Welcome to Year of the Rooster: 新年快乐

Posted on January 27, 2017 by nyamhistmed

By Emily Miranker, Project Coordinator

Growing up in the very multicultural city of San Francisco, Chinese New Year has always been one of my favorite holidays. It’s bright and noisy, with dancing, fantastic animals, cymbals, and vibrant costumes.

The vivacity and strength that the rooster symbolizes, prevalent in many traditions beyond Chinese astrology and the Greco-Roman West, is evident in the cheerful design by the late Clarence Lee. Lee designed an entire series of twelve stamps for the Chinese zodiac cycle, starting with the Year of the Rooster in 1992.

The Year of the Rooster starts on the 28th thanks to a (legendary) challenge set by an emperor of China (for a fuller and charming retelling of the story, click here). Briefly, the emperor told all the animals to race across a river. The first twelve to reach the far bank would have a year named after them – these twelve years make up the zodiac. Famously, the trickster rat caught a ride on the powerful ox, and leapt off his head at the last minute onto the far bank thus coming in first. This year’s star, the rooster, found a raft and came across the river on it along with a goat, who cleared weeds from their path, and monkey, who paddled the raft. The rooster was awarded the eighth year in the zodiac in honor of his resourcefulness and teamwork.

In addition to the above qualities, the Chinese believe roosters symbolize moral fortitude and protection. Their role as protectors may originate from the habit of watching for the day to return; heralded by their crowing at dawn. Scientists have actually discovered that, in fact, it’s not the first light of morning that triggers roosters crowing (they can crow at any time of the day; how much and when depends on breed and personality). Rather, it’s a roosters internal body clock. This watchful quality spoke not only to the Chinese, but to the ancient Greeks for whom the rooster was a symbol of the god of healing, Aesclepius.
The god of medicine and physician, Aesclepius is depicted along with his daughter, Hygeia, goddess of health, over the entrance to the New York Academy of Medicine.

Aesclepius sometimes took the form of a rooster when appearing to supplicants, and the bird was also sacrificed in his honor. As it’s a symbol of restoring health, watching to keep illness and evil at bay, the rooster is one of many health and medicine icons that decorate the interior of the Academy building.

In this painted ceiling ornamentation from our lobby, a rooster dances with a dog, also sacred to Aesclepius. Like the rooster, the dog stands for watchfulness, driving away death.

Other roosters you’ll find in our library include this rooster, with his hen and chicks, from the 1536 *Hortus Sanitatis*, a natural history from Germany.
Jumping fifty years ahead, still from Germany, we have one rooster with fantastic plumage and an eerily long tongue for a bird, and his more sedate and regale fellow. They feature in a cook book by Marx Rumpolt, head cook to the Elector of Mainz, which includes nearly 2,000 recipes and instructions on how to make wine.
The above rooster (mid-squawk?) is from the third of a five volume set, the *Historia Animalium*, the most famous work of Conrad Gessner. Gessner was a 16th-century Swiss physician and naturalist. The woodcuts in our 1555 edition of the third volume were hand-colored and have many of the birds’ French names added by a reader of the past. Gessner did draw, but most of the woodcuts in his volumes were the work of others. Their identities are largely unknown, except for Lucas Schan, an expert fowler, who drew images of birds.[iii]
For the *grande finale*, my favorite rooster is this glorious French fellow, the Coq Gallante, who is just a decoration made of plaster and not an actual fowl, atop a sumptuous Victorian savory pie featured in *The Encyclopedia of Practical Cookery* by Theodore Garrett (1898). The meat pie is surrounded by real, edible game birds, mini pies, and cooked eggs on a bed of parsley. Monsieur Gallante’s sash says, “A Votre Sante,” French for, “To your good health!” I can think of no better wish for the New Year.

References:


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*The Homegrown Table: American Cookbook Highlights in the Academy Library*

Posted on January 18, 2017 by nyamhistmed

By Anne Garner, Curator, Rare Books and Manuscripts

Last week I had the pleasure of hosting renowned chef James Kent in the Rare Book Room. Chef Kent is interested in the history of American cooking, and as I was selecting highlights for his visit, I was reminded—again!—of the depth and variety our American food holdings. Here are a few of our favorite early American cookbooks from our stacks (a later post will look at late 19th and early 20th-century highlights.)

*American Cookery*
The Academy library has one of only four copies in the United States of the slim third edition of Amelia Simmons’ *American Cookery*, long considered the first homegrown American cookbook. The book’s intriguing title page, modified only slightly from the 1796 first edition, credits the book’s authorship to one “Amelia Simmons, an American orphan.” The author’s nod to her Americanness is one of the earliest to occur in print—and possibly the earliest in culinary sources.

*American Cookery* likely drew from manuscript cookbooks with recipes known for some time, and now appearing in print. The recipes in these pages were known throughout the colonies and appealed to Americans living both north and south; they made use of thriving American crops, including corn, peas and beans. Recipes for pumpkin pie, American citron, and an adventurous chowder, composed of fried pork, fish and crackers, were recorded here in print for the first time.

**The Virginia Housewife**

Another early and influential American cookbook was authored by Mary Randolph, a Virginia housewife turned entrepreneur whose culinary creations drew generously on local crops. Before the publication of Randolph’s *The Virginia Housewife* in 1824, many home cooks in Virginia relied on English cookbooks, but found these sources lacking in recipes drawing on local plant sources. Randolph earned her culinary chops—and her nickname, “the Queen”—while supervising the cooking in the kitchen of her boarding house in Richmond. When she retired, she collected her recipes and published them. Randolph had a soft spot for bread; recipes for cakes and biscuits occupy a lengthy section of the book, and include instructions for making batter cakes (using hominy and cornmeal), “Apoquiniminc Cakes” (beaten biscuits), and corn bread. Other favorites include classic southern dishes like sweet potatoes, peach pie, boiled turnip tops, ham, and apple fritters.

**Praktisches Kochbuch**

A number of cookbooks published during the 19th-century in America targeted immigrant audiences, hoping to minimize their anxiety about maintaining their own food traditions while embracing their new country’s agricultural resources and culinary influences. A favorite of these is Henrietta Davids’ *Praktisches Kochbuch*. First published in 1844, *Praktisches Kochbuch*, or Practical Cookbook, was easily the most popular cookbook of the nineteenth century in Germany. It was republished in
Innumerable editions well into the twentieth century, including a number of American editions, which were brought out by a Milwaukee publishing house seeking to tap the large German-American community in Wisconsin. In our 1897 edition, Davidis clarifies her intention to write a cookbook that combines German and American elements in her preface:

_Ein deutsches Kochbuch in Amerika soll nicht dutsch oder amerikanisch, sondern deutsch-amerikanisch sein._ [A German cookbook in America should not be German or American, but German-American.]

For easy reading, the introduction and recipes were published in German, with English translations next to the name of the dish. Indexes in both German and English made it easy for new students of English to use the book.

Left, title page of Henrietta Davidis’ _Praktisches Kochbuch_. Right, Portrait of Henrietta Davidis.

**Hoffman Family Cookbook**

A number of manuscript cookbooks in our collection add dimension to the many American stories of cooking in the immigrant kitchen. A handwritten collection of recipes kept by the Hoffman family, papermakers by trade who opened their first mill in 1766 in what is now Hoffmanville, Maryland, dates between 1835-1850.

The manuscript contains a fascinating mix of ethnically German recipes, many suggestive of the regional culinary style now called “Pennsylvania Dutch,” and then-standard American recipes, some of which show the writer, apparently a German immigrant, struggling to master an unfamiliar cuisine. Recipes for “sowar crout” and “soft rivals” (small dumplings) in milk soup suggest that the Hoffman household continued to eat German dishes, while recipes for pound cake, pumpkin pie and ketchup attest to a desire to incorporate the influences of their new country at the table.

In 2017, we are working with our volunteer Chef Curator, Matt Jozwiak, on a variety of projects to increase awareness and use of our culinary collections. Matt is exploring historical recipes, helping us develop food-related events, and coordinating outreach to the culinary community to help them access the resources we hold. Two of his adapted recipes featured at the Academy’s 2016 Gala.

Matt also works with the Academy’s food policy group, which focuses on better food procurement for East Harlem community based organizations. He is also currently developing his own nonprofit, which is focused on the better use of food waste.

“We’re looking forward to serving up a number of collaborations with Matt this year, continuing a long tradition of great American food.”

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Pumpkin pie recipe from the Hoffman family cookbooks.

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Pumpkin pie recipe from the Hoffman family cookbooks.

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**Cakes and Ale at Woodbine: From Twelfth Night to New Year’s Day**

*Posted on December 27, 2016 by nyamhistofmed*

By Paul Theerman, Associate Director
Part of the Margaret Barclay Wilson collection of cookbooks and cookery, *Cakes and Ale at Woodbine: From Twelfth Night to New Year’s Day* is a pseudonymously published light novel of mid-century Fordham, New York. Ostensibly the work of “Barry Gray,” the book was written by Robert Barry Coffin (1826–1886), one of the “Bohemians” of antebellum New York. He was a critic for, and eventually editor of, the *Home Journal*, later renamed *Town and Country*, which continues in publication to this day. This book was first published in 1868; the Library’s edition is from 1883.

The “cakes and ale” of the title is not culinary, but purely literary. On the title page is this quote from Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*: “Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?” (Act 2, Scene 3).

Sir Toby Belch uttered the line “Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?” the epigram for the novel. This is an image of Lionel Brough in a 1901 production.

“Cakes and ale” are not only mentioned in *Twelfth Night*, they are parts of Twelfth-Night celebrations: the merriment on the day of (or day before, depending on how one counts) the feast of the Epiphany on January 6, the twelfth day after Christmas. Coffin is therefore having fun with the title, “From Twelfth Night to New Year’s Day,” as it means from January 6 all around to January 1: a romp through the year, touching on all the major holidays in turn. Each day is an occasion for indulging in cakes and ale, “the good things of this life” (p. 13): Epiphany, the first day of spring, a birthday, Easter, the fourth of July, “summer,” Christmas and a Christmas wedding, and then New Year’s.

Set at the author’s purported cottage, Woodbine, in Fordham, New York, domestic scenes alternate with long fanciful stories, much of which contrast city and country life, to the decided benefit of the latter! Toward the end of the book, the narrator has an imagined (perhaps alcohol-induced) encounter with Santa Claus, who says he prefers the large expansive chimneys of the country to the narrow ones of the city, and thought that the new city fashion of Christmas trees might put him out of a job:

“When the city folks first began to talk about Christmas trees, and introduced them into their nurseries, it nearly broke my heart; for I feared that my occupation . . . was gone” [p. 225.]

The virtues of the country always win out, in grand matters of love, and more prosaic ones of cakes and ale.

May you have a great holiday season, and may you get all the cakes and ale you want!

Another literary retreat, left, the Edgar Allan Poe house in Fordham, New York, where the author lived from 1846 to 1849, some 20 years before the recounted events in *Cakes and Ale*, also set in Fordham, a village only recently connected to the city by rail. Right, a view of the Poe cottage in its rural setting.

References


Image Sources

17th Century Recipes, Fit for a Gala

By Arlene Shaner, Historical Collections Librarian

The New York Academy of Medicine hosted its annual fund-raising gala at the Mandarin Oriental on June 14. Gala attendees had the opportunity to sample two treats based on recipes from one of our favorite manuscript receipt books.

The Academy Library has 37 manuscript receipt books, most of which contain a mix of culinary, medicinal and household recipes. Some of them have been featured already on our blog (see earlier posts on Mother Eve’s Pudding, and English Gingerbread). The Recipes Project also featured an interview with Anne Garner, our Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts, about the print and manuscript historical recipe books in our collection.

One of our favorite manuscripts is A Collection of Choise Receipts from the late seventeenth century. Inspired by a recipe for Black Cherry Water in the manuscript, Pietro Collina and Matt Jozwiak created a signature cocktail, the “Choise Cherry Crush,” for gala guests. You can try your hand at mixing one up if you are so inclined.

The adapted recipe for the Choise Cherry Crush, adapted from A Collection of Choise Receipts (1680)
On their way out at the end of the evening, guests received bags with a pair of almond cookies also adapted from a recipe in *Choise Receipts*. There are several recipes for cookies or little cakes made with almonds in the manuscript. My favorite, “The Lady Lowthers Receipt for to make Bean Bread” a cookie that very much resembles a macaron in texture, takes its name from the silvered almonds that look like little beans that are mixed into the dough.
The recipe for Almond Bisketts that we reproduced for the gala, however, seems to be missing a crucial ingredient: almonds!

— "Lady Lowthers Receipt, for to make Bean Bread," from A Collection of Choise Receipts, 1680.
Only when examining the full page of the manuscript, on which a very similar recipe for Almond Cakes appears directly above the one reproduced on the postcard, does it become clear that the “half a pound of flower” referred to in this recipe would be made from ground almonds. The adapted recipe printed on the back of our card makes that clear.

If you make a batch of these tasty cookies, let us know how they turn out! Better yet, send us a picture and we’ll post it on Instagram.

Announcing the March Madness Food Fight Club Winner

Posted on March 30, 2016 by nyamhistorymed

Drum roll please...

The winner of the 2016 March Madness Food Fight Club is...
The four recipes in this competition—from a pamphlet, a manuscript receipt book, and two printed cookbooks—don’t begin to scratch the surface of what our cookery collection holds. We acquired our Margaret Barclay Wilson culinary collection in 1929, and it now contains about 10,000 items. The collection includes manuscripts, menus, and pamphlets that demonstrate the way cookery changed over time, and a large collection of printed books, beginning in the 16th century. These include works by Scappi, Platina, and Carême, as well as many other milestones in culinary printing.

Our cookbooks offer aspirational recipes, practical recipes, and everything in between. Our collections hold a snapshot view of what daily cooking was like in a range of households across the world. These recipe books also reflect the changes that occur when people have access to new innovations—refrigeration, for example, or the gas range. We also have strong collections related to diet regimens and cooking for health, as well as cookbooks published during wartime when resources were scarce.

Interested in researching historic cookbooks? Our library is open to the public. To make an appointment, call 212-822-7315 or email library@nyam.org.

Posted in Collections | Tagged 101 Practical Non-flesh Recipes, cookbooks, food, Food Fight Club, food history, historic recipes, vegetable curry | 2 Replies
It's the Food Fight Club final! **Snail Water** won round 1 and **Vegetable Curry** won round 2. Now it's time for these two tough competitors to duke it out once and for all.

This final bout pits a recipe from a manuscript recipe collection against one found in a printed cookbook.

The recipe for Snail Water comes from *A Collection of Choise Receipts*, one of 36 manuscript receipt books in our collection. These collections of recipes, dating from the late 17th through the 19th century, tell stories about the ways food was prepared in a range of households. In many cases, they incorporate source material from contemporary cookbooks in print, showing us the kinds of recipes households valued and relied on. These manuscripts often include personal information about the families who kept them. One noteworthy case in our collections is a recipe for “How to make coffy of dry sweet aple snits (slices),” found in a *recipe book kept by a German-American family* in Pennsylvania-Dutch country between 1835 and 1850. Manuscript cookbooks can also show us the kinds of cooking technologies used by families. Repeated references to coals and the Dutch oven indicate that Pennsylvania-Dutch cookbook’s author was cooking at the open hearth.
Publishers of printed cookbooks responded to demand from readers. These books—and the number of editions that were published—can tell us a great deal about cooking trends. Our 1917 copy of *101 Practical Non-Flesh Recipes*, for example, is the book’s second edition, the first published just a year before. Cookbooks could be aspirational, practical, or a combination of both. A 19th-century cookbook published in Milwaukee in German in multiple editions tell us that there was a demand for cookbooks written in the mother tongue for newly-arrived German immigrants. The mixture of German and American recipes in these books indicate a need for familiar recipes from the Old World, as well as instruction on how to prepare foods that were more typical of the New. A number of printed cookbooks in our collection have emended recipes or manuscript recipes laid-in to their pages, offering clues to how readers modified published recipes for personal use.

Which recipe should be crowned the 2016 Food Fight Club Champion? Vote for your favorite—be it the most appealing, least appealing, or one that just tickles your fancy more—before 5 pm EST on Monday, March 28.

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**Food Fight Club Final (Poll Closed)**

Create Your Own Poll

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**Cook like a Roman: The New York Academy of Medicine’s Apicius Manuscript**

Posted on **October 15, 2015** by nyamhistorymed

By Anne Garner, Curator, Center for the History of Medicine and Public Health

This is one of several posts leading up to our day-long Eating Through Time Festival on October 17, 2015, a celebration of food, cookery, and health. View the full program and register for the Festival

Ancient sources document the culinary excellence of one Marcus Gavius Apicius, a Roman gourmet who flourished during Tiberius’ reign (1st century CE). It isn’t clear from textual evidence that this Apicius ever wrote a book of cookery. ¹ And yet, the

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¹ http://www.eatingthroughtime.org/
Our manuscript, transmitting a 4th- or 5th-century compendium of culinary and medical recipes compiled from a number of 2nd-century Roman sources, packs a powerful wow factor. It contains 500 Greek and Roman recipes from the Mediterranean basin. A handful may date as early as the 4th century BCE. As such, our manuscript is sometimes referred to as the oldest extant cookbook in the West.

This collection of recipes was likely compiled from multiple sources. The 2nd-century satirical writer Juvenal indicated that the name "Apicius" was frequently used to describe a foodie, not a specific person. Other sources suggest that the name conjured luxury and excessive eating.2

These recipes appear to be written by and for cooks. While some recipes called for cuts of meat that might have been beyond the means of the average Roman citizen, many others, including a number of meat, vegetable, and legume dishes, were well within the reach of Rome’s tradespeople, builders, artists, and modest farmers. Some of the recipes may have reflected popular dishes served in local popinae (street bars).

A closer look at book one reveals a wide range of useful directives applicable for the Mediterranean home cook. Called Epimeles (careful, or attentive), book one includes recipes for a spiced wine surprise, honeyed wine, and Roman absinthe. Here too are tips for preserving pork and beef rind, fried fish, blackberries, and truffles.

The dishes reflect the polyglot culture of the Mediterranean basin. The dominance of Greek culinary tradition in the early empire makes it likely that the Apicius began as a Greek collection of recipes, though mainly written in Latin, and adapted for a Roman palate.3 The cookbook incorporates a number of Greek terms, like melizomum (honey sauce) and hypotrimma (here a mixture of cheese and herbs), despite the existence of Latin glosses. Other words are hybrids of Greek and Latin, like tractogalatae, combining the Latin tractum (thin sheet of pastry) and gala, Greek for milk.

The Apicius manuscript is the gem of the Academy’s Margaret Barclay Wilson Collection of Cookery, acquired in 1929. Conservators restored and rebound it in 2006.

Our manuscript was penned in several hands in a mix of Anglo-Saxon and Carolingian scripts at the monastery at Fulda (Germany) around 830 CE. It is one of two manuscripts (the other at the Vatican) presumed to have been copied from a now lost common source.4
Images from both 9th-century iterations illustrate the different approaches to the text. The image above shows the gilt and illuminated Vatican manuscript, as replicated in a 2013 facsimile. Below is the Academy’s text. The number of cross-outs and the plain, unadorned style of the manuscript suggest it may have been a teaching tool for scribes.
Apicius has been a bestseller since the beginning of the print era, published in multiple editions since the 15th century. The Academy library holds many print editions, including two of the earliest.

This title page is from the earliest dated edition of the text, published in Milan in 1498. Pictured below is the device of the printer, La Signerre, who later set up shop in Rouen. Our copy is annotated by an early reader who adds the titles of the text's ten books, grouped by type of dish.
The second earliest dated edition, printed in Venice, offers one of the earliest examples of a title page in printing history. It too is heavily annotated by an early food-lover, fluent in Greek and Latin.
Enthusiasts will find many other print descendants of this extraordinary manuscript in the Academy’s library.

The Apicius manuscript and a number of print editions of the text will be on display in the Academy Library’s Drs. Barry and Bobbi Coller Rare Book Reading Room during our October 17th festival, Eating through Time. A complete schedule of events can be found here.

References


Some of the most engaging materials in the cookery collection of the New York Academy of Medicine’s Library are late 19th and early 20th century advertising pamphlets. Small books of recipes, histories of coffee, tea, spices, and other foods, and brochures touting the health benefits of one product or another offer a window into the changing tastes of the American public, new innovations in the mass production of foods, and the development of mass market advertising. A number of these pamphlets came to us as part of NYAM Fellow Margaret Barclay Wilson’s collection of books on food and cookery, donated to the library in 1929.

One charming example is The Little Gingerbread Man, published in 1923 by the Royal Baking Powder Company, located at 108 East 42nd Street in New York. Written in rhyme, the pamphlet tells the story of the land of Jalapomp, where baking has been declared illegal because of the ineptitude of the cook. Poor Princess Posy, whose birthday is approaching, worries that she won’t have a cake. Alerted to the sad state of affairs by a little Flour Fairy, the Queen of Flour Folk sends Johnny Gingerbread and his friends off in a chocolate plane to save the day. Toting a tin of Royal Baking Powder and a copy of the New Royal Cook Book for the cook, the fragrant baked treats convince the king that baking powder and new recipes will set things right before they head back home to Cookery Land.

A tin of Royal Baking Powder features prominently in most of the pamphlet’s illustrations, and the cookbook appears as well. You, too, can try your hand at making some of the Royal treats, as almost every page also contains a recipe for baked goods, including one for gingerbread men. Readers of the pamphlet (or their mothers, since the book itself was clearly meant for children) could obtain free copies of the New Royal Cook Book by writing to the company as instructed on the final page of the story.

Although she is uncredited, the author of the pamphlet was probably Ruth Plumly Thompson, who wrote more than 20 volumes of the Oz series, a continuation the stories told in L. Frank Baum’s The Wonderful Wizard of Oz and its many sequels. The illustrations are attributed to Charles J. Coll.

Click the images to read the full pamphlet:
Thanksgiving means many things: spending time with family, reflecting on what you’re thankful for, looking back at American history. But the essence of the holiday can be stated in three words: food, football, and parades.

Our collection contains a whimsical pamphlet that combines two of the three (sorry, football fans): “Canapé Parade: 100 Hors d’Oeuvre Recipes,” published in 1932. (We have the fourth printing, from November of that year.)
The personality-filled canapés from the cover reappear throughout the pamphlet, illustrating recipes like bloater paste, Japanese crabmeat, herring, and marrons in brandy. Unfortunately, the pamphlet does not credit the illustrator.

None of the recipes specify ingredient amounts, “as the consistency and proportion of ingredients used will vary according to the individual palate.” The recipes take a semi-homemade approach, adding minimal fresh items to packaged food before spreading on crackers. The cookbook also advises that “the majority of these hors d’oeuvres also make excellent sandwich fillings to be served between thinly sliced bread at afternoon tea or buffet suppers.”

Enjoy the recipes on parade below (click to enlarge and view the gallery):
For more traditional Thanksgiving recipes, read Thanksgiving, 1914 Style.

Posted in Collections | Tagged Canapé Parade, cookbooks, cookery, food, hors d’oeuvres, illustration, recipes, Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving Day | 1 Reply

Cookery for a Jewish Kitchen

Posted on March 20, 2013 by nyamhistofmed

By Johanna Goldberg, Information Services Librarian
Passover begins the night of March 25. In preparation, we’re sharing some recipes from an early English-language Jewish cookbook in our collection. The library and rare book room house a large number of cookery-related items, as nutrition and health are inextricably linked.

After the cost of books plummeted in the 1800s, Jewish cookbooks came on the scene, first in Germany around 1815. In 1846, the first English-language cookbook was released in London.¹

The cookbook in our collection, Aunt Sarah’s Cookery Book for a Jewish Kitchen, was published in Liverpool in 1872.

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*I have been induced to publish this little Book, the result of long experience, for the purpose of teaching young and inexperienced Jewish Housewives the art of cooking their daily food in a proper manner, without infringing those dietary laws, the observance of which has been of so much importance to the health and well-being of our people. The directions are plain and simple, the most minute particulars are given with the greatest exactness, which, if attended to as written down, cannot fail of success. I have taken every pains, so that it may be easily understood by the most inexperienced; and if my humble endeavours to assist my Sisters in Faith in acquiring a knowledge of one of the most important of their Domestic duties be appreciated, and the higher object be also recognised, my labour will not have been in vain.*

— Aunt Sarah
At the time of the book’s publication, matzo didn’t look like it does today—a piece of matzo was most often “round, irregular, or oval-shaped.”¹² The mechanization of matzo began with the invention of a kneading device in 1838, and progressed after the first matzo factory, Manischewitz, opened in Cincinnati in 1888. Eventually, the factory produced entirely machine-made, and square, pieces of unleavened bread.²

Aunt Sarah did not write the recipes in this book with most (non-shmurah) modern matzo in mind, and her ingredients are not always as common today as they were in the 1870s. If you try one of the recipes, let us know how it translates to the modern kitchen. And take a picture—unfortunately, this little book only includes text.

Here are some recipes to add to your holiday repertoire this year.³

Matzo Cake.

Put a matzo on a plate, strew over it almonds finely chopped; then sprinkle with brown sugar. Bake on a tin five or six minutes.

Potato Cake, or Pudding.

One pound of grated potatoes (boiled in their skins the day before), one pound of sifted loaf sugar, three ounces of pounded almonds, the rind (grated) and juice of one lemon, and the yolks of twelve eggs (beaten). Mix all together. Then take the whites of the eggs, beat them to a froth, and add it to the rest. Bake in a moderate oven, in small dishes, greased with salad oil.

A delicious Pudding for Passover.

Take whole matzos [a handwritten note specifies two or three], put each into a soup-plate, with sufficient cold water to make them very soft; drain off the water, leaving the matzos whole; grease a basin with dripping a quarter of an inch thick, cover it well with brown sugar, and line it with the soaked matzo the same as the paste for a steffin [another of Aunt Sarah’s recipes, basically a pie crust dough made with water, flour, and suet]. Mix well together a quarter of a pound of chopped raisins, the same of currants, ditto of chopped suet,* one ounce of preserved citron, ditto of orange and lemon (chopped), the juice of one lemon, the rind of half (grated), half a teaspoonful of ground cinnamon, a quarter of a small nutmeg (grated), half a teaspoonful of salt, and a wine glass of rum. Then put the mixture into the lined basin, about an inch thick; cover with the soaked matzo, strew over brown sugar; then the mixture and the matzo alternately, until the basin is full, the matzo forming the top layer. Make holes with a knife not quite to the bottom of the basin, and pour over it by degrees eight eggs (well beaten). When all is soaked into the pudding, put a little dripping over the top; then cover it with brown sugar. Bake in a moderate oven from an hour and a half to two hours, until quite brown. Turn it on to a flat dish, bottom up, and serve very hot. I must be made two hours before putting in the oven.

And Aunt Sarah’s take on the evergreen classic:

Matzo Ball Soup.

Stew slowly for six hours, in five pints of water, four pounds shin of beef, four pounds of mutton or veal, three leeks, a little celery, and a teaspoonful of salt. Strain and take off the fat.

For the Balls.—Take a teacupful of matzo meal, half a teaspoonful of salt, the same of ground ginger, one small Spanish onion chopped fine, and browned in a frying pan with a little dripping, and two teacupfuls of matzo soaked in cold water and squeezed dry. Mix all together, with a half a teacupful of the broth and one or two eggs, sufficient to make it the consistence of forcemeat. Make it into balls, and boil them in the soup twenty minutes before serving.

*A common English ingredient, often found in early Jewish cookbooks, but not kosher.¹

References:


Got gloves? Ditch them when handling rare books. Here’s why: twitter.com/LibraryArchive...

RT @allergyPhD: It’s really cool teaching @BklynInstitute classes at @NYAMHistory, even when the whistling wind outside heightens the haunt...

RT @NYAMNYC: Tomorrow afternoon, Academy VP Dr. Claire Wang @ThatClaire will share her expertise as part of @theNAMedicine’s free webinar o...

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CATEGORIES
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The Web is loaded with information about R, and there are R-specific tools for searching it (Recipe 1.10). The Cookbook and Home Economics Collection includes books from the Young Research Library Department of Special Collections at UCLA, The Bancroft Library at The University of California, Berkeley, and the Prelinger Library. These fascinating books take us back to an America in the early decades of