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THIS ISSUE

I have to apologise for the extreme delay of this issue. The summer has been more up and down than I expected. Some form of recompense will be the rapid succession of issues 93 and 94. This present number, 93, is devoted almost entirely to Andrew Dalby's translation of the *Treatise* of Walter of Bibbesworth. I will be issuing it separately as a small book in months to come. It is a remarkable overview of life in thirteenth-century England, not forgetting food and its preparation. Hitherto the *Treatise* has only been accessible to those who read Anglo-Norman (these have been very well served by the herculean labours of Professor Rothwell), but now Andrew Dalby's rendering into English lays bare its charms to everyone.

AN EARLY REVIEW

I don't know if any of you read the little archive column in the *Guardian* on 11 October. It was a review that the paper printed in 1951 by Lucie Marion of Elizabeth David's *French Country Cooking*. Lucie Marion was the author of *Be Your Own Chef: Simple French Cookery* (1948) and *The Home Chef* (1952), both published by Duckworth. Her review of E. David is un-put-downable. I hope the *Guardian* doesn't mind if I repeat it here.

> Cookery books are of two kinds, the ornamental and the useful, those which make good reading and those which make good books. *French Country Cooking*, by Elizabeth David (Lehmann, 12s 6d) is chiefly of the former kind. It partly consists of quotations from other books, most, but not all of them acknowledged, and most chiefly of literary interest.
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> Perhaps the chapter in the book which contains the most valuable practical suggestions is the one about the use of wine in the kitchen, though I cannot agree with Mrs David's statement, in another place, that French peasants put wine into the soup when they are making it. I have known them to pour wine into the soup when it is made, but never to use wine in making it.
>
> Mrs David is indeed sometimes a little sketchy about wine. For instance, the only Pouilly which has with difficulty obtained the right to call itself a Burgundy is Pouilly Fuissé, and Graves is not a Burgundy but a Bordeaux wine, as Pouilly is a Loire wine.
>
> I cannot think that Mrs David has tried actually to make many

of the dishes for which she gives recipes. If she had she would have discovered that four to five pints of water in a soup for four people is excessive, and that to add any water to mussels in their cooking is wrong.

Excessive also, and extravagant as well, would be the use of two pounds of French beans, two pounds of green peas, and twelve carrot, as well as turnips and onions, in a "potée" for six people, or to chop up two bunches of watercress for a potato and watercress soup, or to take as much as a teacup of capers, to prepare Mackerel en Papillotes for four persons.

As for beating the yolks of four eggs to put into a soup, or covering red mullet – which, by the way, should never be cleaned out – with melted butter before grilling them, and thus allowing the butter to be lost, or pounding up a whole partridge or pheasant to make a soup – all these are so wasteful as to make my economical French hair stand on end.

The very idea of complicating a choucroute soup by the addition of mushrooms and herbs – which in any case would have no effect in so strongly tasting a dish as choucroute – would make generations of Alsatians and Lorrainers (my father was one) turn in their graves.

So would the suggestion that this dish can be ready after simmering for an hour. It requires at least four, and a day is not too long.

MODERN COOKERY

The exciting development this season at Allaleigh has been my wife Sally's subjection to the surgeon's knife. The only consequence of this successful encounter is a temporary debility causing domestic responsibilities to fall entirely on my shoulders. So there has been much hustle and bustle, and unnecessary kerfuffle, in the kitchen as I struggled to produce three meals a day. My responsibilities, however, do not extend to pastry and I delved in the freezer for a stock of Marks & Spencer ready-rolled puff. The back of the packet gave pause for thought. *The Observer Food Monthly* recently celebrated its tenth anniversary with a handful of articles musing on the state of the English and their kitchen. In general, the reports were upbeat – as indeed they were likely to be, given that the *OFM* wished to garner unto itself much of the credit for our improvement. My back of packet however made me wonder at the true state of affairs. There I read a recipe suggestion for the private gastronaut to make use of his or her

puff pastry. A mozzarella, tomato and rocket tart was the thought. Take one roll of puff pastry, two tablespoons olive tapenade, one jar roasted red and yellow peppers, one pack mozzarella – grated, 2–3 plum tomatoes, fresh rocket leaves. Defrost the puff pastry; unroll and place on baking tray; pre-heat oven; spread the tapenade all over the pastry; drain the jar of peppers and scatter evenly over the tapenade; top with mozzarella and bake for 12 minutes; chop up tomatoes and add to the top and bake for further 5 minutes; remove from oven and top generously with 'wild' rocket leaves. I particularly like the idea that the rocket leaves are 'wild'. This is a fascinating recipe. It speaks volumes for our drawing on a world of ingredients and culinary techniques. It seems light-years from the post-war smoked fillet of fish or manky kipper. But it requires absolutely no culinary skill. All the cook has to do is troll the aisles of M&S, unzip a few packets and put in the oven in the right order. Rather than showing an improvement in our culinary arts, it shows quite the opposite; and rather than displaying an adventurousness and inquisitiveness about other cultures and the wider world, the correct adjective, I think, for this style of cooking is deracinated. I found it rather sad.

A further sobering experience in this latest domestic odyssey was the purchase of bread from a local bakery. The baker had no pretensions but on the other hand he was not mass-producing. He was, in English terms, an 'artisan'. I have rarely been more horrified than by my encounter with his granary loaf. If the *Observer Food Monthly* thinks we have progressed they might perhaps like to sample it.

One would never like to say that we haven't progressed or that there is not light on the horizon. The changes in our kitchens have been profound and often encouraging. But sometimes one feels that these changes are confined to a tiny proportion of the population and the nation as a whole merely benefits from occasional random spangles of culinary joy that spin off the hyperactive worktop of the privileged bourgeoisie.

PENGUIN'S HISTORICAL COOKERY

English readers will know of the new series of twenty little books from Penguin, each costing £6.99, that abstract gems from classic food books. The series runs from Gervaise Markham to Alice Waters. Given the strong American representation I presume the series will get world-wide exposure 'ere long. You can imagine every cookery editor (myself included) wishing

they too had thought of the idea. The authors are excellent, the covers are brilliant, it just seems right. You should not think any subsequent comments are sour grapes, far from it. The series was brought to mind by my use in the previous paragraph of the word deracinated because, charming though they are, these little books are entirely removed from their context, both bibliographic and historical. The extracts are just extracts. There is no idea of the work as a whole. There is absolutely zero bibliographic information beyond a note of the date of the first edition. As far as I can see, the editor's pen has struck through any contextual reference or cross-reference so that the quotation seems stand-alone, and there is no guidance to the readers as to where they might find a current edition of the text in question. As the publisher of at least two of these texts (Hannah Glasse and 'Wyvern') I take exception to this, just as might my friend Stephen Hayward, the publisher of Alice B. Toklas. I take more exception when I think that for not much more than double the price, you could have seven times the extent, as well as a useful and informative introduction. The deracination goes further with the book from 'Wyvern' (Colonel Arthur Robert Kenney-Herbert) because they write on the cover, with nary a blush, 'Colonel Wyvern'. Well that's just ludicrous. So I am less entranced by this series, which seems a very modern take on our past: just dip your finger in and lick without the first idea what it might mean or even taste of.

LEEDS PIGS PART 2

We had a most entertaining Leeds Symposium at York in April exploring further the whole question of the pig. I can't recommend highly enough the foods that are brought to the gathering by the symposiasts themselves. It is always an adventure and a voyage through the past of English cooking. Lunch comes first, but there is often a teatime treat as well, this time provided by the efforts of Peter Brears who was exploring blood puddings, etc. Now there's a man at ease in his kitchen. I hope that the two Symposia will be gathered together in one volume in the far distant future (we are waiting for a Moulded Foods from an earlier Leeds Symposium which I guess will be appearing sometime in 2012). The guest speaker on pigs (as opposed to one of the regular symposiasts) was Stefanos Mastoris, who belies his name by being English, who discussed the historical view of the pig and the passage of its image from swinish to adorable. His talk had many links to his published work, with Robert Malcolmson, *The English*

Pig: a History (Hambledon Press, 1998). This was a new one on me and is full of most interesting pictures, excellent quotations and much helpful history. I recommend it.

JOHN FOTHERGILL

Mr Mastoris revealed that he had been curator of the museum at Market Harborough in Leicestershire. Many will remember that the innkeeper and cook, John Fothergill's, last establishment was The Three Swans at Market Harborough, which he kept until shortly before his death in 1957. We are probably more familiar with his glory-days at the Spreadeagle in Thame in the '20s. Mr Mastoris was most helpful in that he recalled that there were manuscript materials relating to Fothergill deposited by his sons in the local record office and he also recalled a chapter on Fothergill in a book called *Bachelors of Art*: *Edward Perry Warren and the Lewes House Brotherhood* by David Sox (Fourth Estate, 1991). Warren was a rich American collector, in polite terms an Uranian, who gathered around him likely young men to help in his purchases and disposals. Fothergill was one of these. The chapter is deeply interesting. The man was in my mind because I had paid a visit to my friends Richard and Jenny Storey, who had hanging on their kitchen wall a manuscript letter from John Fothergill which Richard had purchased in some sale of unrelated ephemera. It was written in green ink (par for Fothergill's course, I think). The letter is undated but addressed from Market Harborough. The text goes as follows (once or twice I have introduced an extra dash, but otherwise it is its unpunctuated original):

Dear Mrs Cardew,

Mentha citrata
Mint lemonised

It is very jolly to have yr letter – so many thanks
I remember your names so well from Ascot tho' Beastlywise I've forgotten your faces – and for your comfortable words about my last Diary – to be sure I don't mind the p-g [paying guests] now so much but practice more objective attitudes upon them & don't get subjective.
It's a wonder that Mswt [Meadowsweet] hasn't blocked your rivers by now – it grows like couch grass – twitch – but I do like it still!
It may be a long time till we see ourselves again -

It's a desert, this Midlands – but this is a delightful little place of great parts. Thanks, it's going quite well.

Meantime please have my best wishes & Memories

Yrs sincerely

John Fothergill

The reference to Ascot is to the second of his three inns, where Mrs Cardew was evidently a customer. The letter underlines his preoccupation with gardening and his troubled relationship with his customers. His books are uncomfortable to read, containing many home-truths about hospitality but laying bare a soul riven with anxieties. I also turned to his cookery book (*John Fothergill's Cookery Book*, Chatto & Windus, 1943). It's gripping, mostly for the photographs and descriptions of his kitchen arrangements, but the recipes I find really quite disconcerting and can't be sure whether they are just plain bad or ruined by the exigencies of wartime. For example: his hollandaise sauce is a butter white sauce, thinned with white stock and thickened with yolk of egg stirred in when just under the boil.

LIVING WITH BANKS

We returned from a fortnight in France where we suffered the painful effects of sterling's devaluation since the crash of 2008. I was forcefully reminded of the banks, however, because I carried along a very large, nay almost costermonger, roll of English banknotes harvested from a recent sales expedition as first reserve for those little vacational luxuries. 'Have you got a bureau de change?' I asked the ship's purser as we boarded late at night in Plymouth. 'No longer,' she replied. 'You use the hole in the wall.'

Raising a metaphorical brow I went to sleep, and tried the same trick once more in a small French town (though large enough to support three banks). The girls looked at me pityingly as if the very idea that they should handle cash was some form of late-medieval heresy. I gave the whole thing up and returned to Blighty still weighed down with my roll of notes.

The entirety of our stay was negotiated by means of debit and credit cards, electronically. Cheques of course were a no-no; travellers' cheques prehistoric. This reminded me of my days as a trades union activist (you may laugh but I was once representative of the Historical Manuscripts Commission branch of the Institute of Professional Civil Servants and can even claim some form of service-wide amelioration of salaries and

conditions due to my eagle left-wing eye) when there were struggles between those employers who wished to pay salaries by cheque or bank transfer and those employees who preferred cash in their pocket. The hoops that cash-lovers were made to jump through (picking up your packet at 10.16 a.m. in the fifth gate from the left) were an outrage. Since those days, we have seen cash recede from almost every aspect of our transactional lives; just try to get your Old Age Pension that way. Apologists claim it's both cheaper and more secure but the big effect has been to make banks, who are the only agents of this non-cash society, compulsory to every citizen.

There are those who seem to think that this role was thrust upon banks. I am more and more of the opinion that it was the banks' idea in the first place and that we have been subjected to the most appalling highjack of our most private lives. Therefore, my low-grade mind might chunter, the whole of the 2008 business was in fact their well-deserved nemesis. We should never have rescued them but should instead have developed some alternative means of financial exchange.

HIPPIES

There have been further developments in the continuing attempt by a group of ecological warriors to establish a settlement intended to highlight the beauties of low-carbon-footprint-living on their land just a few hundred yards from our front gate. I cannot disguise how much distress this episode has caused, though strangely bearing little personal animosity towards the warriors themselves. The temporary permission to settle on their land came up for renewal this spring and they successfully applied for an extension to allow their occupation, complete with up to a dozen dwellings, for another five years.

Our contention has always been that although they might be genuine in their desire to live lightly on the land, and although they may occasionally endure some fairly torrid, or more likely frigid, conditions in fulfilling their desire (it's a long walk to their earth closet in a force ten, and the solar-heated shower block must seem quite the opposite on January 15th), they are in fact behaving much more like the residents of a conventional housing estate than they would ever admit. The power of greenwash to close the minds of their critics, and the perceptions of the hippies themselves, has shocked us. When the district council was faced with this new application, they were very conscious of their previous defeat at a public enquiry.

This was costly to the rate payer, as it was to us. Our careful councillors understandably did not wish to repeat this vain expenditure, so when it came to the crunch most of the Planning Committee abstained, and the hippies won the vote. Had the abstainers voted as they ought, then the hippies would have lost.

Another thing that shocked us, sitting as mute observers in the council chamber, was the bizarre, not to say surreal, form of debate within these bodies. If debate means exchange of opinion and argument, there was none, merely unilateral statements of preference.

When the first application was made, it was accompanied by grandiose economic projections. In the cold light of day, the annual income per household of this apparently self-supporting commune is now found to be something in the region of £3,000. It was incomprehensible to us why this fact was not more closely examined, given that the reason that they wished to live on their land was to better exploit it. It is also a real irritation that these ecological warriors in fact seem to own as many motor vehicles as the rest of us. And they drive their children to school every day. And they even get a taxi service to take one of them to school many miles away every day. On top of this, their refuse containers are larger than ours and put out with as much frequency. And when we, or our neighbours, go up to see the progress in cultivation, we stand open-mouthed wondering how half a dozen able-bodied males can have done so little to the land in so long. It gets us even more irritated when we find that the bulk of the grassland is in fact maintained for them by neighbouring farmers on very large tractors.

Every so often they have 'volunteer days' and they also advertise for full-time volunteers who can come and live for a month or two on their land – and, as far as we can see do a little of the hard work that the bone idle owners can't face themselves.

I am sure my readers have been expecting this rant and would be disappointed if it were too measured and reasonable. As I say, there is remarkably little personal animosity and they are by no means troublesome as neighbours. For this we are grateful.

Over the summer England has been watching the developments at Dale Farm in Essex where a group of Travellers have been fighting much the same battle as the Allaleigh hippies. For those not resident here, the case in a nutshell was that a small Traveller encampment had planning permission,

was extremely enlarged (without permission). The new inhabitants attempted to regularise their position with a retrospective application. This failed, but it has taken the local council ten years to bring matters to a head – the head being eviction under an enforcement order. This has caused a lot of trouble, involving even the United Nations (Travellers being Irish in origin and considering themselves an ethnic minority). The nation waited for the bailiffs to move in, but their activities delayed at the last moment by a creative judicial ruling. The impasse underlines the difficulties of enforcing planning law and the immense complexity of the law in general in situations such as this. The council's victory will certainly be in some senses pyrrhic. It never seems possible to draft their enforcement orders with sufficient accuracy to gain their point. What was piquant for us was witnessing the arguments deployed by all parties. They were identical to those that we had rehearsed in Allaleigh. *Plus ça change*....

FRENCH GARDENERS

On our trip to France, our first port of call after a very early disembarkation at Roskoff in Brittany was for a cup of coffee at a small town on the road to Rennes. The town in question was called Broons, which had us speculating philologically. Anyway, the point of this report is the weekly market that was opening as we parked the car. As it was late spring, there was stall after stall of vegetable (and flower) plants ready to plant out in your *potager*. Compared to what I find in British garden centres, they were magnificent. You didn't buy half a dozen or a dozen lettuce, you bought a gross. There was every possible variety of useful vegetable available at the drop of a euro. And the prices weren't high. It's true that we have a fond image of the French peasant in his *potager*, though this is often belied by the restaurant experience where you will have to hunt from one end of the menu to the other to find any form of vegetable at all. Obviously the French behave very differently at home. But I thought of our national stereotypes and how the British pride themselves on their gardens in a way they do not credit the French.

RESTAURANT DESIGN

We had an interesting evening re-visiting our former restaurant in Dartmouth. In 1973 we had christened it The Carved Angel, and indeed

commissioned a life-size torso of a rather bad-tempered Michael. It has recently changed hands and has been re-named. The name is Angélique, presumably to remind the visitor of a residual connection to the original, but reminding me, I fear, of nothing of more than a pair of tart's bloomers. Anyway, we had a nice if expensive meal, as our eyes sought out each nook and cranny of earlier happy days. What most struck us, I think, was how the public demands on the physical structure and layout of a restaurant have changed in the last ten or twenty years. The restaurant still looks as though it was designed and built in 1973. In those days, we thought, it was pretty red hot, pretty advanced, pretty cool. Now, it is none of those things and demands much harder surfaces and much more space (as well as much better lavatory accommodation) to cut the mustard. We noted too, just like all the medium-fancy restaurants in France, that they were slaves to slate instead of good old porcelain. This is a fashion which must change.

STOCKS

In the process of editing Blandine Vié's *Testicules* for our blockbuster Autumn title, *Testicles: Balls in Cooking and Culture*, I was interested to note that she counselled using dehydrated powder instead of fresh stock in a recipe for *bouchées à la reine* with a *sauce financière*. Just in case the French had some magic ingredient, I thought I'd better check via Google. I was surprised to find the French seemed to have embraced an EU regulation which states that if restaurants make their own stocks, they must use them the day that they have been made. They are not allowed to keep them, or so it would seem, in a fridge or cold storage for the use on next or subsequent days. As you can imagine, the effect on most general-purpose kitchens (excluding of course the very best) is that they have given up making stocks at all and rely entirely on powders and cubes. If they wish to freshen up the flavour of these disgusting products, then they make a mirepoix of fresh vegetables, add the powder and then dilute. This was all laid out for me in a variety of French chatrooms on the Internet. Well, enquired one curious home-cook, what if I make a stock at home? How long can I keep it in the fridge? Astonishingly, the universal answer by *soi-disant* experts was two days maximum. This has had me rocking on my heels, particularly as I make a soup today from stock I made last week. Can anyone enlighten us on the truth of these statements?

THE REVEREND RICHARD WARNER

Mark Cherniavsky has very kindly sent the following paragraphs which go far towards a reassessment of the character of one of Alan and Jane Davidson's favourite authors. Mark's e-mail is: <mark@lavarenne.com>

I came across unflattering references to the Reverend Richard Warner, a name familiar to culinary historians as the presenter/editor of *Antiquitates Culinariae* (1791), tucked away in a book about William Smith, the man who turned geology into a science and produced the first geological map of England and Wales, completed in 1815. That book, called *The Map That Changed the World* by Simon Winchester (paperback edition, 2001), is worth reading in itself, so well told is the pathetic tale about William Smith and his revolutionary insights into the new science of stratigraphy.

I had always assumed that Warner was a respectable country clergyman cum antiquary. Simon Winchester exposes Warner as a plagiarist who would stop at nothing in exploiting the credulity of others, in this instance the naive William Smith. Smith became the victim of Warner, whose machinations ultimately landed Smith in the debtors' prison in 1819.

As many readers of PPC may recall, the use by Warner of the engraved plate of the Peacock Feast in the forematter of *Antiquitates Culinariae* was in breach of copyright and copies of Warner's work containing the plate were ordered withdrawn (without much visible effect, it would seem, since complete copies of the book, as originally published, are still to be found). The copyright holder who made the complaint about Warner's copyright infringement would appear to have been a Mr Carter, at Hyde Park Corner, who was publisher of the periodical work from which the image was taken.

Possible as it may be that there were two Richard Warners in holy orders who were contemporary with William Smith, circumstantial evidence makes that hypothesis unlikely, given that the Reverend Richard Warner of *Antiquitates Culinariae* had already been in breach of copyright in reproducing the engraved plate of the Peacock Feast in his book, and that an identically named man, also in holy orders, became the ruin of William Smith when he plagiarized Smith's highly original work on geology.

[On the subject of the Peacock Feast and its illustration, the 'brass monumental plate' in the church of St Margaret at King's Lynn is a monument to Robert Braunche (d. 1364) and his two wives. It survives to this day. The Feast is very much as illustrated in Warner. Depictions of it can be found on the Internet (e.g. < http://www.townwaits.org.uk/pictures/braunche.jpg > and below in miniature) where it mostly excites historians of music, not of food. The church's own website suggests the image is either an incident in medieval legend or is perhaps a reference to an entertainment provided by Robert Braunche, when mayor of the town, to King Edward III.]

ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY

Barbara Santich reports the re-launch of the Food Studies programme under the direction of Rachel Ankeny. Eager candidates can read all about it at <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/food-studies> where there is extensive description and practical information. Adelaide has a very successful and fully functional distance-learning arrangement so you don't have to live in South Australia to achieve your life's ambition.

MORE ABOUT DADHI

I was pleased to receive a letter in response to Nawal Nasrallah's piece about *dadhi* (Dadhi: The Mystery Date-Wine Additive) from Anthony Lyman-Dixon, the West Country's most eminent historical plantsman. The text went as follows:

> I greatly enjoyed Nawal Nasrallah's piece in *PPC* 92 which inevitably send me on a wild goose chase. I am sure you will wish to follow it up with an interesting homebrew at the next family gathering, so [I enclose] some *Datura ferox* (Long Spined Thorn Apple) seed. [Which I have been unable to distribute to *PPC* readers, Ed.] You may be disappointed to find that it is totally useless for 'coitus when cooked with wine (p. 49)', but it does indeed release its alkaloids in alcohol. A former partner used it in gin as a migraine remedy and said 'it was

like being whooshed into a dark tunnel'. So while this emphasises its inadequacy as an aphrodisiac, it does seem to correlate to Nasrallah's comment about 'moonless night'. It is certainly soporific but the effects are cumulative and will eventually cause cardiac arrest. Twelve seeds in alcohol usually prove fatal; I keep a large jar handy in case the cancer comes back.

The identity of the plant is fascinating. Apart from the writers of 'popular herbals' (i.e. the batty followers of alternative medicines and religions), I think we are all agreed that *Datura* was introduced to western Europe from the East shortly before the sixteenth century. I say this because it is absent from classical and medieval herbals; it is referred to by Avicenna, but doesn't appear in Alpago's annotation of 1527. Based on Mattioli's confusion with *Nux vomica* (1557), *Datura metal* is listed in the 1691 Cortuso catalogue of the plants in the Padua Botanic garden with 'Stramonia del Fuchsio' cross-referenced to '*noci metelle*'. We normally regard *Datura stramonium* as having been introduced from the Americas, so it is interesting that Mattioli gives 'Stramonium' a brief mention in his chapter on Nightshades saying that it is now universal in gardens. But was this the true *Datura stramonium* or a related white flowered eastern species such as *Datura ferox*? His comment about its 'soave odore di gigli' (sweet smell of lilies) makes one wonder both about the plant's identity and his sense of smell. Gerard, 1636 wrote that the flowers were 'of a strong ponticke savour, offending the head when it is smelled unto.'

The Oxford Botanic Garden list of 1648 lists both a 'Whyte Thorne apple' and a 'Blew Thorne apple'. Now *Datura stramonium* is everywhere, probably better adapted to the English climate than *Datura metel* and *Datura ferox*, though if you sow the seeds you should get a good crop to plant out in the garden. Treat them like tomatoes in fact.

No one in their right mind would ingest henbane seeds or, if they did, they certainly wouldn't be in their right mind afterwards. I did try a few belladonna berries but the effects were about as unexciting as cannabis; perhaps I am lacking the ability to metabolise these supposed delights. A bit sad really?

Finally a question about the hitherto infallible *Oxford Companion to Food*. It mentions *Salvia lavadulifolia* as being lavender-scented.

Surely the reference is to the shape of the leaves rather than the smell? Coincidentally the day before I noticed it, Jenny and I had an almost identical conversation about *Monarda menthifolia*, which likewise doesn't smell of mint.

NEW ZEALAND FOOD SYMPOSIUM

I realize that my hopelessness in time-keeping means this communication is nearly redundant, but I have left it in to mark the vigour and interest of New Zealand food historians. A call for papers has gone out for 5th New Zealand Symposium for Food History, Auckland, 25–27 November 2011. The subject is the 1920s. The desiderata are laid out in the following :

> The 1920s was the decade the Pavlova cake first appeared, as well as the Caesar salad, Smith's Crisps, Birdseye frozen food, and Vegemite. Dominion Breweries was founded in the twenties, Farmers department store opened its famous Auckland tearooms at the beginning of the decade, and rebuilt it in art-deco style at the end of the decade, and Aunt Daisy, New Zealand's original celebrity cook, first appeared on the radio (as a singer).
>
> The 1920s was a time when many 'modern' ideas were applied to food, for example in: nutrition, manufacture, marketing, state policy, education, agriculture, urbanism, restaurants, economics, science, publishing, kitchen appliances and design.
>
> New Zealand gastronomy is a melting pot. Ethnic influences by the 1920s included the indigenous Maori, predominant British Isles, North American, Chinese, Indian, Lebanese, Jewish and Continental European.
>
> The 1920s were book-ended by the First World War and the Great Depression. Papers could be comparative studies of those periods, or indeed cover a larger chronological period that includes the 1920s.
>
> New Zealand represents a microcosm of global food culture, especially for gastronomy and consumerism in the post-colonial Anglo world. Papers could cover any region in the world in comparison to New Zealand.
>
> For more detail, contact should be made with <andretaber@xtra.co.nz>.

MORE PRAWNS PART TWO

We have a further communication on prawns in cocktails and elsewhere, this time from Karen Olsen Bruhns of Berkeley, California.

I read with interest the short article 'More Prawn' in the latest (92) volume of *PPC*. You know, I am not sure Toronto is now or ever was a gastronomic center in the forefront of new trends (although I remember fondly a lovely meal in an extremely ethnic Hungarian restaurant there some years ago). In other words, seafood cocktails are likely something that arrived fairly late.

In the second edition of *The Picayune Creole Cookbook* published in 1901 (as far as I can find out the first edition was published in 1900 or shortly before that), on page 67 there is a recipe for shrimps in catsup sauce which is obviously what we would call a shrimp (or prawn) cocktail. Folk etymologies are always problematical... shrimps and prawns are interchangeable terms in most North American dialects of English, although the bigger the beast is, the more likely he is to be called a prawn. This is of some interest, since most of the recipes in this book were claimed, at least, to be traditional and to have been around for some time. Here is their recipe:

Shrimps in Tomato Catsup
Chevrettes à la Sauce Tomate

100 River Shrimp
Two Tablespoons of Tomato Catsup
Three Hard-Boiled Eggs
Salt, Pepper and Cayenne to taste

Boil the shrimp and pick. Put them into a salad dish. Season well with black pepper and salt and a dash of Cayenne. Then add two tablespoonfuls of tomato catsup to every half pint of shrimps. Garnish with lettuce leaves and hard-boiled egg and serve.

The book does not mention putting the shrimp in individual glasses or cups, but it is certainly the same 'shrimp cocktail' my mother and grandmother fixed for important occasions in the 1950s and 1960s!