

gunpowder, soda and early glass-making to biofuels) and its use in medicine, health care and cosmetics. My favourite chapter was obviously going to be 'Seaweeds in the kitchen' and the cooks among you will be pleased to learn that it is a long and comprehensive one, covering no less than: Seaweeds in the Home Kitchen; as Seasonings; in Soups; in Salads And Sauces; in Omelettes and in Fish and Vegetable Dishes; and Sushi; in Bread, Pasta and Savoury Tarts; in Desserts and Cakes; in Drinks; in Snacks; in Gastronomy. There has to be something for everyone in this collection. The recipes are clearly written and the ingredient lists not extensive. You could simply take your tried and tested guacamole recipe and add 5 tbsps of dried sea lettuce or dulse, or even try the same with mayonnaise. Come to think of it, I have such a recipe in my *Forager's Kitchen*. My own book is not academic but in neither that nor this one under discussion do the recipes require a science degree. A professor who is an accomplished cook is a rarity, but one who has the foresight to write for an international readership while keeping measurements accessible, must be nigh on unique. I love Mouritsen's book. In this kitchen it certainly won't be collecting dust, metaphorical or otherwise, but it might get enhanced by splashes from slimy wet seaweed and other ingredients. It's on my list of 'don't lend to anyone unless they are your best friend' editions. Highly recommended. I paid for this book, although Ole Mouritsen has ping-ed an email from Denmark to the Outer Hebrides: 'It is a great experience to get into contact with people with whom you share a passion ('of cooking with weird things').' I have to adore an author who bothers to quote me in an email.

FI BIRD

Lynda Moreau, ed.: *The Confederate Cookbook: Family Favorites from the Sons of Confederate Veterans*: Los Angeles, Pelican Publishing Company, 2000: 382 pp., hardback, £15.83.

If the old cliché that an 'army marches upon its stomach' has any validity whatsoever, then this truly appalling book explains why the South lost the war, not least because the majority of its recipes require the presence of a well-stocked modern Walmart. Unfortunately Walmart was incorporated more than a century after the Appomattox surrender so what the troops actually fed on does not form part of this book. Authenticity, then, has gone with the wind, taking General Robert E. Lee, 'colored washrooms' and all the rest of the Old South with it, leaving only the creaking dream of a

parallel universe, culinary no less than political. Take for instance 'Hearty Crock Pot Clam Chowder' on page 150, which relies on '2 cans minced clams, drained', not to mention the three different varieties of Campbell's soup (and no, contrary to what you are thinking, Campbell's didn't sponsor its publication). Again try 'Matt's Easy SCV Dessert' on page 342, which is introduced with the wholly superfluous line, 'You don't have to be much of a cook to make this tasty dessert,' and which lists amongst the ingredients, 'Family size brownie mix', 'Large Size instant chocolate pudding', '1 can cherry pie filling', '8-ounce package frozen whipped topping' and '1-2 toffee candy bars'. With your taste buds about to go into overdrive, you turn to the index for the directions of how to assemble these wondrous delicacies and indeed you find the names just as printed in recipe headings. But suppose you wanted to know how to prepare that all-time Dixie classic 'Brunswick stew'. It's no good looking under either 'beef' or 'Brunswick' because it is in fact listed under 'Granny Coleman's Brunswick stew'. Consequently unless you know to which particular family member a recipe is credited, and bear in mind that there are not only ten grandmothers, but a great-aunt and a great granny listed as well, this folksy, whimsy, twee index is totally useless. *The Confederate Cookbook* has a curiosity value in that it is quite the worst cookbook that I have encountered in fifty years of collecting such things. Nevertheless, I can see the point of it, if you have a larder bursting to the seams with a vast range of junk food, the boys are already on the way round to watch the game and are expecting to be fed before kick-off and you have a headache, all you have to do is open a few cans, slop the contents together and everybody will be happy. But ask yourself, do you really need to spend fourteen quid on guidance for the concoction of a dog's dinner? As it is, it seems insulting to the superb culinary traditions of a vast region whose citizens came within a whisker of winning a gruelling war, fighting for a cause they sincerely believed in. They, and we, deserve better.

ANTHONY LYMAN-DIXON

Catherine Phipps: *The Pressure Cooker Cookbook*, Ebury Press, 2012: 223 pp., hardback, £18.99.

Pressure cooking seems to be having something of a vogue, or so the publishers and manufacturers hope. A second generation of these appliances is now available, with new safety features and greater ease of use than the wobbling, hissing pans of the past. This way of cooking is not for everyone