

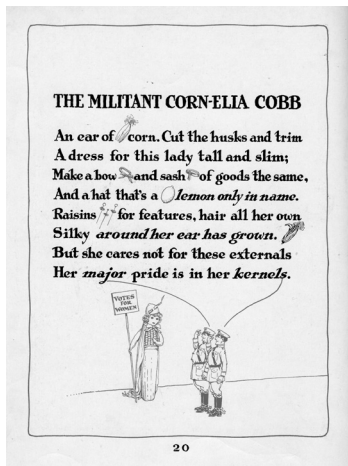
## NEW BOOKS FROM PROSPECT

The next volume of the proceedings of the Oxford Symposium, *Food and Morality*, is now through the press. It costs £30.00. Also published are two volumes in our series 'The English Kitchen'. The first, by Anne O'Connell, is called *Early Vegetarian Recipes*, an anthology of vegetarian books before the 1920s. The majority were indeed written by food reformers, but there are some suggestions from orthodox cooks like Colonel Kenney-Herbert and S. Beaty Pownall. While giving due exposure to the great pioneer Thomas Tryon, most extracts are from works published in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. The second small volume comes from David Burnett and Helen Saberi. It is once more an anthology, this time of recipes for curry. It is called *The Road to Vindaloo. Curry Cooks and Curry Books*, and gives an account of the rise and variation of this Anglo-Indian theme. There are some modern recipes but the emphasis, of course, is on history.

## WILLIAM L. CLEMENTS LIBRARY

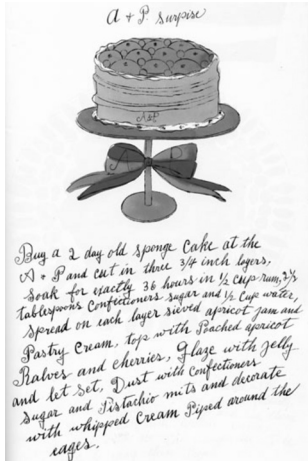
Jan Longone has curated an exhibition at the library in Ann Arbor, Michigan. 'The Old Girl Network: Charity Cookbooks and the Empowerment of Women' uses the matchless holdings of the Library, and Mrs Longone's unrivalled knowledge of the field, to illustrate 'cookbooks on many themes with an emphasis on female empowerment. Many of the [original]

compilers worked hard to publish these books (with scant funding) in hopes of raising more women to the level they had already attained. The books demonstrate how women worked together to help themselves, other women, and the outside world. Causes include: Suffrage, military and patriotic support, Temperance, education, working women and Women's Exchanges.' Here is a page from one of the items on show: *Kritters of the Kitchen Kingdom and How to Make Them*, a children's how-to book published in 1922.



## ANDY WARHOL

Prospect Books author Susan Rossi Wilcox has curated an exhibition at the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh. It is called 'Recette Satire: Andy Warhol's & Suzie Frankfurt's *Wild Raspberries*' and centres on the book of that name which the pair issued in 1959. The recipes are the work



of Suzie Frankfurt, the drawings by Andy Warhol, while the handwriting is Warhol's mother's. They caught the moment that America was falling in love with French cooking. Susan comments, 'The book's combination of celebrities of the '50s such as Dorothy Kilgallen and Cecil Beaton with ridiculous-sounding antiquated (but accurate) cooking terms blends culinary history with the guilty pleasure of celebrity-watching.' My slow schedule is hardly up to this note, for the exhibition closes on 14 September. However, there are hopes that she will secure a transfer to the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, Ohio.

## †MARGARET SHAIDA

It is with great sadness that we mark the death in April of Margaret Shaida, whose *The Legendary Cuisine of Persia* was so important for the British appreciation of this country's cookery. It was written with such enthusiasm, such knowledge and such culinary skill, yet was first published by Margaret herself. Its status as a modern classic was soon recognized, however, and today it is found among the books published by Grub Street. It is one of those cookery books that deserves to be read, and the reader comes away invariably better informed, as well as refreshed. I think Alan Davidson would have felt, too, that Margaret was the sort of person for whom the Oxford Symposium was intended. An educated amateur, here she could find like minds and could venture in pastures as yet unfamiliar. Her exceptional hospitality was ever the talk of some lucky Symposiaists.

## LIZ SEEBER

One of the gang of four ladies that runs Britain's secondhand cookery book trade (perhaps now a pentad, with the accession of Sophie Schneideman) sent me, and her customers, the following notice: 'Catalogue 67 was the last of the printed catalogues. Economic conditions, the rise of book websites, and the lack of new younger collectors has finally made it completely unprofitable for me to continue having catalogues printed.

'But this does not mean I'm giving up the business, just redirecting it! In future, all catalogues will be put directly onto my website [www.lizseeberbooks.co.uk](http://www.lizseeberbooks.co.uk) and for all customers who want me to do so, I will continue to advise by email when the catalogues first appear on the site.

'My website has always been a little basic and over the coming months I intend to master some of the complexities of operating a website and to improve it as far as I can. I do not intend to take payment via the website as my bank already takes far too much money from me and I intend to continue to talk to customers via email and telephone. If customers want me to find them items from the various book websites, I am happy to do so though you may well find you have to pay a little more than I charge, as my books continue to be very good value for money!

'My catalogues have been enjoyed and praised for nearly 15 years and I know many of you have loved sitting up in bed and reading them, or stopping your lives to read them when they first appeared. I have been grateful for your support and hope that you will continue to enjoy the catalogues albeit in a different format.'

## WARWICK CONFERENCE

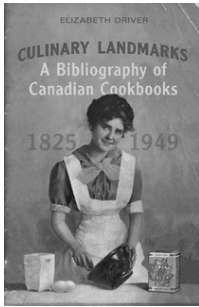
The conference 'Reading and Writing Recipe Books, 1600–1800' organized by Michelle di Meo and Sara Pennell at the University of Warwick was of great interest. There were lots of speakers, seasoned veterans and neophytes, and the range of topics was larger than I had expected (as well as being less to do with cookery). Departments of literature, of women's studies and of the history of science and medicine outnumbered historians of food and cookery. There was, however, much to think about. Not least was my experience on the bookstall, where the manuscript recipe book of John Evelyn and the similar, though printed, collection of Kenelm Digby attracted not one purchaser. Was it that everyone owned a copy? Or was

it occult discrimination? I noted, too, that no-one discussed the evident enthusiasm of 17th-century males for collecting recipes.

I came (late as ever) upon some resources that seem worth mentioning. The microfilm collections of Adam Matthew Publications ([www.ampltd.co.uk](http://www.ampltd.co.uk)) may be more expensive than most individuals can run to, but they do have all the manuscript receipt books (approx. 80) in the Folger Shakespeare Library (18 reels, £1,800). We heard too of the project in hand at the Wellcome Library to digitize the receipt books held there.

A very interesting talk was based in part on the University of California at Santa Barbara's English Broadside Ballad Archive ([http://emc.english.ucsb.edu/ballad\\_project](http://emc.english.ucsb.edu/ballad_project)). This is a digital version of the Pepys collection of broadsides at Magdalene College (and it has some sound recordings). A happy afternoon can be spent browsing, and scooting off to other broadside collections such as the Bodleian's (which is not so user-friendly). A little light food poetry, anybody?

## A NEW BIBLIOGRAPHY



Elizabeth Driver's *Culinary Landmarks. A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825-1949* (Toronto University Press, £112.00) is a landmark itself. This takes the business of cooks' bibliographies to new levels of exhaustiveness, careful attention to detail and appreciation of the contexts of production and creation. (And Toronto's own production is pretty scintillating as well.) In common with the US and Australasia, there is much to be learned from the various community and charity cookbooks that are a staple of the literature. And as Elizabeth Driver deals with everything published in Canada in the period, there is the chance to trace some of the most important foreign influences. The bibliography is arranged by province (Ontario's output vastly exceeding any other territory's) and one hidden benefit of this arrangement is that the reader gets not only the general introduction at the very beginning, but a province-specific introduction as well. There is much to read and inwardly digest. A masterwork.

A pleasing surprise, as you open the book and leaf through the

preliminaries, is the foreword by Alan Davidson. Of course, the project has been long in the making, so this was written in 2002, before his death. Elizabeth Driver has permitted me to reprint his contribution, for its phrases bring strongly to mind his effortless elegance.

Even in my own lifetime, indeed in the latter half of it, the quality and status of bibliographies of cookery books have changed dramatically. Throughout most of the twentieth century such few of them as existed were patently intended as references for librarians and private collectors, most of whom were interested in the actual books, as artifacts which called for identification and accurate descriptions, rather than in their context and content. This is not to belittle in any way the work of earlier bibliographers. They did what they set out to do, with diligence and occasionally with hints of the broader perspectives in which the books they catalogued could be viewed; but only hints.

In reality, a good bibliography with accurately defined boundaries, whether of subject, language, geographical area, or period (or of course all four), can be used as a sort of prism through which to perceive, with a fresh illumination, many matters other than the publishing history of the books. As Elizabeth Driver says herself, the range of relevant interests, besides food history, is great: 'women's studies, social history, archaeology, museum studies, folklore, ethnology, even English literature.' To her list I would add the work of mainstream political historians (how often are great political events found to be partly explicable by food matters!), that of both general economists and students of economic botany, and that of dietitians and practitioners of medicine, including nursing. And I would further add agriculture, and those many forms of biology, including ichthyology, which are relevant to the use of animals as food. Finally, I warmly endorse the idea that studies of food in literature can be greatly helped by good bibliographies. I am, as it happens, just embarking on an investigation of food in novels, and find that the only relevant bibliography (by the late Professor Norman Kiell) is just about indispensable.

Of course the extent to which a bibliography fulfils the manifold purposes to which it can be put depends on how good a

bibliography it is. On this, I am happy to say that they don't come any better than the present one. More than twenty years ago I was one of only a dozen or so people who had become aware of Elizabeth Driver's talents as a bibliographer. She was just starting work on what was to become her *Bibliography of Cookery Books Published in Britain 1875-1914*, and I could tell from the way that this was being planned (with the help of yet another Canadian, Dr Lynette Hunter) that it was going to be a model of its kind. In 1989 my wife and I had the privilege of being the book's publishers. We had never published a book so large, nor one on which we had had to contribute so little editorial work. It was a masterpiece.

The same could and will be said of the present volume, but in my opinion it deserves special and additional praise on two counts. First, its geographic and ethnic scope is so much wider, giving it a more international flavour. It is remarkable how a reading of the chapters on the provinces conveys what might be called their various personalities, reflecting the varied origins of the communities which settled in them. Second, like Elizabeth's earlier book but perhaps even more, the present one does so much to bring alive the books which it catalogues and their authors. I will never forget *mère Caron*, still less her nun who wept when cooking because the flame under the pan reminded her of the fires of Hell which she has so often deserved. Catharine Parr Traill is another outstanding figure, now firmly imprinted in my memory. These are but three characters from a cast of hundreds.

Here, then, is a book which is a precious gift to Canada and which will also be useful to and cherished by many people outside Canada. I wish it the success it deserves – although this wish may seem superfluous in the case of a book of such manifest excellence and with such a long life assuredly ahead of it.

Chelsea, London  
October 2002

## ANOTHER OVEN

Freddie Dudbridge, the organizer of Slow Food Devon, has nearly finished his bread oven. Firing starts in September.





## THIS & FUTURE ISSUES

We have no book reviews in this issue, a defect for which I am alone responsible, due to the press of other material. However, next time Michele Field will return with a long list of titles we cannot live without. There should also be a piece of the use of food as a metaphor for good and evil in the later Roman empire, as well as a look at almonds and their history. I have been lucky enough to buy a copy of the second edition (1935) of The English Folk Cookery Association's *Good Food Register*. It is a tiny pamphlet listing good retailers and dining-rooms as well as regional specialities. Slow Food, eat your heart out. I will print a transcript.

While eschewing book reviews, I should note my recent enjoyment of Lucy Worsley's *Cavalier*, a life of the 17th-century Duke of Newcastle. Her expertise is buildings and artifacts, and this is the tilt and emphasis of the book. He was a great builder, a bon viveur, and even a poet of matters domestic. There are many manuscripts and archives and, of course, plenty of buildings, not least Bolsover Castle. It is worth inspection.