

changed. Few live in employers' houses nowadays; many are self-employed, providing specialist services such as dog-walking or oven-cleaning to multiple customers. More work in institutions such as nurseries, rather than in private homes. Some are well-qualified and earning good salaries: professional couples look for educated nannies with qualifications in first-aid and the like, and pay accordingly. Not included in the ONS figures are the factory jobs that have replaced service jobs. Instead of employing housemaids and cooks, for instance, busy householders buy the output of workers chopping and bagging salads and cooking ready meals.' So there is quite a lot for us all to discuss on the question of modern servants, although the facts and figures are not easy to recover and there's not much lovely literature, memories and correspondence to quote from.

Peter Brears: *Traditional Food in Northumbria*: Excellent Press, Ludlow, 2013: 285 pp., illustrations, hardback, £19.99.

Peter has done it again, this time for Northumbria – thanks, perhaps, to encouragement from his friends at Beamish Open Air Museum. Excellent Press has done him proud on the production and presentation, and his own drawings (plus some black and white photographs and prints) are their usual eloquent selves. What I like about Peter's writing is that he is definite, precise and clear. He tells you what's what and no mistake. And his recipes are given straight (often, of course, from impeccable sources). It would be difficult to identify the extra-special bits but mention must be made of the discussion of kitchens, grates and fireplaces, of the meals connected to churches, chapels and rites, and the festival foods of the region. Good sense prevails, old wives' tales are bid good riddance and there is much to ponder about the region and its relation to the wider country. Remind me not to ask for Fadge in a north country restaurant. Rather as in that great film *Les Diaboliques*, I am sure that it is Peter Brears standing in the back row, holding a rope, in a picture of a pig-killing at Rookhope in the 1920s.