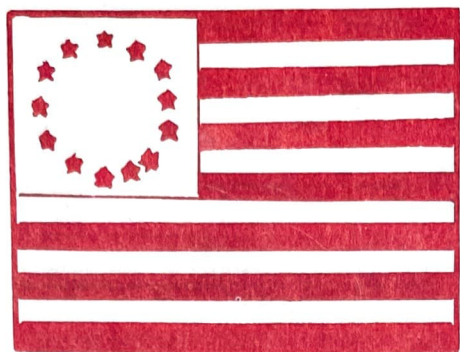


1776



1976

The Bicentennial Cookbook

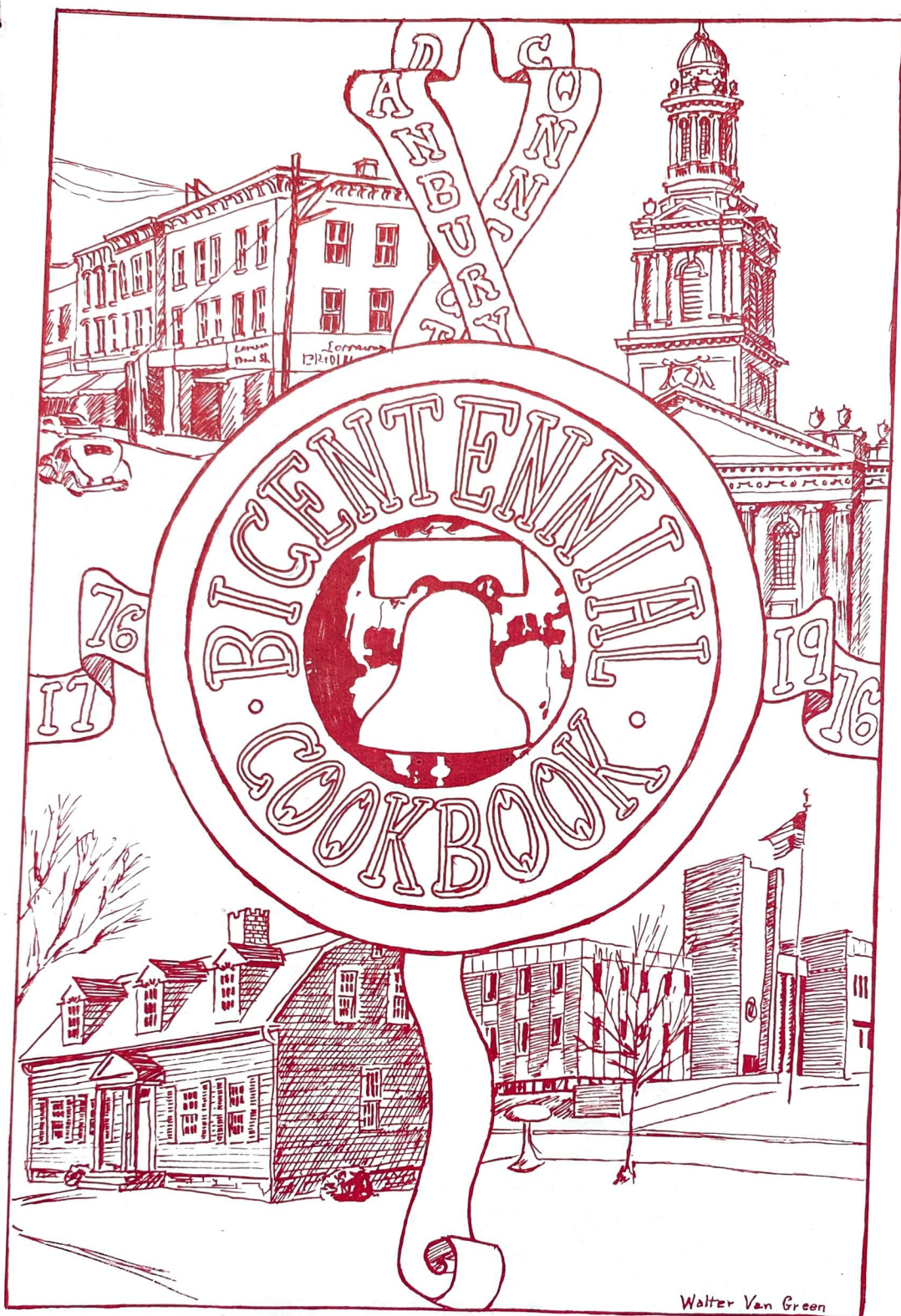
Ethnic Recipes
from the
Danbury Area



SUSAN MOSEAU

Compiled by
American Revolution
Bicentennial Steering
Committee
Danbury, Connecticut
1974





HISTORY OF DANBURY

In the year 1684 a small group of colonists trekked up from Norwalk reaching this section which the Indians called "Pahqui-poque." The central basin, surrounded on all sides by gentle hills, appeared attractive as a possible site for settlement. As a result of the glowing report these colonists took back with them, the next year eight Norwalk families packed their

household goods and took off north with horses and wagons for this virgin territory. The families made friends with the Indians, bought land from them on what is now Lower Main Street, and proceeded to build cabins for shelter. Other settlers followed the first eight families so that after 100 years - in 1785 - there were about 3,000 people living here.

Early in the Revolutionary war colonial army officials chose Danbury as a depot for military stores. The British, learning of this, dispatched General Tryon to destroy the supplies. Sailing from New York and landing near Compo beach with about 2,000 British troops, General Tryon marched the large British force toward Danbury. It arrived in town about three o'clock in the afternoon of Saturday, April 26, 1777. General Tryon planned a leisurely sack of the town, but at midnight a messenger brought word that a continental militia was on its way to Danbury.

So early Sunday morning he hurriedly grouped his troops, set fire to some 19 buildings containing supplies and fled toward Ridgefield. The colonial contingent under the command of General David Wooster reached Danbury later that Sunday. Wooster pursued the Redcoats catching up to their rear forces near Ridgefield, where in a light skirmish he was mortally wounded by a musketball.

Danbury grew slowly in population until 1870. In that year there were 8,500 residents here, but by 1890 the number had more than doubled - to 19,500. The manufacture of men's felt hats and derbies became the town's chief industry, due, it is said, to the quality and quantity of the town's water supply. During the flowering decades of 1870-90 electricity and the telephone were introduced, a hospital was founded, adequate railroad service was brought to Danbury, the borough government changed to a city by an act of the General Assembly, and the first trolley car lines were placed in operation.

Hat manufacturing plants proliferated here and Danbury became known as "The Hat Center of the World." Fur processing companies and paper box manufacturers sprung up to supply the hat making trade. In the 1940's, however, men all over America began to ignore the felt hat as a mode of dress, preferring to go hatless. The effect was to deteriorate Danbury's industry to a point in the mid 1950's when hat making in this city became practically non-existent. Fortunately a number of diversified industries located here taking advantage of Danbury's skilled labor market, and the city has continued to prosper.

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Danbury is a city of many Ethnic groups and the Committee thought a cookbook, representing the various nationalities, would be appropriate to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The following countries are represented:

England	Germany	Portugal
Ireland	Russia	China
Scotland	Poland	Japan
Wales	Czechoslovakia	India
Norway	Switzerland	Mexico
Sweden	France	Puerto Rico
Denmark	Italy	Paraguay
Canada	Hungary	Israel
Holland	Iceland	Spain

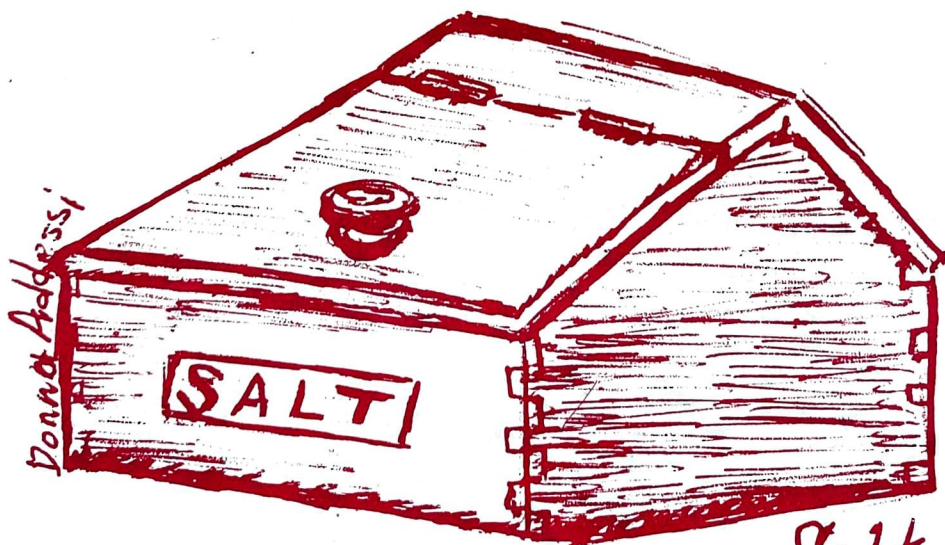
an apple wood
mint mill



Donna Adessi

"THE SALT OF THE LAND"

In the new world, salt was first produced by boiling seawater in iron kettles in the fireplace, but about 1776 Captain John Sears of Dennis, Mass. built himself an out-door vat and filled it with saltwater. The object was to have the sun evaporate the liquid; then the solid salts were shoveled out and spread to dry. The neighbors termed the experiment "Sears Folly"; but when they saw Sears sell the salt for \$8.00 a bushel during The Revolutionary War, there were many imitators. It took a 50 gallons of saltwater to produce 1 bushel of salt. Eventually, windmills lining the shores of the Cape towns pumped enough seawater into the drying pans to produce a \$2,000,000 salt industry, which later declined when easily marketable salt deposits were found in New York state, about the same time Congress reduced the duty on salt.



Salt Box

The following recipes were submitted by descendents of two of the original settlers of Danbury, 1684.

OLD HARTFORD ELECTION CAKE

(from Miss Beecher's Recipe
Domestic Receipt-Book 1772)

5 pounds of dried and sifted flour	4 eggs
2 pounds butter	A gill of wine and a gill of brandy
2 pounds sugar	1/2 an ounce of nutmeg
3 gills of distillery yeast, or twice the quantity of home brewed	2 pounds of fruit
	A qt. of milk

Method

Rub butter very fine into flour. Add half the sugar, then the yeast, then half the milk, hot in winter and blood warm in summer, then eggs well beaten, the wine and the remainder of the milk. Beat it well in the morning, adding the brandy, wine and spice. Let it rise three or four hours, till very light.

When you put the wood into the oven (meaning an old fashion brick oven) put cake in buttered pans and put in fruit as directed previously. If you wish it richer, add pound of citron.

(James Beebee was the ancestor of Fred M. Carley of Danbury.)

CRULLERS

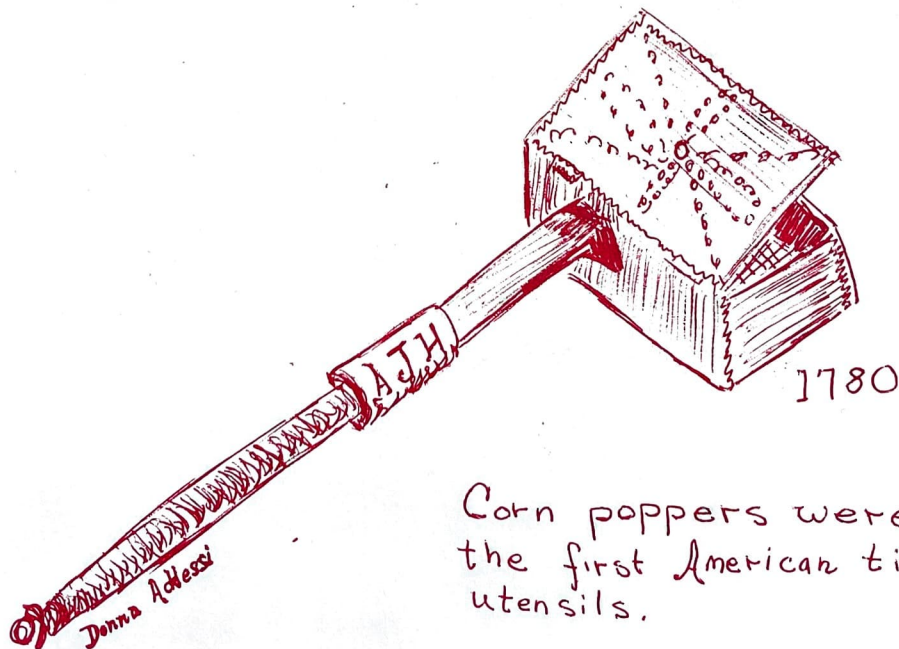
(Family recipe 1841)

1 cup sugar
1 Tbsp. cream
1 qt. flour
2 Tbsp. baking powder
2 eggs, beaten

1 cup milk
vanilla
nutmeg
salt

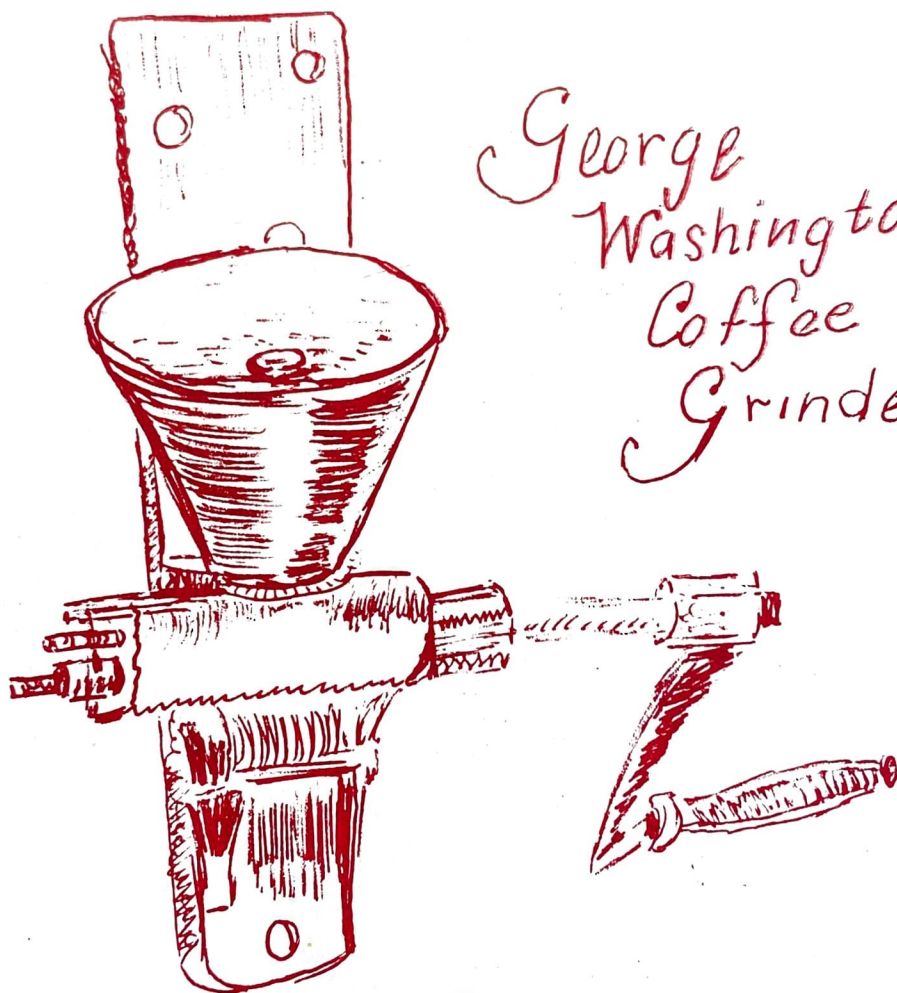
The cream for this recipe was the heavy cream off the top of pan setting in the pantry, to make butter. A whole nutmeg was grated. Cut in strips to make round crullers and fry in deep fat. Home made lard was used for frying.

(Mrs. Ernest Taylor is a descendent of Thomas Taylor.)



Corn poppers were
the first American tin
utensils.

"COFFEE---Substitute dry brown crusts and roast them; others soak rye grain in rum and roast it, others roast peas. None are very good and the peas considered unhealthy, but alright for large families, apprentices and workmen. When coffee is boiling add a bit of fish skin well washed and thoroughly dried, or whites of an egg, or substitute an egg shell; rind of salt pork is excellent."



George
Washington's
Coffee
Grinder

Donna Addessi

SCRIPTURE CAKE

Take 4 1/2 cups I Kings IV,
verse 22

1 1/2 cups Judges V, verse
25

2 cups Jeremiah VI, verse
20

2 cups I Samuel XXX, verse 12

2 cups Nahum III, verse 12

1 cup Numbers XVII, verse 8

2 Tbsp. I Samuel XIV, verse 25
season to taste II Chronicles

IX, verse 9

6 of Jeremiah XVII, verse 2

a pinch of Leviticus II, verse 13

1/2 cup Judges IV, verse 19

2 tsp. Amos IV, verse 5

Follow Solomon's advice for making a good boy, Proverbs
XXIII, verse 14 and you will have good cake.

Mrs. Irving Marquard, Danbury

(Taken from an old Methodist cook book)

(Key to SCRIPTURE CAKE)

I Kings IV verse 22

Judges V verse 25

Jeremiah VI, verse 20

I Samuel XXX, verse 12

Nahum III, verse 12

Numbers III, verse 12

I Samuel XIV, verse 25

II Chronicles IX, verse 9

Jeremiah XVII, verse 2

Leviticus II, verse 13

Judges IV, verse 19

Amos IV, verse 5

flour

milk and butter

sugar

raisins

figs

almonds

honey

spices

(no food mentioned)

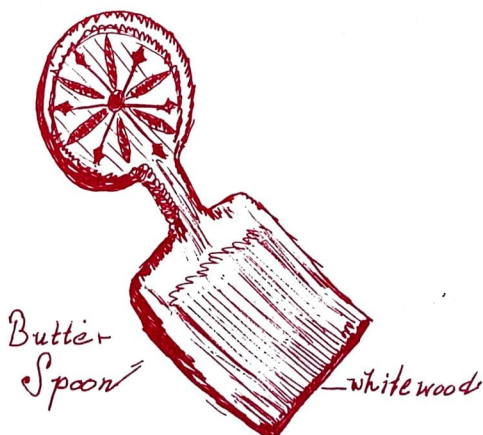
salt

water - milk

leaven

Proverbs XXIII, verse 14

beat with rod



Butter
Spoon

white wood



New England Boiled Dinner

EATING HABITS

Eating habits were basically European, with American modifications and regional variations.

Meat or seafood or poultry was served twice a day in most regions.

Cook books were scarce before the Revolution; some published in London had a few American recipes. Helpful hints might be included, such as what to do with tainted venison: "Bury it in the ground in a clean cloth a whole night and it will take away any corruption, savour, or stink."

Isolation accounted for regional specialties, not yet victimized by commercialized cookery; a New Englander traveling down through the colonies could be confident of a culinary surprise at each city en route - sausage and scrapple in Pennsylvania, terrapin and beaten biscuits in Maryland, ham in Virginia and in Charleston the queen of desserts, the syllabub made of cream, Rhenish wine, dry sack from the Canary Islands, lemon juice and sugar.

New England lobster stew, was indeed a treat, with liberal chunks cut from coldwater lobsters that ran up to twenty pounds or more or Yankee oyster pie. The recipe might read as follows:

After the oysters were parboiled and seasoned, "the pye being made, put a few currans in the bottom, and lay on the oysters, with some slic't dates in halves, some large mace, slic't lemon, barberries, and butter, close it up and bake it, then liquor it with white wine, sugar and butter.

Punches were popular, made of rum, sugar and "sourings," the word for lemon, orange or lime juice or pineapple juice imported from the West Indies or Portugal in demi johns. A few recipes required both brandy and rum and also Madeira wine.

One elegant punch called for sugar, hot water, lemon juice and peel, spice, brandy, porter and Jamaica rum. Nutmeg was the spice most in demand. A far-out concoction called, "whistle-belly- vengeance," was made by simmering sour beer in a kettle, adding molasses for a sweetener and filling the kettle with bread crumbs, or the ominous - sounding "stone-wall, 1/2 rum and 1/2 cider.

In one of Ben Franklins rare attempts at verse, he provided a theme song entitled "A Drinking Song," it includes these stanzas:

Twass honest old Noah first planted the Vine,
And mended his Morals by drinking its Wine;
And justly the drinking of water decry'd,
For he knew that all Mankind, by drinking it dy'd.

From this Piece of History plainly we find
That Water's good neither for Body nor Mind;
That Virtue & Safety in Wine-bibbing's found
While all that drink Water deserve to be drown'd.

TYPICAL RECIPE

"Grandmother Brown's Election Cake"

A piece of butter, twice its weight of sugar, twice their weight of flour, eggs, spice of cinnamon and nutmeg. Raisins Malt yeast. Set to rise in warm place. Bake in thin loaves and glaze when hot with molasses.

HER FIRST CAKE

She measured out the butter with a very solemn air
The milk and sugar also,
And she took the greatest care,
To count the eggs exactly
And to add a little bit of baking powder,
Which you know beginners oft omit.
Then she stirred it all together
And she baked it full an hour
But she never quite forgave herself,
For leaving out the flour.

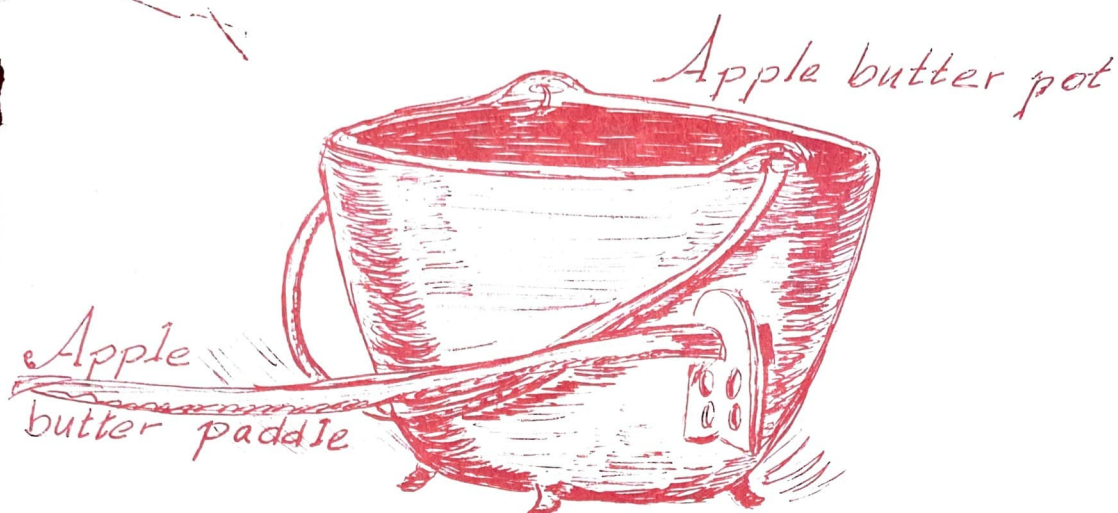


PEBBLE STEW

Have the water piping hot,
Put a pebble in the pot
Boil and boil and boil all day
Till the water boils away.
Next, stir in two quarts of cream,
Then, when it begins to steam
Drop in oysters one by one,
Cook them, 'till you think they're done.
Salt and pepper - butter too-
Will give flavor to the stew

P.S. The pebble should be put away --
To make a stew some other day.

Anon



Apple butter pot

Apple
butter paddle

Donna Addressi

MRS. CHILD'S ADVICE TO
THE EARLY AMERICAN HOUSEWIFE

"THE AMERICAN FRUGAL HOUSEWIFE"

Dedicated to those Who are not ashamed of Economy

By Mrs. Child

"A fat kitchen maketh a lean will".

1836 Boston

B. Franklin

"It has become necessary to change this word to the
AMERICAN Frugal Housewife, because the English word of
the same name is not adaptable to the wants of this Country."

"Do not let the beauty of this thing, or the cheapness of
that, tempt you to buy unnecessary articles. Nothing is cheap
that we do not want".

FOOD

"To keep HAM--Baste with 1 quart of molasses, rub in
2 oz. salt-petre and 1 quart common salt. Turn and rub
every day for six weeks; then hang in a chimney or smoke
house for four weeks."

"To keep BEEF--Boil 4 gallons of water 6 pounds coarse
salt, 8 oz. brown sugar, 1 pint molasses, 8 oz. salt. Put in
cold beef."

"PRESERVES--- Economical people will seldom use

OUR OLDEST RECIPES

preserves except for sickness. They are expensive and unhealthy to those who are well, Melt the sugar, skim it, throw in the barberries. When done soft, take them out and throw in others."

"Candles are improved if wicks are steeped in lime water and salt petre and dried. Flame will be clearer and tallow will not run.

New England rum, constantly used to wash the hair, keeps it very clean, free of dsease and promotes its growth. Brandy may strengthen the roots."

SIMPLE REMEDIES

A poultice of wheat or rye bran and vinegar, very soon takes down inflammation occasioned by a sprain.

Brown paper, wet is healing to a bruise.
A rind of pork bound on a wound, occasioned by a nail, needle or pin will prevent lock jaw.

If cut slightly while cooking, bind on salt; molasses equally good.

Black berries extremely useful in case of dysentery, Some times effected cure when a physician dispaired.

Tea made of colt-foot and flax seed, sweetened with honey is a cure for coughs. Consumption have been prevented by it. It should be drank when going to bed and does good at any time.

Catnip made into tea prevents fever.

Succory very valuable herb; tea sweetened with molasses good for piles, dyspepsy etc.

"There is no subject so much connected with individual happiness and National prosperity as the education of a daughter -- they should spend two to three years assisting mother in her duties, instructing brother and sister--caring for their clothes--not in dress and flattering balls and parties -- music and drawing are useless. Age needs a mindfull of piety and knowledge to live contently; not in the Alms House which is terrifying or disgraceful---Her conduct is the real standard of respectability."

Pottage 1615

Violet leaves (petals) Succory, Strawberry leaves, Spinage Borage (heliotrope and forget-me-nots), Marygold flowers, onions, and parsley, with oatmeal added to the kettle.

Flummery 1772

Cut sponge cake into thin slices. Line a deep dish. Make it moist with white wine; make a rich custard, using only the yolks of the eggs. When cool turn it into a dish, and cut the whites to a stiff froth and put on the top.

Mother's Fizzy Drink early nineteenth century

Boil for 5 mins. 2 oz. Tartaric Acid, 2 1/4 pounds of sugar, and 3 1/2 pts. water. When nearly cold, add 3 beaten egg whites, 1 oz. wintergreen, 1/2 cup flour, 1/2 cup water. Boil all together and keep in a cool place.

Into a glass 2/3 full of water, add 2 tbsp. of mixture and 1/4 tsp. baking soda and serve as cold as possible.
N. B. Baking soda makes it fizzi!



Donna Adlesst

lasty stamp

MRS. FRANK SCHNEIDER'S COLONIAL HINTS FOR PRESERVING FINE FURNITURE

Best Furniture Polish

Equal parts of:

Boiled linseed oil (commercially prepared)

Turpentine

White vinegar

Shake well in bottle or jar, and always shake well before using.

Apply with soft cloth, and wipe completely dry with another soft dry cloth.

Dust cloths may be treated by sprinkling with a bit of the polish. Store cloths in covered can until ready for use. Solution will penetrate entire cloth, and will be good for dusting between polishings.

This is used on fine old furniture in many museums.



My-Own Dust Cloths

In a 2-Qt. jar mix
1 qt. soapy water
2 tsp. turpentine

Put in a few old, soft, lint free cloths, screw lid on tight, and let soak overnight. Wring out cloths and hang up to dry. When soiled, may be washed and treated again.

These dust cloths will pick up every bit of dust and leave furniture nice and shiny.