alicia Rios' speech. I have not edited it because to do so would be to detract from the ineffable *brio* that is Alicia:

I feel so honoured and moved to be able to present Harlan Walker to such a distinguished audience!

'I am lending my voice not only to the glorious number of veterans present here but, also, to those who, like Harlan Walker, are absent, and will not be able to join us any more.

It is very moving to see the size of this year's edition of the Symposium since it was the objective when it was born that the seed planted by the pioneers would germinate, grow and expand to this extraordinary level of excellence.

Harlan has been the soul, the mind, and the hands of the Symposium since its origin. No one could have ever imagined that the Symposium would work without him. By him I mean Harlan the Nile, the cluster of the whole family: Delia, his faithful wife and extraordinary professional flute player, plus his children Philip, Becca and Ben who acted as five brains and 10 hands, or 1000 hands in one to enlarge, still more, Harlan's effectiveness.

Other circumstances existed at the time of the birth and the origin of the Symposium. During the mid '80's something reigned that today doesn't exist any more, and that is freedom.

Nowadays everything is either compulsory or is forbidden.

Imagine that then it was legal, and the Symposiasts were expected to bring from home the ingredients and the dishes that illustrated the core of the contents of their papers. Imagine home-cooked delicacies brought by attendees personally from so far. We created edible thematic maps of the world as we assembled the delicacies offered for the lunch and dinner banquet tables of St Antony's College served at the Refectory. Everything arrived from so far as the Philippines, Indonesia, Adelaide or Poughkeepsie.

When the Symposium started, all sorts of initiatives were welcome and affordable.

Welcome and affordable thanks to Harlan Walker who was able to orchestrate the increasing complexity of the tasks and hopes nurturing the magma of the Symposium. The annual editions evolved in the shape of the sum of knowledge, experience, curiosity, devotion, enthusiasm, imagination, energy and commitment contributed, edition after edition,by the increasing number of Symposiasts.

The diverse skills of its attendants was a relief for Harlan Walker who was able to cope with all the physical and mental peculiarities and curiosities being brought by the attendants arriving from all five continents.

Harlan Walker's gestaltic personality was a synthesis of a hyper-thoughtfulness and trustworthiness attitude with a unique fluidity and easygoing ability to get every requirement of the Symposium under control as if it were an easy task. He was always in a perfect unstable equilibrium, making everyone happy and and relaxing all of us instantly. We must not forget the relevant trait of his exuberant sense of humour which radiated through his smile and his roguish gaze.

Harlan Walker exceded the limits of the Kantian categories of Space and Time. Not only did his day last, at least, 72 hours; he was the incarnation of Virginia Woolf´s literary character Orlando. He was an inexhaustible traveller like Odysseus, a hedonist like Dionysius, he was mystic and sober like a Gothic monk, an adventurous poet like John Donne. He was a humanist like Erasmus from Rotterdam, a revolutionary like Voltaire, a gallant man like the men from Watteau's paintings, a philosopher like Bertrand Russell or an avant-garde artist like Kandinsky or Stockhausen. There were no limits to his educated curiosity and to his alert soul and heart.

In fact he was, in addition, an eccentric scientific-minded person. He embodied the quintessential wit of his idol, Buckland. He was the primordial foodie person. In homage to him, Harlan, plus some other equally enlightened friends and colleagues, founded the Buckland Club

based in Birmingham where the Walkers lived.

This institution brought to life Buckland's ideal of extending the food habits of the British. He was a pioneer in importing and adapting to their homes and public spaces the ways of cooking and eating from abroad. During his research journeys around the world, Buckland observed, studied and tried not only the basic edible and drinkable staples but, also, the most shocking and luxurious ones, assimilating the cultures of the inhabitants of the five continents.

Harlan was a real diplomat. He was able to dilute the slightest sign of violence or irrational behaviour. Not only was he a pacifist but, also, an extremely practical-minded person. This was so in all aspects of his private and public life, in order to prevent any risk of losing time and energy.

To conclude, I will describe to you a poetic occasion when, at dawn, on my first day in Oxford to attend the third edition of the newly born Symposium, Harlan, a graduate of Oxford, silently took me to explore, to walk through all the gardens and parks of the colleges, the city centre, the rivers Cherwell and Isis, and then introduced me to Jane and Alan Davidson, to Theodore Zeldin, Claudia Roden, Sami Zubaida, Jill Norman, Ray Sokolov, and Gillian Riley before commencing the Opening Session.
¡Viva Harlan Walker!

ETHELIND FEARON (1898–1974)

I have been spending some days immersed in books written by this Essex woman. Her name may be familiar to several here because her 1954 publication *The Reluctant Hostess* has not long since been reissued by Vintage. She published nothing until she was 48 years old, thereafter she wrote a couple of dozen books, a few of which were successful in America as well as Britain. She wrote about three subjects: cookery, gardening and farming; while a constant thread that reappears is a fourth, herself. On top of that, she issued half a dozen children's titles – novels such as *Pluckrose's Horse* and *The Secret of the Château* as well as more instructive things like *The Young Market Gardeners* and *The Young Stock Keepers*. Her cookery books were in large part about baking and jam making. They were all published by Herbert Jenkins and began with *Jams, Jellies and Preserves* and *Herbs: how to grow, treat, and use them* in 1953; followed by a trio in 1954: *Cakes for Occasions*, *Fancy Cakes and Pastries* and *Home-made Sweets, Candies and Fudge*; with *Hot and Cold Sweets* and *Savoury Supper Dishes* bringing up the rear in 1956 and 1957. Recipes figured in some of her other books, too; sometimes they were part of the narrative, others coralled in an appendix. Nowhere was this more true than in two of her three *Reluctant…*

titles: *The Reluctant Gardener* (1952), *The Reluctant Cook* (1953) and *The Reluctant Hostess* (1954), all, again, from Herbert Jenkins. These anticipate to some degree Peg Bracken's *I Hate to Cook Book* in that they posit a woman under a variety of pressures, most often time, but also circumstance, and propose a host of often shortcut solutions. Just as Bracken's recipes were not invariably horrid, nor are Fearon's, but they are always accelerated. The tone is mildly self-deprecatory, the sub-hysteric fear of lurking danger is ever-present, the expression often amusing: but the reader, so long as she/he follows her advice, always triumphs. All three books, in fact, were useful manuals of home- and house-keeping. Ethelind Fearon was also a keen gardener, although I have no information as to her professional formation. It is said that she kept a garden for H.G. Wells, although no one states which. Wells did not live in Essex, but London and Kent. Was it possible that she had something to do with his garden in Provence, where he built himself a house near Grasse? Her gardening titles are enthusiastic and sound: *The Making of a Garden* (1948); *The Reluctant Gardener* which we have already mentioned; *Planning a Garden* from 1961; and *Flower Growing for Ungardeners* from 1963. Of the first of these, Vita Sackville-West remarked in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 'This book has literary pretensions, sometimes rather regrettable, but it is full of good advice and in many ways deserves the success with which it has met. [It was a Book Society recommendation.]' The rest of Fearon's output was, at least nominally, autobiographical. Her first book, *The Happy Husbandman* of 1946, was about a farmer's year. This she followed up in 1951 with *Me and Mr Mountjoy* which was more about farming, with a narrative link of winning of a pig at the village fête, raising and nurturing same pig, culminating in its sad demise while being shown at the county agricultural show in conditions of extreme heat. The next stage in her apparent memoir is *How to Keep Pace with your Daughter* (1959), a light-hearted take on parenting, followed in the same year by *Without my Yacht. How to be at home in the South of France* which details an infinity of bus rides round the towns and villages of the Côte d'Azur while living in Cannes. She returned to England at that stage for *The Fig and Fishbone*, also 1959, which gave an account of her purchase and restoration of a half-timbered cottage in her native Thaxted and how she ran it as a tearoom. Two years later she was back in Provence for *The Marquis, the Mayonnaise and Me* (1961) which tells of her living in a rented villa in old Cannes and her making ends meet by running it as a guest house. This is nearly the end of it: by 1965 she was reporting from Majorca in *A Privy in the Cactus* which describes her restoration of an old farmhouse during a twelve-year residence on the island. All these books are first-person narratives, but matching their circumstances and timing to the actual facts we know of her life is not easy. She teases we readers with false trails. None more arrant than the first two. *The Happy Husbandman* is narrated by a farmer, Edward Fearon, married to an Irish girl called Marion.

The porcine sequel is narrated by Marion. But when we come to her account of doing up an old cottage and running a tearoom (*The Fig and Fishbone*), the narrator is again female, her maiden name (as in real life) is Ratcliff and her farmer husband is Freddy Fearon. Both these couples have daughters: the first is Sally, the second is Penny. In real life, Ethelind's daughter was called Bridget. When she gets to the south of France in *The Marquis, the Mayonnaise and Me*, she is reassuringly called Ethelind Fearon in the text as well as on the cover. Not only is identity a question, so too is time. The farming books were published in 1946 and 1951 and do reflect affairs at the end of the War and immediately postwar. In *The Reluctant Hostess* she states that she is writing it near Grasse in Provence, that's 1954. But in 1959 she published not only her first south of France book, but also her tearoom story. It is possible that the tearoom episode occurred in the very early 1950s before decamping to Provence. If you check Pevsner's early edition of *The Buildings of Essex* (1954), he talks in a footnote there of someone having uncovered Tudor wallpaintings in a cottage in Stoney Lane, which may have been the building she was involved with. All this may make some sort of sense, but when she writes of Majorca in 1965, she says she has been there for twelve years, taking us back to 1953 (yet she was definitely in Cannes during the tricky business that brought de Gaulle to power in 1958). There are just not enough years to accommodate all this. The facts, so far as I have been able to work them out from my desk (no shoe leather involved) is that Ethelind Fearon was the daughter of Percy and Jane (née Raven) Ratcliff of Thaxted. Percy Ratcliff was a builder. Ethelind was born in 1898, she had an elder brother, who became a mechanical engineer, and a younger sister, who married a Northern Irish doctor. Ethelind was married in 1922 to a civil servant who died in 1937. She had one daughter, Bridget Anne, born in 1935, who married one Hayward in 1956 and died in 2001. The dust-wrapper copy on one of her books reads, 'By training a landscape gardener, by profession a farmer and stockbreeder, by choice a cook, by way of a hobby a restorer of Tudor houses, she was "forced" into writing in 1937 when suddenly widowed, because "it was the only way of making money … while still remaining home to cherish the family." She has (in pursuit of money) bred, exhibited and exported by air to America cats, dogs and rabbits. … She ran a teashop for five years and wrote about it …' Meanwhile, notes accompanying her account of pigs and farming dated 1952 state, 'Her husband, a civil servant, died prematurely, so with a friend she bought a four-and-a-half acre field, began intensive market farming, and drove around villages selling their produce direct. It is now a flourishing business, but as they do all the work themselves, it is only after sundown that Mrs. Fearon can sit alone in her library to write steadfastly for two or three hours before midnight … "Writing has meant a boarding school for my daughter and I hope Me and Mr. Mountjoy will provide a holiday in Switzerland." Her two favourite pastimes are cooking and

tapestry work: she breeds Astrex rabbits whose pelts fetch £5 to £25. Once she had fifteen Essex pigs (including Mr. Mountjoy), but now keeps only three. At one time she bred Irish setters, having thirty, but now the only dogs in her two-hundred-year-old Essex house are Sandy, a golden cocker, and Monday, a Yorkshire terrier.' All these facts sit uneasily with her image of a farmer's wife on a large scale, part of a local farming dynasty. While this may be intriguing, it does not detract from the excellence of her books. Her farming information is good; her appreciation of her locality is infectious; her architectural history is fascinating; her cookery is great – if of its time (oh! so much pineapple and white sauce); her gardening is, or seems to me to be, pretty accurate; her travel writing is amusing and replete with local colour; she is an absolute enthusiast for things musical; and even if her style is sometimes florid, it can be digested. She is surprisingly right-on about things like chemicals in farming and gardening and proper sorts of foodstuffs (even if she does depend too much on tinned pineapple and Bovril). We should celebrate her.

JULES MAINCAVE: MAN OR MYTH?

Here follows a note from Philip Hyman about the elusive identity of Jules Maincave, the Futurist French chef about whom he wrote in *PPC* 114.

> After finishing the article about Jules Maincave, several people called my attention to the fact that I had not address a crucial issue – did Jules Maincave really exist? Before responding, a brief résumé of what was said in the previous article is in order.
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> Jules Maincave was first mentioned in an article written by André Charpentier which appeared in the 15 June 1913 issue of *L'Intransigeant* in Paris. The article was titled 'Le Futurisme à la Cuisine, Un "chef" se propose de révolutionner l'art culinaire' [Futurism in the Kitchen, A "chef" wants to revolutionize the art of cookery]. In the course of the article Jules Maincave refers to himself as 'the first futurist cook' and in so-doing associated himself with a radical new artistic movement founded by Filippo Tommaso Emilio Marinetti in his *Futurist Manifesto* of 1909. Marinetti encouraged artists to abolish all references to the past in their work and encouraged them to challenge long-established norms. There was no mention , however, of cooking in the *Manifesto* and Maincave was the first to suggest that futurist ideas had a place in the kitchen.
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> Charpentier quotes him as saying: 'The art of cooking has been stuck in a rut, recycling a dozen recipes which, like the dog described in the Scriptures, "comes back" again and again. The same dishes are served over and over under different names and pretentious *appellations,* which cannot hide their monotonous mediocrity. For at least four

hundred years, you understand, not *one* new dish has been created. The time has come revolt against this situation, to speak out, to rejuvenate the art of cookery!'

Charpentier's interview caused quite a stir and was picked up by the press both in France and abroad. It inspired a fellow journalist, by the name of André Arnyvelde, to publish his own interview with the Maincave some three months later. Arnyvelde repeats much of what Charpentier had already said but adds a few new details about the cook and his creations. Maincave quickly became a culinary celebrity and 'futurist cooking' a subject of heated debates.

Maincave's career was cut short when he reportedly died on 30 October 1916 while working as a cook on the front lines during World War I. His reputation, however, increased in the years to follow and he was even singled out by the French food critics Henri Gault and Christian Millau as a model and an inspiration for the young chefs who were practising what they called *La Nouvelle Cuisine* in the 1970s.

Despite his celebrity and the numerous references to his radical ideas about cooking, some have suggested that Maincave was no more than a journalistic 'joke' and not a real individual! The first to refer to this claim was the French food critic and historian Bénédict Beaugé in his *Plats du jour. Sur l'idée de nouveauté en cuisine* (ed. Métailié, Paris, 2013). Beaugé wrote: 'Maincave's existence has been questioned by several recent authorities based on the fact that he is not listed among those who died fighting for France in the First World War.' He goes on to say, 'We know nothing about his place of birth and a search for this, and other details about his life, would go well beyond the scope of the present volume.'

No less an authority on Futurism than Giovanni Lista questioned Maincave's existence in his *Qu'est que le Futurisme?* (Gallimard, 2015, Paris): 'The *Manifeste de la cuisine futuriste,* signed by a so-called chef by the name of Jules Maincave, a pseudonym composed of two terms: '*main*' [hand in French] and '*cave*' [a 'hollow'] alluding to an old culinary term designating the quantity of an ingredient one could hold in one's hand. ... Maincave was probably invented by the journalist André Charpentier and accomplices such as André Arnyvelde. ... Charpentier's article is the sole source of all the mysterious, contradictory and unverified information we have about Maincave's life. ... In 1921, faced with a mounting interest in the futurist chef, Charpentier feels obliged to explain how Maincave was killed by German bombs while serving on the front lines in the Valley of the Somme. He will, in fact, provide two different versions of Maincave's death. Be this as it may, the author of the *Manifeste de la cuisine futuriste* did nothing more

than apply futurist ideas to cookery by questioning traditions inherited from the past. ... The problematic chef, who was said to have authored the *Manifeste,* became both the subject of a poem published by Raoul Ponchon in the 21 July issue of *Le Journal* in 1913, and the object of a series of articles by journalists who eulogized him and his ideas without the slightest proof that he ever existed!'

Maincave's existence has also been questioned by members of an Internet forum devoted to veterans of the First World War: <https://forum.pages14-18.com/viewtopic.php?t=17023>. Several of the participants called attention to the fact that the cook's name was 'unusual', indeed, one contributor claims to have examined 'five centuries of genealogical records' without ever encountering the name Maincave!

I object to these arguments and believe that a cook by the name of Jules Maincave *was* working in Paris in the early years of the last century and this for several reasons. First of all, though most of the early articles about Maincave do draw heavily on Charpentier's original interview, several include a few new details and name dishes that Charptenier didn't mention. On occasion they actually contain recipes attributed to Maincave. Charpentier himself even includes a photo of Maincave in the article he writes for *Fantasio* in September of 1913 (see the photo reproduced in *PPC* 114).

On 2 November of that same year, when André Arnyvelde's interview with Maincave appears in *Les Annales politiques et littéraires*, he too includes a photo of Maincave. In both photos it is clearly the same man, in the same chef's uniform, though in different poses. A third photo of Maincave is published in the 3 March 1931 issue of *La Femme de France,* perhaps taken at the same photo session as the other two: the chef is dressed in the same chef's 'whites' although this time he is pictured only from the waist up with the beginnings of a grin on his face. These photos can either be taken as proof that Maincave actually did exist or seen as yet another clever attempt of Charpentier and his 'accomplices' to trick the public into believing that he did.

Be that as it may, it is hard to believe that Maincave's contemporaries would still be attempting to mislead the public when they later referred to him in print. In 1931, the same year that the last-named photo was published, for instance, an article appeared in *L'Oeuvre* about the 'new' interest the Italians were showing in futurist cuisine. The article was signed by one of the most famous French chefs of the day, Prosper Montagné (1865–1948), who was active in Paris at roughly the same time as Maincave. Montagné mockingly refers to one of the Italian chefs as pretentiously thinking of himself as a 'nouveau

Maincave' although 'he has neither the imagination nor the talent of the man who attempted to revitalize French cooking around 1912.' Another of Maincave's contemporaries, Paul Reboul, who wrote several cookbooks in the 1920s, claims to have been inspired by Maincave's experiments and pays homage to him on several occasions. Why would they eulogize a fictitious chef?

Let me now address the mysteries surrounding our cook's name. As previously mentioned, several people have suggested that the name must have been purely invented since no reference to anyone named Maincave could be found in genealogical records or official documents. However, my own research using <Ancestry.com> turned up a reference to the death of a certain Jeanne Joséphine Mancave (spelled without the 'i') on 26 March 1870 in the Paris suburb of La Courneuve! In other words, in only a slightly modified form – common in public records – a person or persons of that name were living in the Paris area at roughly the same time as Jules.

I also dispute Lista's suggestion that 'Maincave' was a contraction of the two words '*main*' and '*cave*' referencing an 'old culinary term' used for measuring ingredients. Though one does find reference to ingredients being measured by placing them in '*le creux de la main*', literally in the 'hollow' of the hand, after searching hundreds of old French recipe books I have never encountered the term '*main cave*' nor is it to be found in other French texts published before or after Maincave's time.

Lastly, are we to believe that a non-existent chef would invite the curious gourmets to his home to sample futurist cuisine? This was the case of Jules Maincave who signed a letter to André Arnyvelde which appeared in the 16 November issue of *Les Annales* in 1913. It reads: 'You may tell those who subscribe to your publication that I will, for no cost, prepare a meal of futurist dishes for them on demand and this during the entirety of the months of November and December of this year. For your readers who do not live in Paris I will, at no cost, provide them with any information [about my cooking] that they would like. As you can see, I won't be making a penny, I simply want to reinvigorate the art of cookery and am not motivated by any pecuniary consideration.

'I can be contacted by writing care of my cousin, Monsieur Boussuge, at 9 rue Georges-Saché, in Paris.

'Very sincerely,

'Jules Maincave.

'Notice is therefore given to those of our readers who want to see for themselves exactly what this new cuisine is all about.'

Several articles that appeared about Maincave in the years

that followed the publication of this invitation tend to confirm that Maincave was serving futurist dishes to the public before he enrolled in the army. Indeed, an article in the 12 February 1921 issue of *The New York Times*, entitled 'Latin Quarter Chef Among War Heroes,' describes how visitors searched in vain for Maincave's restaurant before learning that the he had been killed during the War. The article refers to these tourists as 'old habitués' [frequent clients] of Maincave. Was the anonymous author of *The Times* article yet another of Charpentier's 'accomplices'?

Nine more years pass and another 'old habitué' of Maincave's restaurant is named in the April–June 1930 issue of *The Romantic Review*: Maincave is mentioned in brief piece included among the *Varia* signed J.L.G. who tells us that Georges Beaume (1861–1940), a popular author of the day, had also sampled Maincave's dishes before the War and 'warmly commends them'! In short, given the evidence provided here and, *above all*, the fact than *no one ever questioned Maincave's existence until a hundred years after his death*, I am convinced that a cook by the name of Jules Maincave did exist and was attempting to revolutionize French cooking in much the way futurist artists were revolutionizing ideas about art in the years immediately preceding the First World War.

Bénédict Beaugé summed the situation up nicely in the book previously referred to earlier. 'Even if Maincave was a figment of André Charpentier's imagination,' he wrote, 'does it really matter? What's important are the proposals attributed to him and the impact they had on others. I will therefore assume that he did exist and that the articles written about him and his cooking were based on real interviews and facts.'

I could hardly agree more!

Philip Hyman

AMSTERDAM SYMPOSIUM ON THE HISTORY OF FOOD 2020

A call for papers has gone out for the Symposium, to be held on 13–14 November, at the University of Amsterdam. The topic is 'Food and the Environment: The Dynamic Relationship Between Food Practices and Nature'. The deadline for submission of abstracts is 1 April 2020 and they should be sent to <foodhistory-ub@uva.nl>. More information about this excellent (and not too expensive) symposium may be had at <http://bijzonderecollectiesuva.nl/foodhistory/amsterdam-symposium-on-the-history-of-food/>.