



VOLUME XXV, NUMBER 2 SPRING 2009

Repast

Quarterly Publication of the Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor

CEREAL INFRACTIONS

*Soggy Episodes
in the Rise of the
All-American Breakfast*

IT'S NOT THE CEREAL
THAT CAUSES TOOTH
DECAY. IT'S THE SUGAR.



M. Doeffinger

Graphics and Poems in This Issue

The cartoons on pages 1 and 16 of this issue were created by *Repast* subscriber Mark Doeffinger of Plymouth, MI. A landscape gardener during the warmer months, Mark has been drawing cartoons during Winter for many years. He likes to use the methods of commercial advertising to look at everyday objects and events from a humorous perspective. A book of his cartoons, *Coupon Clippers* (Plymouth, MI: Ross Street Press, 1985; \$4.95 paper), can be purchased on the Internet. Mark also maintains a web-log of his latest work at <http://www.thelitestuffcartoons.com>.

In line with the theme of this issue, the other graphics are presented as “exhibits” at a mock court trial. The Shredded Wheat images on pages 5 and 9 are from publications in the Culinary Archives at the University of Michigan Clements Library. We’re grateful to docents Kathy Schafer and John Thomson for selecting and scanning them.

The poems on pages 8, 10, and 16 are by another Clements docent, Marvin A. Brandwin, from his forthcoming book, *A Smorgasbord of Verse: Easy to Digest Food Poems* (Ann Arbor, MI: Charing Cross Press, 2009). Dr. Brandwin, an emeritus psychology professor in the Dept. of Psychiatry at the Univ. of Michigan Health System, gave a presentation about “Poetry and Food” to CHAA in January 2002, and read many of his food poems there. ■

Repast

ISSN 1552-8863

Published quarterly by the
Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor (CHAA)

<http://www.culinaryhistoriansann Arbor.org>

An archive is available at <http://www.aadl.org/cooks/repast>

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Laura Gillis is Our New Program Chair

Members of the Culinary Historians have been delighted to learn recently that Laura Gillis is to become Program Chair for the group, succeeding Julie Lewis in that post. Laura is a great choice to be in charge of programming for our organization.

First, our heartfelt thanks go to Julie, who has done yeoman service for CHAA in this capacity (as in several others) for so many years, arranging a scintillating variety of programs. Julie commented, “I have enjoyed my tenure a lot, learned much, and met so many interesting people and made many new friends. Thanks to all of you! I hope you will offer Laura the same kind of great support you have given me over the years.”

We also thank Laura for volunteering to take on this important function, and we welcome her aboard knowing that she will continue with the same spirit of dedication that Julie has established. Laura told us, “After consideration, I decided this position is something I’d love to do. I think it will be a wonderful opportunity to meet interesting people and make a contribution to the organization I care about.” All of us should be ready to help by forwarding program ideas and contact information to Laura, and by responding generously to her requests for assistance.

Laura Green Gillis has been a member of CHAA and a docent in the Culinary Archive at the Clements Library for three years. She is currently employed as an Event Planner with Zingerman’s Catering & Events. Laura is interested in culinary history, cultural foodways, reading cookbooks, current food trends, and the development of the food scene in Michigan; readers will recall her article, “Michigan Producers of Handcrafted Cheese” (*Repast* Fall 2006).

Laura grew up in the Lansing area, graduated from Michigan State University, and did some graduate work in the Popular Cultural Studies program at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. For 12 years she was employed with nonprofit groups and government agencies in the New York and Washington, D.C. areas before moving back to Michigan. She then completed the culinary arts program at Oakland Community College’s Orchard Ridge campus. Laura and her husband Dan Gillis live in Salem Township. ■

KELLOGG CO. VS. NATIONAL BISCUIT CO.



HENRY PERKY, THE TRUE INVENTOR OF SHREDDED WHEAT

by David C. Burns

David Coulon Burns is a management consultant who lives in Louisville, CO. He was born and raised in Dayton, OH, attended Rice University in Houston, TX, and worked for 13 years at the Ohio State University Hospitals and Clinics before coming to Colorado. Mr. Burns has carried out historical and genealogical research in his spare time for many years. He was the originator of the Wikipedia article on Henry Perky, and has contributed to many other articles there, including those on the Dayton industrialists John H. Patterson, Edward A. Deeds, and Charles F. Kettering.

Henry Perky, best known today as the founder of the Shredded Wheat Company, was an Ohio-born lawyer, businessman, promoter, and inventor. Eventually, decades after he passed away, there was a legal battle over the rights to manufacture Shredded Wheat, and the case was decided by the Supreme Court in 1938.

I came to discover Henry Perky because I was doing research on Edward Deeds, an industrialist of note whose home was near mine when I was growing up in Dayton, Ohio; we used to play on some of his fallow farmland. It was Deeds whom Perky hired in 1901 to build the famous Shredded Wheat factory at Niagara Falls, New York, a plant that came to be known as the Palace of Light. Deeds also became a director of Perky's National Food Company. He had another food connection in that he organized the General Sugar Company in Cuba in the 1920's and was its chairman until 1946.

I was trying to understand how Perky had ever come into contact with Deeds, and eventually I concluded that it was through John H. Patterson, founding chairman of the National Cash Register Company in Dayton, where Deeds also worked. Patterson and Perky were both members of an organization of social welfare industrialists who met periodically to discuss issues and ideas. Patterson was one of the earliest social-conscience industrialists. Starting in the 1880's and 1890's, a period when much of industry was characterized by sweatshops, his factory buildings in Dayton were among the first to be built with large win-



**"Exhibit A".
Photo of
Henry Perky**

From Anonymous, *The Worcester of Eighteen Hundred and Ninety-Eight: Fifty Years a City: A Graphic Presentation of its Institutions, Industries and Leaders* (Worcester, MA: F. S. Blanchard & Co., 1899)

dows to let in light and that could be opened to control temperature. Along with many other innovations, he provided inexpensive lunches for his employees as well as onsite health care. In addition, he hired the Olmsteds to landscape his factory grounds and design parks for the City of Dayton. Many of these ideas were later used at the Palace of Light.

It was only as I was looking at this period of Deeds's life that I discovered that I had another "connection" to Perky—he was living in Denver, Colorado when he had the idea for shredded wheat. Although, like Perky, I was born in Ohio, I now live in Louisville, a suburb of Denver/Boulder.

From Railroad Attorney to Entrepreneur

Henry Drushel Perky was born in Holmes County, OH on December 7, 1843. He studied law and was admitted to the bar in Nebraska, and later served in the Nebraska State Senate in the 1870's. In 1880, for reasons due to his health, Perky and his wife Susanna moved to Denver, CO where he became an attorney for the Union Pacific Railroad.

Several years later Perky was hired by Byron A. Atkinson, a Boston furniture dealer. Atkinson had acquired a firm that had gone bankrupt attempting to manufacture and sell cylindrical steel railroad passenger cars. Perky, who had quite a reputation for making money during times that ruined other businessmen, was able to find financial backing and in late 1888 erected a factory just east of St. Joseph, MO to manufacture the cylindrical railway cars. Unfortunately, a fire the next year destroyed the facility. Perky, not one to be easily discouraged, tried to attract interest in the railcars by taking one on a transcontinental tour. The tour included a showing at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

continued on next page

SHREDDED WHEAT *continued from page 3*

At the 1893 fair, Perky also presented his newly-built machine for making what he called “little whole wheat mattresses”, today known worldwide as shredded wheat. Sometime in the early 1890’s, at a Nebraska hotel, Perky—who suffered from heartburn—had encountered a man similarly afflicted, who was eating boiled wheat with cream. The idea had cooked for a while in Perky’s mind, and in 1892 he had taken his idea of a product made of boiled wheat to Watertown, NY, where his friend William H. Ford, a machinist by trade, helped Perky build the device that he had conceived.

Perky’s original intention was to sell these shredding machines for home use, not the biscuits made by them. He and Ford were granted a patent for their “Machine for the Preparation of Cereals for Food” (U.S. Patent No. 502,378, August 1, 1893), the first of dozens of patents that Perky would eventually receive in connection with the production of shredded wheat.

In Denver, Perky founded the Cereal Machine Company and began distributing the shredded-wheat biscuits from a horse-drawn wagon in an attempt to popularize the idea. But the biscuits proved more popular than the machines themselves, so Perky moved East and opened his first bakery in Boston and then in Worcester, MA in 1895, retaining the name of the Cereal Machine Company, and adding the name of the Shredded Wheat Company.

The First Ready-to-eat Cereal Empire

Whether he developed his ideas on nutrition before the machine or after, Perky was a food faddist who believed the fundamental issue was how to nourish a man so that his condition would be natural. Although John Harvey Kellogg and Charles William Post are better known, Perky was a pioneer of the “cookless breakfast food”, and it was he who first mass-produced and nationally distributed ready-to-eat cereal. By 1898, Shredded Wheat was being sold all over North and South America and Europe.

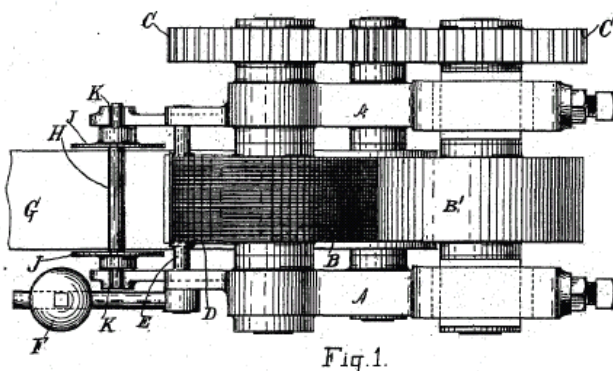
Perky was attracted to Niagara Falls by the idea of inexpensive electrical power for baking, and the natural draw of a popular tourist attraction. In 1901, he hired Edward A. Deeds, an electrical engineer at the National Cash Register Co., to build a new Shredded Wheat plant fronting the Niagara River on the New York side. Deeds also became a director of the National Food Company, the new name Perky had adopted for his enterprises that produced Shredded Wheat and related products, such as Triscuits crackers. The Niagara factory itself was called “The Palace of Light”, and was white-tiled, air-conditioned, well-lit with floor-to-ceiling windows, and equipped with showers, lunchrooms (a free lunch for women—men had to pay 10¢), and auditoriums for the

(No Model.)

H. D. PERKY & W. H. FORD.
MACHINE FOR THE PREPARATION OF CEREALS FOR FOOD.

No. 502,378.

Patented Aug. 1, 1893.



“EXHIBIT B”. Above is one of the drawings submitted by Perky and Ford for their original 1893 patent. The design is based on a pair of rollers, the one shown on the left having a set of circumferential grooves. Whole wheat that has been boiled and steeped until soft, then partially dried, can be fed between the turning rollers, pressing it into the grooves. A comb-like attachment then scrapes the wheat out of the grooves, forming a “web” of thin strands of wheat. Several of these moist webs of shredded wheat can be stacked together, then crimped at regular intervals to produce individual “pillows”. These are then baked until their moisture content decreases to 5%. Because the grain undergoes two cooking stages (boiling and baking), the pillows qualify as “biscuits”, although they were also called “breads”.

employees. It even had a roof garden with a view of the Falls. A representation of the factory appeared on the Shredded Wheat boxes for decades.

To mark the opening of the factory, Perky invited a large number of notables to a special luncheon. Canadian author Pierre Berton describes the bill of fare: “...a Shredded Wheat drink, Shredded Wheat biscuit toast, roast turkey stuffed with Shredded Wheat, and Shredded Wheat ice cream” (Pierre Berton, *Niagara: A History of the Falls*. Toronto: Anchor Canada, 2002).

In 1902, Perky retired from the company and disposed of his interest in it. He published a book on nutrition and oral hygiene, *Wisdom vs. Foolishness*, that went through at least ten editions. Having made his fortune, the following year Perky arrived in Glencoe, Maryland and began purchasing large tracts of land in the region. A few years earlier, he had established in Worcester, Mass. the Oread Institute of Domestic Sciences, a boarding school for young women. His dream now was to build in Maryland a new branch of the Institute, which would offer for young men an innovative curriculum of scientific farming and domestic science subjects, free of tuition in exchange for farm labor. The main building was completed, elaborate brochures were printed, a few students had enrolled, and the plans for its dedication were in place. But on June 29, 1906, just days before the grand opening, Perky died at the farm, and the

school never opened. An obituary stated that he had been ill for a long time and that a fall from a horse a month earlier had hastened his death ("Henry D. Perky Dead— He was an Advocate of Vegetarianism— End Hastened by Fall", *New York Times*, June 30, 1906, p. 7).

In 1908, the firm again took the name of the Shredded Wheat Company, and another factory was built in Niagara Falls, although the original "Palace of Light" was not shut down until 1954. Across the river, another plant had been added in Niagara Falls, Ontario in 1904, known as the Canadian Shredded Wheat Company. By 1915 the Pacific Coast Shredded Wheat Company had been added in Oakland, California, and by 1926, a factory in England, outside London in Welwyn Garden City, had joined the family.

The Battle over Shredded Wheat

In December 1928, the Shredded Wheat Company was sold to the National Biscuit Company. Almost immediately the latter commenced legal action against the sale of shredded wheat made by the Kellogg Co., which had introduced its own version of the product in the early 1920's. National Biscuit argued that it had the exclusive right to manufacture shredded wheat biscuits in a pillow-shaped form, and also exclusive right to the trademark "Shredded Wheat".

continued on page 9



"EXHIBIT C". *The Vital Question Cook Book*, published by Henry Perky's Natural Food Co., promoted dozens of creative recipes for serving Shredded Wheat. Over 1.5 million copies had been distributed at grocery stores by 1902.

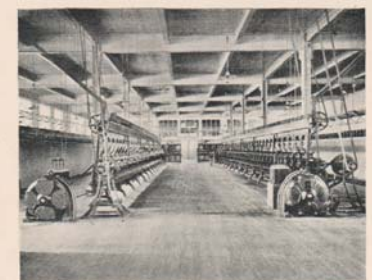
Above, one of the 147 pages of the Seventh Edition (1899) shows drawings of Shredded Wheat Biscuit—Plain, Shredded Wheat Fish Chops, Mushrooms in Shredded Wheat Biscuit Baskets, Jellied Apple Sandwich, Shredded Wheat Fig Pie, and Shredded Wheat Fish Balls.

The cover (left) of the 1908 edition and (right) an inner page that shows views inside the Niagara Falls plant, "The Home of Shredded Wheat": Cooking Room, Shredding Machines, and Baking Ovens.

Images courtesy of the Janice Bluestein Longone Culinary Archive, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.



COOKING ROOM



SHREDDING MACHINES



BAKING OVENS

KELLOGG VS. SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH



THE EXCOMMUNICATION OF THE KELLOGGS

by Randy K. Schwartz

Most *cerealists* know that the Kellogg brothers were leading members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and played the single greatest role in bringing that faith to the attention of the world. Fewer people know that in 1907, after a bitter dispute with other Church leaders, the Kelloggs were expelled from the Adventist flock.

The Church was shaken by this schism to such an extent that, arguably, it never truly recovered. Once the Kellogg brothers were expelled, officials adopted a new policy insisting that all members accept founder Ellen G. White's testimonials as divinely inspired, a test that would have been inconceivable in earlier years. Doubting the wisdom of this move, many lay and clergy members left the fold. They included some leading physicians, and the Church lost much of the medical and health-reform establishment that it had carefully built up.

How was it that the Adventist Church attracted the young Kelloggs and other zealous advocates of healthy eating? And what led to their eventual falling-out?

Battle Creek as a Health and Diet Mecca

In Adventist doctrine, nutrition and health are highly correlated with morality. Their reform was an integral part of Church activity from the earliest years. When Ellen White and her husband James began to record her prophetic daytime "visions" and to formally organize the group in Battle Creek, Michigan in the early 1860's, they laid down the principle of abstaining from certain practices that impair man's health and excite his animal passions with a "perverted appetite". The list of sinful items included alcohol and tobacco, licit and illicit drugs, coffee and tea, "flesh-meats", eggs, butter, cheese, spices, together with all excessively salty, sugary, or rich foods, and of course masturbation, sex, and skimpy clothes.

To put their health reform teachings into practice and evangelize for their cause, the Church established a sanitarium at Battle Creek in 1866. The Western Health Reform Institute, in later years often referred to as "the San", was set up as a for-profit stock corporation. It floun-

dered until 1876 when its management was turned over to John Harvey Kellogg, an energetic young surgeon whom the Whites had put through medical school and groomed for this job.

J. H. Kellogg and his 15 full- or half-siblings had been raised in a family that followed the Christian adventist teachings of Ellen White and of William Miller before her. Dr. Kellogg and his wife Ella, whom he married in 1879, would adhere closely to their religious beliefs. For instance, they remained celibate and slept in different bedrooms their whole lives. In addition, they practiced what they preached about health reform, and both of them worked in the San's test kitchens to develop an impressive array of new vegetarian products.

Boasting techniques that sounded like cutting-edge science, Dr. Kellogg was able to draw large numbers of customers to his health retreat, eventually including business tycoons and other notables and celebrities. The patients accepted for treatment were mostly those suffering from either "dyspepsia" or "neurasthenia". Kellogg maintained that he could cure them without drugs or other harsh interventions, but instead with "Nature's simple restorative measures". In practice, this amounted to austere vegetarian meals combined with a regimen of frequent bowel movements, physical exercise, massage therapy, and "hydrotherapy". This last involved a regimen of baths and showers variously in hot water, cold water, mineral water, steam, moist compresses or salt packs, artificial light, electrical stimulation, plus high-powered douches and enemas.

Patients staying at the San were fed mostly low-calorie vegetarian fare that featured raw and cooked fruits and vegetables, along with such staples as Graham crackers and breads, peanut butter, acidophilus milk, yogurt, tofu, sterilized bran, and whole-grain meal. This meal was pot-boiled and dished up as gruel, and also moistened and baked into coarse crackers and cereals. As Kellogg famously advised, "Eat what the monkey eats— simple food and not too much of it." He argued in one of his 50-odd books that "The decline of a nation commences when gourmandizing begins."

Dr. Kellogg was perhaps the first American to try to place vegetarianism on a foundation that was scientific, not just religious or philosophical. According to Sanitarium promotional literature, "The joy of eating at Battle Creek is that every meal is a prescription."

In 1895, breakfast cereals were spun off as an affiliated business, selling to former patients by mail-order. It was called the Sanitas Nut Food Company and was headed by the doctor's more market-oriented younger brother, Will Keith Kellogg. Granose Flakes, a toasted but chewy wheat cereal that was successfully field-tested

earlier that year at a meeting of Church officials in Battle Creek, went on to rack up over 56 tons of commercial sales in its first year. Granola, an older malted-grains cereal from Kellogg that would be the prototype for Post Grape-Nuts, was already selling at a rate of well over 100 tons per year. Interestingly, these cereals were intended to be eaten dry. Drenching the flakes or the gravel-like Granola pellets in milk or cream would have directly violated Adventist health principles.

The Battle Creek Sanitarium evolved into a massive institution. There was the main building with six stories and two wings; a charity hospital; an annex; about 20 guest cottages; a nearby lake resort; and 400 acres of farms and orchards. The complex also housed a printing press, a Nursing School, a School for Medical Missionaries, and a School of Domestic Economy. On any given day, several hundred staff members attended to the needs of roughly 3,000 patients and visitors. The San was revered and envied as the leading health destination in America, and the Church used it as a model in establishing other sanitariums across the U.S. and overseas. Dr. Kellogg not only directed the complex at Battle Creek, but oversaw all Adventist activities related to health reform and the temperance movement, which together involved the plurality of Church employees.

Noises at the Breakfast Table

Ironically, the outstanding success of the Battle Creek Sanitarium and its spin-off cereal business helped put the Kellogg brothers on a collision course with the Adventist Church.

After the San's original corporate charter expired in 1897, Dr. Kellogg "pulled a fast one" by having it reorganized as a nonsectarian, nonprofit group called the Michigan Sanitarium and Benevolent Association. To persuade the stockholders, who were overwhelmingly Church members, to vote in favor of this move, he claimed that it would bring significant tax advantages. As a result of their vote, the Sanitarium became an independent entity and was no longer owned by the Adventist Church. Dr. Kellogg, who was a member of the Church's 25-person Executive Committee, pointedly told a reporter early in 1903 that the San had "no connection to the Seventh-day Adventist denomination as such." Kellogg later admitted privately that tensions had been growing over a period of many years, and he was preparing for the possibility of his eventual separation from the Adventists.

At the same time, John's brother Will Kellogg was working hard to bring the San-inspired food products to a mass market. In this, he adopted some of the successful techniques used for Postum and Grape-Nuts by C. W. Post, a Texas businessman who'd been converted to the health-foods cause as a patient at the San. In 1906, Will founded



"EXHIBIT D". When W. K. Kellogg placed this advertisement from his new Battle Creek Toasted Corn Flake Co. in the *Ladies Home Journal* in July 1906, he was astonished by the huge increase in business it produced. Within months, he was expelled from the Seventh-day Adventist Church, whose principles had inspired the flakes' invention.

the Battle Creek Toasted Corn Flake Co. (renamed the Kellogg Co. in 1925) with the goal of merchandising in stores rather than by mail. Brazenly, he added malt, salt, and—heaven forbid!—white cane sugar to the cereal ingredients. His introduction of a waxed-paper wrapping to inhibit rancidity made it easier to sell the corn flakes coast to coast. Sales would skyrocket, and two-thirds of the firm's profits were plowed back into advertising. Within five years, over 100 rival brands of corn flakes were being produced in Battle Creek alone.

The relationship between the Kellogg brothers and the Church officials grouped most closely around founder Ellen White did *not* sweeten—it soured. In their view, the Kelloggs were turning the Battle Creek sanitarium from a spiritual project into a secular medical and commercial endeavor. Trying to establish the point that the San was not the center of Adventist activities, Church officials relocated their Battle Creek College to Berrien Springs, Michigan in 1901, and their main headquarters to Takoma Park, Maryland in 1903.

continued on next page

THE KELLOGGS *continued from page 7*

The Relationship Snaps (and Crackles and Pops)

Things finally came to a head in 1907. The first to be cut loose was Will Kellogg, the younger of the two brothers. In the eyes of other Church members, he had become wholly engrossed in the very unholy enterprise of manufacturing and marketing mass-appeal breakfast cereals. He, and effectively his wife and children, were “disfellowshipped”, or expelled, from the Battle Creek Tabernacle of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

That same year, Adventist physician Charles E. Stewart published a letter he’d sent to founder Ellen White, in which he raised serious questions about her divine revelations and essentially labeled them a fraud. Since Dr. Stewart was a close associate of Dr. Kellogg at the San, Church elders launched an urgent inquest into Kellogg’s own attitudes toward Sister White and the Church. Dr. Kellogg didn’t help his cause when, hearing of the inquest, he spoke out saying, “I do not believe in Mrs. White’s infallibility, and never did.” On Nov. 10, 1907, he was expelled by the unanimous vote of roughly 350 assembled members of the Battle Creek Tabernacle.

Heretical statements such as the one just mentioned were the most widely publicized factor in the Church’s expulsion of J. H. Kellogg. Many church elders accused the doctor of placing biology, medicine, and humanitarian work on a higher pedestal than preparing for God’s salvation and the Second Coming of Christ. They labeled as “pantheism” his belief that God is not above nature, but within nature, active in every living thing. This was most clearly expounded in his book *The Living Temple* (1903).

However, Adventist scholar and administrator Richard Schwarz concluded that the schism culminating in Dr. Kellogg’s expulsion from the Church went deeper, with religious dogma only the tip of the iceberg. The causes of the break were “many and varied”, Schwarz wrote, and mostly hidden below the surface of things. He documented three main factors:

- A cultural gap, and resulting personality conflicts, separated the highly educated and domineering Dr. Kellogg and other Church officials who, while they had little formal education, believed they had a duty to supervise the Church’s medical mission.
- There were repeated clashes over where to reinvest the money gained from various Kellogg-supervised enterprises (patient care, publishing, and health-food production), most acutely when the Sanitarium had to be rebuilt following a disastrous fire in 1902.
- Dr. Kellogg was disgusted at how members of the Adventist Church routinely flouted Church doctrine concerning healthful living.

RICE KRISPIES

I’m hesitant to admit the truth
About my cereal eating habit.
From the time of early youth
When I saw a Rice Krispies box I’d grab it.
As I poured the milk I much enjoyed
To hear them say “snap, crackle, pop”.
But lately it seems I get annoyed
And wish those repeated sounds would stop.
Their taste is good and their shape attractive
But they should be quiet if they’re able.
I think they’re rude to be so hyperactive
And make such noises at the breakfast table.

— Marvin Brandwin

The last of these factors, which Schwarz called “of central importance”, is perhaps the most interesting to food historians because it shows the difficulties faced by early American advocates of dietary reform.

Junk-Food Junkies in the Pulpit

Most Adventist believers found it relatively easy to keep away from alcohol and tobacco. But when it came to coffee, tea, and especially meat, there was notable backsliding from the 1870’s onward. By 1900, Schwarz noted, “vegetarianism was more the exception than the rule in Adventist households.” Dr. Kellogg later recalled that in those years, he attended many Adventist Summer-camp meetings across the country where not only coffee and tea but “whole codfish, large slabs of halibut, smoked herring, dried beef and Bologna sausage” were made available in the provision tents.

Even among the Adventist clergy and bureaucracy, resistance to vegetarian eating prevailed. Many ministers refused to preach Church doctrine about the sinfulness of flesh foods. Uriah Smith, respected editor of the leading Adventist periodical, was known to relish a bowl of oyster soup from time to time with the remark, “God did not make oysters so good if He did not mean for them to be eaten.” Meat dishes appeared routinely at banquets at the biennial Adventist General Conference of top officials. Kellogg was appalled when high Church leaders attending meetings in Battle Creek would show up at the San dining room and ask to be served chicken or steak. (It turns out, however, that the San maintained a “speak-easy” called The Red Onion, which quietly dispensed steak, onions, and beer to patients who lapsed from the approved diet.)

It was almost common knowledge that founder Ellen White herself, whose 1863 vision had initiated the Adventist campaign for health reform and vegetarian

living, struggled throughout these years to practice what she'd preached in that regard. For example, she was observed eating duck on a vacation in the Rockies in 1873, and she celebrated her return from a trip to Europe in 1887 with "a large baked fish". Kellogg further recounted an incident at a camp meeting where White sent one of her sons to a butcher's wagon, which regularly visited the grounds, to fetch a fresh chicken to be cooked for their Sabbath supper.

In fairness, the palatability (or not) of the experimental vegetarian cookery of the day probably influenced the degree of adherence by the faithful. In a personal letter from 1884, White confessed that she often ate meat during her frequent visits to an Adventist sanitarium near St. Helena, just north of San Francisco, because the cook there wasn't skilled in preparing wholesome meatless dishes.

The Last Battle of Battle Creek

The break between John Harvey Kellogg and the Adventist Church actually wound up in court decades later, in the last year of the doctor's life. During the Great Depression the San had fallen on hard times, and in 1942 Dr. Kellogg sold its main building to the U.S. Government, with plans to pay off his debts and to re-open on a more modest scale. However, the Church claimed that the proceeds of the sale were rightfully its own; it wanted to use them to re-open a sanitarium of its own. A lawsuit resulted, "Battle Creek Sanitarium and Benevolent Association and John H. Kellogg vs. General Conference Corporation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church".

In this dispute, cereal tycoon Will Keith Kellogg actually assisted the Church, which he judged was more capable of managing a large facility than was his nonagenarian older brother. It would be the last in a long series of quarrels between the two; the doctor died before the case could be adjudicated. Eventually, in 1943, there was a court-approved settlement whereby the Church was awarded about two-thirds of the disputed assets. ■

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SHREDDED WHEAT *continued from page 5*

The case, which wound up in the U.S. Supreme Court (Kellogg Co. vs. National Biscuit Co., 305 U.S. 111, 1938), is apparently still studied in some law school courses. The justices decided, 7-2, in favor of the defendant, Kellogg. In an opinion written by Assoc. Justice Louis Brandeis, the court majority found that any exclusive right to make the pillow-shaped biscuits or to use the name "Shredded Wheat" had ceased with the expiration of Perky's original patents of 1893-5, and that in any case the term "shredded wheat" had become generic and was therefore no longer trademarkable. Brandeis also noted that Kellogg's version of the biscuit had a form "somewhat like" the original version, but its "manufacture was different, the wheat being reduced to a dough before being pressed into shreds."

Interestingly, Perky's son Scott Henry Perky invented a shredded wheat product called Muffets in 1920, which was marketed by his company Toasticks. Muffets were later merchandised by the Quaker Oats Company, billed as "the round shredded wheat". Scott Perky was principally a writer, and his books included a biography of his father.

In 1993, the centennial year of Perky's original patent, RJR Nabisco sold Shredded Wheat to Post, together with its other cereal brands. ■



"EXHIBIT E". A page from the promotional book *Health in Every Shred* (1910 edition) shows the Niagara Falls plant as the centerpiece among the company's "five beautiful, sunlit factories"—over a decade before Kellogg began selling shredded wheat. Courtesy of J. B. Longone Culinary Archive, Clements Library, University of Michigan.

QUAKER OATS VS. HISTORICAL AUTHENTICITY



WHEN THE QUAKER REPUTATION TOOK ITS LUMPS

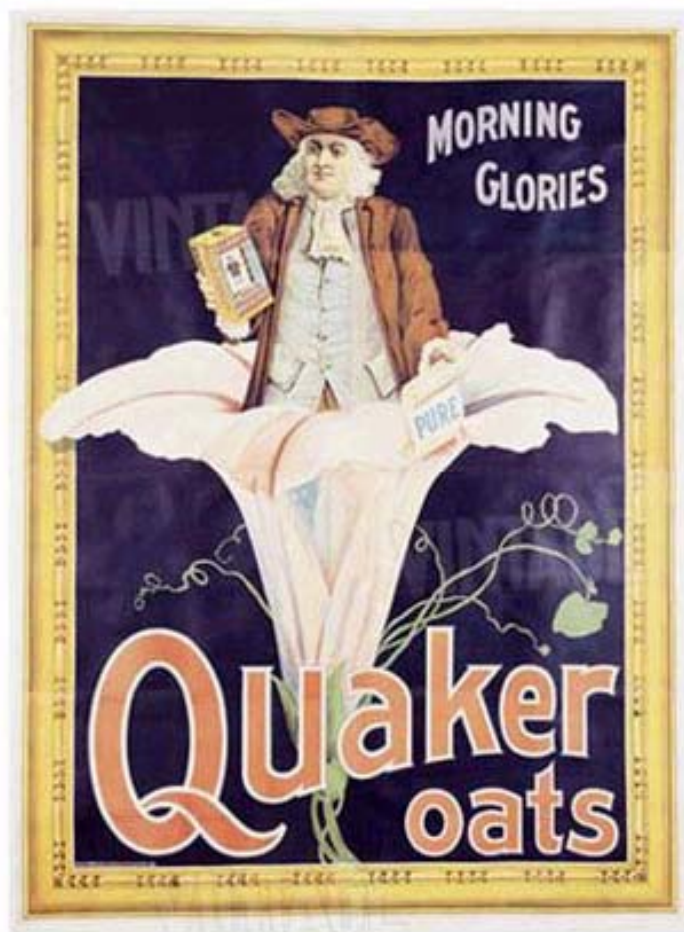
by Randy K. Schwartz

The famous oatmeal with the Quaker man on the package was the first breakfast cereal to be blessed with a registered trademark from the U.S. Patent Office. But surprisingly, the oatmeal itself has never had the slightest connection with real Quakers. In fact, Quaker elders might turn in their graves if they knew what's been done in their name!

William Heston and Henry D. Seymour were the owners of a steam-powered oat mill in Ravenna, OH. Neither one was a Quaker, but they contrived the name Quaker Mill Co. because it sounded good, suggesting purity and integrity. On August 17, 1877, they were granted their trademark: "the figure of a man in Quaker garb". They ground their oats fine, but they failed to grind out a profit, and soon sold the mill along with its trademarks and patents. The buyer, Warren Corning, was a grain distiller—that poor Quaker man's picture was slapped on all his bottles of whiskey!

In 1881, the business was acquired by Henry Parsons Crowell, a "robber baron" in the same mold as fellow Cleveland John D. Rockefeller. Harry Crowell, an evangelical Christian, would become President of the Moody Bible Institute and widely known as "the Godly Autocrat". Step by step over the course of two decades, he colluded with rivals to form an oat-milling monopoly, making sure that he emerged at the helm. In 1901, he consolidated the trust under the name Quaker Oats Company.

Besides being adept at gobbling up smaller competitors, Crowell was a promotional genius. His goal, he explained once, was "to create a demand for cereals where none existed." The Quaker man's face was plastered everywhere in America, from big-city streetcars and illuminated billboards to metal signs hung on farm fences. Crowell also launched the first national magazine ad campaign for a breakfast cereal (1882). He packaged his canisters of oatmeal with an ever-changing series of giveaways and coupons, and even held cooking schools inside grocery stores.



"EXHIBIT F". This 1920 advertisement exploits a Quaker likeness to suggest that the cereal is as pure as a morning glory.

No technique was discarded merely because it went too far. Quaker ads with outlandish claims were cleverly disguised as actual news stories and run in papers. For an 1891 promotional whistle-stop tour from Iowa to Oregon, the company hired five fat men to dress up in "Quaker" costumes and jump down from atop the railroad cars at each stop, handing out free boxes of oatmeal. When the White Cliffs of Dover were defaced with the words "Quaker Oats", the act was condemned by the British Parliament.

Eventually, the real Quakers—the Religious Society of Friends—tried to get the U.S. Congress to outlaw the

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OATMEAL

The oatmeal is hot and cooked well because
I took special care to see it was,
For cereal that is cold and lumpy
Makes you feel so gosh darn grumpy.

— Marvin Brandwin

KIDS' PESTER-POWER VS. MOMS OF NORTH AMERICA



THE "BIG INCH" YUKON LAND PREMIUM

by Albert Rush

Bert Rush is National Counsel for the First American Title Insurance Company in Santa Ana, CA. He wrote the following posting in 2002 for LandSakes, the company's online land-title news service. It is reprinted here with his permission. Bert thanks in-house counsel Richard Hanesiak (Mississauga, ONT) for assistance with the original research.

If you're old enough to remember Sergeant Preston, or breakfast cereal "shot from guns", maybe you also remember the Quaker Oats Yukon land giveaway of 1955.

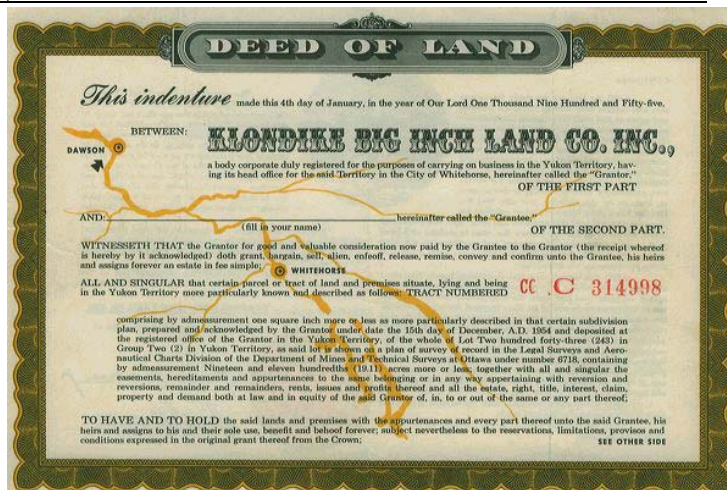
It started in October 1954, with Quaker Oats marketing execs looking for a gimmick to promote their "Puffed Rice" and "Puffed Wheat" cereal products. At the time, Quaker Oats sponsored a radio show for the younger set, "Sergeant Preston of the Yukon", that was scheduled to move to television in the Fall of 1955. So they wanted an ad campaign to feature Sergeant Preston and hype the new TV series.

Their idea man was Bruce Baker, a Chicago advertising exec, who— one sleepless night— hit on the idea of giving away square-inch lots of land in "Sergeant Preston's Yukon", by putting deeds in specially-marked boxes of Quaker Oats cereals.

The idea was not bad. At the time, cereal makers marketed to kids by giving away trading cards, whistles and plastic toys— some items costing as much as 5 cents per unit. Baker thought he could give away deeds for much less.

But the cereal maker's Chicago headquarters (and especially their attorneys) hated the idea. They pointed out that, even in the hinterlands of western Canada, the only way to create legal lots would be to prepare a survey map, which (if it included separate lot numbers) would probably be larger than the land itself. Worse, the deeds would have to be registered in the local Torrens system— requiring payment of prohibitive fees.

Undaunted, Baker and two other men (one of them a Quaker Oats ad executive) chartered a plane and flew to the Yukon.



"EXHIBIT G". One of the Quaker Oats "Big Inch" land deeds.

Landing in Whitehorse, the three Americans introduced themselves to local attorney George Van Roggen. Van Roggen listened, and found himself "entertained" by the ad men's antics. But for Van Roggen, the question was whether, in Canada, one could give away deeds that wouldn't or couldn't be individually registered in the land records system. He gave the opinion that "you could, that they'd be legal."

Buoyed by this advice, Baker quickly got approval from Quaker Oats to go ahead. In the meantime, Van Roggen found 19.11 acres of government land, located seven miles up the Yukon River from Dawson, that could be purchased for \$1,000.

On October 7, the three Americans were driven to Dawson, where they met up with Constable Paul LeCocq— a real, live Royal Canadian Mountie, who had a dog named "Yukon King" (as did the fictional Sergeant Preston). Matter of fact, fan mail received locally for "Sergeant Preston" was delivered to LeCocq.

Constable LeCocq took the three Americans, in their Brooks Brothers suits, in an open skiff up the Yukon River to the 19-acre parcel. One of the Americans, John Baker (who was a lawyer, and the brother of ad man Bruce Baker), recalled that the weather was frigid, "several degrees below zero", and the river was "a forbidding sight with ice cakes zooming by." Here's how John described the 19 acres in his journal: "Fairly level with a beach of stones about 100 feet wide; quite thick with jackpine and spruce, poplar and birch."

When the party returned to Dawson they were tired, cold and wet. Bruce Baker's feet were badly frostbitten. Quaker Oats bought the land.

Later, John Baker and George Van Roggen drew up the deed language. The Grantor would be a specially-

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WHO REALLY CREATED “BIG INCH”?

by Norine Smyth

Ms. Norine Smyth of Chicago sent us the e-mail message below when she heard that Repast would be covering the story about the Big Inch Campaign.

Hello. My name is Norine Smyth, and I am the daughter of Robert Smyth, the creator of the Big Inch Campaign. Bobby died on May 7, 2008.

Two separate stories aired on National Public Radio about this Big Inch Campaign soon after my father died.

Here is a link to “Tiny Yukon Land Deeds Prompt New Interest”, an interview that aired on NPR’s program “All Things Considered” on May 29, 2008: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=90958140>.

And, here is a link to “Cereal Thriller”, a Canadian documentary film on the Big Inch campaign: http://www.telefilm.gc.ca/data/production/prod_4479.asp?lang=en&cat=tv&g=doc&y=2006. David McDonald, the filmmaker, took the time to investigate and discover who actually did create Big Inch— Bobby Smyth— and refute the false claim of ownership made by my father’s boss at the time, Bruce Baker.

During the Big Inch campaign, my dad and Bruce Baker both worked at Wherry, Baker and Tilden, a firm in Chicago that would later be bought out by Compton Advertising. Baker was a very good business executive, and my father, who was 10 years his junior, worked for him as a copywriter and a ‘creative’. My father was a very talented, very funny, youthful, warm and generous person who was loved by everyone who knew him. He had a first-rate education and was one of those rare people who just oozed creativity in every aspect of his life. He was only 32 years old when he created this campaign, which is said to be the most successful sales campaign of all time.

Some months before the creation of Big Inch, my Dad had read an article in *Life Magazine* about a man who bought a lot of land in Texas, and who had parceled it for some kind of big profit. I am sketchy on the details, but whatever it was, it was similar to what ultimately became Big Inch and it gave my dad the idea. He was fairly new at WB&T when Quaker came to them asking for help.

My dad proposed the campaign and they loved the idea. In fact, a side note of this story is that Bruce Baker was the one person who didn’t like it originally; he thought the campaign would not be feasible, and not compelling enough. But, it was given the green light by Quaker. They then got Baker’s brother, an attorney, to handle the land dealings. The executives from Quaker, Bruce Baker, and the lawyer headed off to the Yukon to survey and buy the land.

At some point in the 1980’s, Baker, nearing the end of his life, claimed that he had invented the Big Inch campaign. All involved who were still living knew that Baker’s claim was false. However, my dad was an unusually modest person, and always downplayed his successes and talents. I think that his innate modesty and his distaste for any discord is why he never made a fuss about this. Although my dad never, ever complained about Baker’s claim, it really bothered all involved who knew the truth. When David McDonald came along at the very end of Dad’s life to make a documentary about it and set the record straight, it was like a little miracle. And my dad lived, just barely, to watch the film.

Also, I must say that, as my father put it: People were always trying to find fault with Quaker, but in fact, Quaker was a reputable company who made products that were good for people. This whole campaign was born of the need for Quaker to combat the introduction of sugared cereals. The sales of Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat had severely declined when sugared cereals were introduced.

Later, my dad played a key role in the 1963 introduction of Cap’n Crunch, Quaker Oats’ first successful sugar-coated cereal. He had shifted over to the Leo Burnett Agency, an advertising giant in Chicago. Part of Leo’s success formula was to personify the brand: the Marlboro Man, the Pillsbury Dough Boy, etc. Dad was tasked with creating a persona for a new sugary cereal of Quaker’s. He immediately called upon Jay Ward, creator of the “Bullwinkle” cartoon, with whom he had briefly collaborated on another project. They had become fast friends and had true *sympatico*; in fact, my dad wore a Bullwinkle watch, a gift from Jay, for years.

Despite Jay’s off-the-wall personality, the execs gave the green light to let my dad hire Jay Ward as the artist— and thus, a great collaboration was formed. From this collaboration came the Cap’n Crunch character and the other characters associated with him. I can remember my dad bringing storyboards home with Jay’s art, and asking my sisters and brother and me to study and comment.

It must have been after the brand launch, but somewhere early on in the life of Cap’n Crunch, my dad was slapped with a lawsuit, the only one of his career, I believe. It seems that the actress Tallulah Bankhead did not cotton too well to the Cap’n Crunch character “Tallulah Bulkhead”. Quaker caved immediately, and the character was re-named.

My dad loved Leo Burnett as an employer and as a friend. He always had the nicest things to say about Leo as a man and as an ad visionary. I can remember big, elaborate presents arriving for Mother and Dad on Christmas Eve for years from Leo Burnett himself.

Thanks for reading this, and thank you in advance for clearing up any myths about these matters. ■

"BIG INCH"

continued from page 11

formed corporation to be called "Klondike Big Inch Land Co., Inc." The Grantee would be ... (fill in your name). The legal description would refer to a "Tract Number", more particularly described in "that certain subdivision plan ... deposited in the registered office of the Grantor in the Yukon Territory." The deeds excluded mineral rights (which had been reserved in the original grant from the Crown), and provided for a perpetual easement over each square-inch lot for the benefit of surrounding lot owners.

So there was no survey map. Instead, the deeds were numbered consecutively following a master plan that made its "point of beginning" the northwest corner of the 19 acres. If you wanted to find a certain lot number, theoretically you would start at the northwest corner, go X number of inches east, then go X number of inches south, and there it would be. Theoretically.

Twenty-one million deeds were printed, and the ad campaign was launched on the Sergeant Preston radio show on January 27, 1955. Ads ("You'll actually own one square inch of Yukon land in the famous gold country!") appeared in 93 newspapers.

The campaign was a sensational success. The specially-marked ("Get Free Gold Rush Land Today!") boxes of Quaker Oats cereal fairly flew off of grocers' shelves. Before long, they were all gone. Lots of kids, myself included, were "too late".

Meanwhile, letters poured in to Quaker Oats offices. New landowners wanted to know where their land was located, how much it was worth, and "is there gold there?" One kid sent in four toothpicks and some string, requesting his inch be fenced.

In Buffalo, NY, newspapers carried a story about a man being tried for murdering his wife with an ice pick. On the third day of trial, the defense attorney made a motion to be removed from the case. Turned out the attorney had been promised to be paid with "land in the Yukon", only to learn this "land" consisted of his client's collection of 1,000 "Big Inch" deeds.

Unfortunately, no one paid taxes on the 19 acres, and in 1965 it was repossessed by the Canadian government and sold for the arrearage, \$37.20. According to an August 2000 article in the *Whitehorse Star* newspaper, "a Quaker Oats spokesman in Chicago claims the company never received a tax bill." Maybe "Yukon King" ate it.

Meanwhile, the "Klondike Big Inch Land Co." was quietly dissolved in 1966.

To this day, inquiries still come to Quaker Oats (now a division of PepsiCo), and the Canadian government, about

"Big Inch" deeds. According to Steven Horn, Chief Legislative Counsel for the Department of Justice in the Yukon, inquiries typically come from lawyers representing estates with assets including one or more of the deeds, and they always get the same answer: The deeds are and always were "unregisterable".

A cruel hoax? Consumer fraud??

Consider this: A "Big Inch" deed now fetches up to \$40 or more on the collectible market, and they are suitable for framing. ■

QUAKER MAN

continued from page 10

naming of commercial brands after religious denominations. To no avail.

Have you heard of the famous religious tolerance of the Quakers? One day, Quaker Oats chairman Harry Crowell called his advertising man Albert D. Lasker into his office and asked him to renounce Judaism and convert to Christianity! Of course, Lasker refused. (It was Lasker's firm that in 1913 had created the wildly successful campaign for Quaker Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat, "The Grains That Are Shot from Guns".)

Real Quakers are also famous for their pacifism. But wait— wouldn't that make a corporation named "Quaker" think twice before cheering on the troops? Not a chance! As soon as the U.S. entered World War 2, Crowell jumped onto the military gravy train, retooling his factories to grind out heavy munitions, army camp stoves, and the doors, windshields, and heaters of military aircraft. The Quaker Oats Co. built and operated the Cornhusker Ordnance Plant in Grand Island, Nebraska, which produced over 14 million aerial bombs and artillery shells for the war effort. The War Department had actually sought out Quaker because of its safety record in guarding against dust explosions in its missile—er, grain—silos.

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MUSEUM OF RACIST MEMORABILIA VS. CREAM OF WHEAT



WAS THE CREAM OF WHEAT CHEF A REAL PERSON?

by Brad Flory

The article below, and also the advertising graphic to the right, are posted on the website of the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia (Ferris State University, Big Rapids, MI). The article was originally published on September 9, 2004 in the Jackson [Michigan] Citizen Patriot. All rights Reserved. Reprinted here with permission from that newspaper.

A cultural icon may lie in an unmarked grave in Leslie. He is Frank White, a chef who claimed to sell Cream of Wheat to generations of Americans. White's story, like his grave, would be forgotten if not for the Mid Michigan Genealogical Society and family researcher Jesse Lasorda of Lansing. Cataloguing Leslie's Woodlawn Cemetery, the society found records of an unmarked "colored" grave. Lasorda was asked to learn more about the man buried there, Frank White.

Lasorda found proof White was born about 1867 in Barbados, came to the United States in 1875 and became a naturalized citizen in 1890. When he died February 15, 1938, White was described by the Leslie



"EXHIBIT H". An imagined chef named Rastus was portrayed in this racially insensitive ad for Cream of Wheat from the early 1900's.

Local-Republican as a "famous chef" who "posed for an advertisement of a well-known breakfast food."

Through his research, Lasorda became convinced White was the model for "Rastus", the smiling Cream of Wheat chef. "He was on the Cream of Wheat box from 1901 to 1925", Lasorda said.

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"EXHIBIT I". Chef Frank L. White is believed to be the model for the "Rastus" drawing. This grave, which for decades had been heralded by nothing but a tiny, concrete marker with no name, has now been furnished with a new granite headstone. Thanks to a campaign initiated by genealogist Jesse L. Lasorda, the new marker was produced and installed at Woodlawn Cemetery in Leslie, MI in June 2007.

Photo: Christine Rook/
Lansing State Journal,
published June 14, 2007.



GENERAL MILLS VS. THE DENTAL HEALTH OF THE PLANET



WHEN ANN ARBOR KIDS BECAME GUINEA PIGS

by Randy K. Schwartz

In the 1960's, public health authorities and consumer groups became vocally alarmed at the growing proliferation of ready-to-eat cereals, soft drinks, and chewing gum in the American diet. They were especially concerned about these sugary foods' suspected role in tooth decay among children.

To stave off such alarm, in the late 1960's Minneapolis-based General Mills paid for a field trial to be carried out among Ann Arbor school children. Pupils in the study were given as much free General Mills cereal as they cared to eat. Their dental health was tracked over a three-year period.

Have Some Sugar on Your Sugar

Ironically, the world's first sugar-coated cereal had been invented to try to moderate kids' sugar intake. Jim Rex, a Philadelphia equipment salesman, was disgusted by how much table sugar his children spooned onto their puffed-wheat cereal with milk. He figured that by glazing the puffs himself with honey and corn syrup, he could regulate his kids' sugary intake. Rex established the Ranger Joe Cereal Co. in 1939 to begin selling the product, which he called Popped Wheat Honnies. His

children loved the stuff— but they kept spooning more sugar on top of it anyway!

Lesson learned: the sweeter the cereal, the sweeter the profits. Things took a sugar-coated leap in 1954 when General Mills unleashed a new product, Trix, that weighed in at a whopping 46.6% sugar! The cereal industry refers to such sugar-coated foods as “presweetened”, but the term is misleading: almost all commercial breakfast cereals are presweetened, in the sense that sucrose or similar sweeteners are mixed in with the other ingredients. General Mills, for instance, is perhaps most famous for its Wheaties, containing 4.7% sugar when it was introduced in 1926, and its Cheerios, introduced in 1941 as “Cheerioats” with 2.2% sugar.

Those two were among the cereals that 375 Ann Arbor eighth-graders were regularly offered after they were enrolled, with their parents' consent, in the three-year study. The research was directed by a dentistry professor at the University of Michigan, with assistance from other dentists and dental hygienists, the Ann Arbor Public Schools, and two General Mills scientists.

How the Study Worked

Every month, participating children would order whatever quantity they desired of seven General Mills products: Wheaties, Cheerios, Corn Flakes, Trix, Cocoa Puffs, Frosty O's, and Corn Bursts. The cereals were packaged in seven-ounce boxes with plain generic labels (“wheat flakes”, “sugared oat cereal”, etc.). All orders were carefully tallied by the researchers and delivered to the kids' homes. The participants were free to eat any foods they wished in addition to, or instead of, the offered cereals. The children were also given individualized training in oral hygiene, and free supplies of Crest toothpaste and Oral B toothbrushes. Their teeth were examined yearly for cavities.

continued on next page

COMPARATIVE DENTAL CARIES EXPERIENCE OF ADOLESCENT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN WHO
ATE READY-TO-EAT BREAKFAST CEREALS AND THOSE WHO DID NOT

	Mean		Standard Deviation			Percent	t
	Eaters (302)	Noneaters (73)	Eaters	Noneaters	Difference		
Age (in years)	13.10	13.05	0.37	0.40	0.05	0.4	0.98
Sex	0.53*	0.45*	0.50	0.50	0.08	15.4	1.24
Initial DMF teeth	4.55	5.11	2.92	3.27	-0.56	-12.3	-1.34
Initial DMF surfaces	6.12	7.25	4.41	5.67	-1.12	-18.3	-1.58
Incremental DMF teeth	3.24	3.63	2.69	2.90	-0.39	-11.9	-1.04
Incremental DMF surfaces	5.20	6.41	4.67	5.62	-1.21	-23.2	-1.70

* Male = 1; female = 0.

“EXHIBIT J”. The study results from Rowe et al., 1974. The DMF index counts the number of decayed, missing, or filled teeth or tooth surfaces.

ANN ARBOR KIDS *continued from page 15*

At the end of the study, the children were divided into two groups: the “noneaters”, each of whom received fewer than 28 boxes of the free cereal, and the “eaters”, who received from 28 to 600 or more boxes during the three-year period. The researchers admitted that there were a number of other factors beyond their control, such as who actually ended up eating the cereals that were delivered. Nevertheless, they noted that on average, both eaters and noneaters suffered about 3 or 4 newly decayed teeth in three years. They concluded, “Under the conditions of this study, adolescent children who consumed ready-to-eat breakfast cereals did not differ with respect to dental caries activity from classmates who consumed other breakfast dietary regimens” (Rowe et al., 1974).

However, a subsequent careful review of many studies did find abundant evidence for a link between sugary foods and cavities. It found “important methodological problems and limitations” in the General Mills-funded study and similar studies: since only cereal consumption was varied and the rest of the diet was not considered, “the intake of sugary foods was not totally controlled” (Newbrun, 1982). This could easily explain why both eaters and noneaters of the cereals that were offered in the study tended to get lots of cavities. ■

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RESEARCH NEWS

Have you heard the latest news on what
Researchers recommend you eat, or not?
Their scientific studies always mention
Which foods bring disease and which prevention.
In fear I read through their reports for answers
On everything from simple itch to cancers.
My eating's based on each research suggestion
And much I used to dine on now I question.
The problem is they change their mind so quickly
I can't remember if I'm getting well or sickly.

— Marvin Brandwin

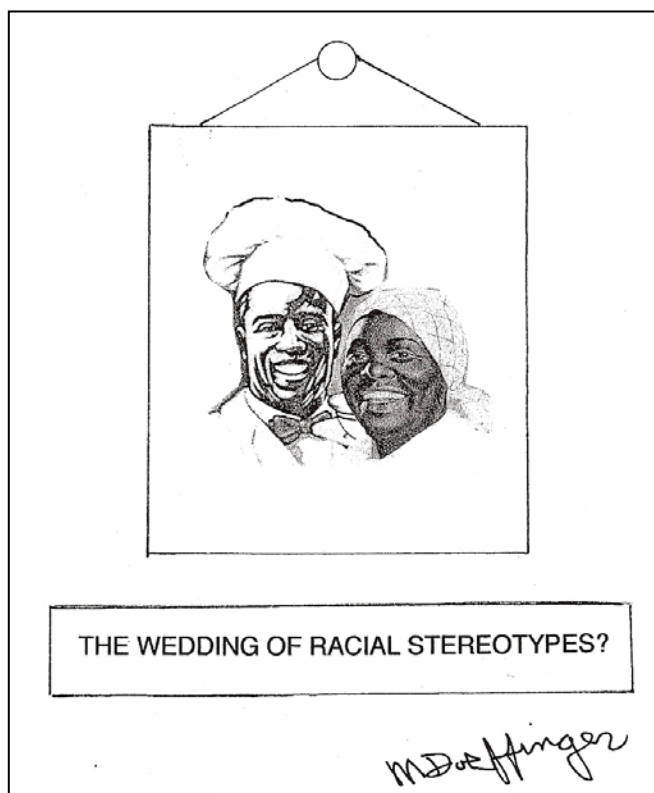
CREAM OF WHEAT *continued from page 14*

If so, it is impossible to prove. Cream of Wheat company history says the chef was a real person photographed about 1900 while working in a Chicago restaurant. His image was the basis for future versions of Rastus, but no one bothered to record his name.

White was a well-traveled chef about the right age for the photo. He claimed to be the Cream of Wheat model and neighbors believed him.

Even if they had the same face, White and Rastus were different people. Rastus was sometimes used to sell cereal in ways racially offensive by today's standards. White's life was richer than a stereotype. He worked in cities, on trains and on steam ships. Married twice, White had no children. His first wife was said to be the second black woman to graduate from the University of Michigan. He settled in Leslie, her hometown, in the early 1920's. “After the [First] World War, he ran the Holly House in Mason and became noted in the vicinity for his ‘Maryland chicken’”, White's obituary said. “He seemed quite content to settle down to a peaceful life during the last days. He made many friends in Leslie and enjoyed caring for his chickens and pigs and working in his garden.” White left an estate worth \$400, Lasorda said.

“My No. 1 objective at this time is to do what I can to get this man a headstone”, Lasorda said. “I am hoping someone will start a fund. Everyone should have a headstone.” It seems the least we can do for an icon. ■



C.H.A.A. WINTER MEETINGS



FRUITS OF THE EARTH

Our Winter 2009 programs considered what humans have made and eaten from the fruits of such varied plants as the banana (an herb), the grape (a vine), and the cacao (a tree). We were also treated to a fascinating lecture on the cuisine of Mali, in Africa.

The Perfect Corm

“Domestication and Spread of Bananas” was the topic of our January presentation by CHAA member George F. Estabrook, a botany professor at the University of Michigan. The full text of Prof. Estabrook’s talks on bananas and citrus fruits will be published in our next issue, a theme issue on fruits.

The banana plant is actually an herb that grows up to 30 feet tall. Most species require very wet, tropical conditions and deep, well-drained soil. A central flower-bearing shoot typically bends back toward the ground, the flowers thus hanging upside-down. It is the female flowers that develop into the fruits. The cultivated plants do not reproduce sexually (with seeds), but vegetatively by means of corms. A corm is a bulb-like stem that sends out not only leaves above and roots below, but also genetically identical corms to the side. In cultivation, each dead banana tree and all but one of its new corms are removed; the removed corms can be transplanted elsewhere.

The fruits, leaves, and fibers of bananas have been important for millennia. Apparently, all of the wild species arose first in Southeast Asia. Wild bananas were probably eaten in the Malay peninsula long before agriculture began there about 10,000 years ago, and the banana was likely one of the first plants to be cultivated because its fruits are so easy to grow and eat. All 500+ varieties of edible bananas and plantains cultivated today evolved from just two of the species of the genus *Musa*. Probably at least 3000 years ago, cultivars were taken west to India and north and east to the Philippines; from the latter islands they were taken further to Micronesia and Polynesia. About 500 AD, Arab traders took cultivars to East Africa, and from there the plants spread across tropical Africa quickly. In the 16th Century, bananas and plantains were transplanted by the Portuguese and Spanish from their dominions in the Old World (notably São Tomé, the Canary Islands, and the Philippines) across the oceans to Brazil, Hispaniola, and Ecuador.

Today, about 85% of the bananas grown worldwide are consumed locally, in a variety of traditional ways. Africa,

where a third of the people get over 25% of their daily calories from bananas, grows more of them than any other continent; but the leading exporting countries are in Latin America. Only in the early 1900’s, when refrigerated cargo holds were developed, did bananas become established as an export crop.

Vineyards in Our Backyard

Lorri Hathaway and Sharon Kegerreis, promoters of Michigan wines (www.michiganvine.com), spoke at our February meeting about their book, *From the Vine: Exploring Michigan Wineries* (2007).

In the past decade the state’s vineyard acreage has increased by over 60%, and its reputation has shifted away from sweet wines to more traditional and sophisticated varieties such as Riesling, Cabernet, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Grigio. St. Julian Winery in Paw Paw, MI, with its Italian roots, is an example of the many state wineries that are family-run operations going back multiple generations. The book details opportunities for formal and informal wine tourism along four “trails”: the Lake Michigan Shore (southwest), the Leelanau and Old Mission Peninsulas (northwest), and the Pioneer Wine Trail (southeast). In addition to wine and port, Michigan produces other fine fermented beverages such as grappa, grape vodka, beer and ale, honey and cherry meads, and hard cider.

In May, CHAA founding member Dan Longone, an emeritus chemistry professor at UM and a nationally recognized expert on wine, gave an illustrated public lecture at the UM Clements Library in conjunction with the exhibit that he curated there, “500 Years of Grapes and Wine in America: The Literature of a Remarkable Journey”.

Dan noted that the literature of food and wine provides a useful way to study American history because of the prominent role these have played not only in the diet, medicine, and industry of Western civilization, but also in its broader cultural and intellectual development. Examples of important books on display from the Old World tradition include the *Tractatus de Vinea, Vindemia, et Vino* (Venice, 1629) by Prospero Rendella, of which the Clements owns the only copy in the U.S.; and the *Tractatus de Vinos* (1522 edition), a book on medicated wines by Arnold of Villanova, who was associated with the medical school at Salerno, Italy.

Early explorers raved about the verdancy and vines of the New World, but for three centuries all efforts to cultivate Old World grapes there (beginning on Hispaniola in 1494) ended in failure. As it turned out, the Americas had some two dozen varieties of indigenous grapes, about the same number as in the opposite hemisphere. But only after the American Revolution did times ripen for experiments in producing wines from these native grapes. The earliest commercially-successful such vineyards were established along the Ohio and Missouri Rivers in the first half of the 1800’s by Swiss immigrant John James

continued on next page

Dufour at Vevay, IN (using the Alexander grape), by Nicholas Longworth at Cincinnati, OH (using the Catawba grape of North Carolina), and by Friedrich Münch, George Husmann and other German immigrants at Augusta and Hermann, MO (using the Isabella, Concord, Norton, and Catawba grapes). Dan called Dufour's *American Vine-Dresser's Guide* (Cincinnati, 1826) "heroic" because it championed native wines and was not derivative of European ones.

About 1860, Missouri vineyards were beset with fungal and other difficulties, and Husmann relocated his operations from the "Missouri Rhineland" to Napa, CA. Other important early California wine production included that of the Hungarian-American A. Haraszthy in Sonoma; and, in the preceding century, that of the San Diego Mission and others in southern California directed by Junípero Serra, a Franciscan priest from Mallorca. Dan went on to discuss some of the other exhibit display cases, which focused on the lucrative trade in imported Madeira wines and its cultural impact; America's role in the *Phylloxera* outbreak; the Temperance and Prohibition periods; the cocktail as an American icon; and wine lists, menus, and service. This last display case included such items as a Santa Fe Railroad Lines beverage list from the Fred Harvey Service, c. 1960.

Chocolate: From Pod to Mouth

Our March talk, complete with sample tastes, was "Chocolate: Food of the Gods" by Wisconsin native Nancy Biehn. After falling in love with fine chocolates during a year in Spain, Nancy taught herself how to make truffles, first as a hobby and then as a career. As proprietor of Sweet Gem Confections in Ann Arbor, she creates truffles and other works of art by melting plain chocolate, adding any of a variety of flavors, and providing exquisite decorations that hint at the flavors inside.

Nancy reviewed the religious origins of chocolate in ancient America and the process of producing it. Most commodity chocolate today originates in equatorial Africa, where plantation workers with machetes harvest the pods from cacao trees. The flesh of the fruit is sticky and luscious, like a mango, but the chocolate itself is made from the seeds, or "beans". These are removed and left outdoors, where they are fermented and dried for two weeks.

It takes 40 pounds of the dried beans to make a pound of chocolate, which is typically done at processing centers in Europe or North America. There, the imported beans are roasted and husked, and their inner nubs removed. Cocoa is extracted from these nubs, then crushed and smoothed, and separated into its two components, "liqueur" and "butter". Chocolate is made by adding sugar to some mixture of cocoa liqueur and cocoa butter. Different varieties of cacao yield markedly different flavor profiles; as with coffee beans, more and more chocolatiers are roasting their own cacao beans and creating single-origin chocolates. Nancy also explained such terms as "white chocolate" and "milk chocolate".

Note: errors in the following summary were corrected in the Summer 2009 issue, page 2.

Cuisine Traditions of Mali

A particular nation in Africa was the focus of an illustrated talk given in April by CHAA member Ann Larimore, "Cuisine Traditions of Mali, an Islamic Country in the African Sahel".

Larimore, an emerita professor of geography and women's studies at UM, spent three years in Mali with the Peace Corps in the 1990's. Since 2002 she has visited the country frequently to visit her daughter Christine and son-in-law Drissa, who work as physicians in the capital, Bamako, a city of one million on the Niger. Ann has been able to observe food being prepared in their kitchen by the chief cook, Caja. She has also found two Malian cookbooks: *Mali: Cuisine and Culture*, produced by a ministry of the Malian government for the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in 2003; and *Le Vrai Goût du Mali* (Paris, 2006) by Lydia Gautier and Jean-François Mallet.

In Mali, as throughout Africa, the diet varies by region and class. The capital and other large cities are full of commercial irrigated vegetable gardens and permanent markets, while the rural areas have markets one day per week. Food is traditionally cooked in pots on a flame, not in an oven; the rural areas supply the main fuel, charcoal, and the main cooking fats, peanut and olive oil. Much of the population practices Christian and/or animist beliefs, but the cuisine shows a strong Islamic and Arab influence thanks to the Muslim population (now concentrated in the north) and to the Lebanese merchants who for generations have dominated the trade in foodstuffs from Europe and West Africa. A French influence, stemming from colonial times, is also still very pronounced.

Midday is the traditional time for the main meal. In much of the country, the staple dish is *to*, which is a thick gruel made variously from ground millet, sorghum, corn, cassava, or (a sign of prosperity) rice. The starch is boiled in water and stirred in a pot for a long time, to a dumpling-like consistency. The dish is accompanied by one or more sauces: perhaps an okra sauce, a chicken sauce, a fish sauce, a hot pepper sauce, or even a rich sauce of Senegalese origin made with tomatoes, fish, meat, squash, and other vegetables. With the fingers of the right hand, a bit of the *to* is taken from the common bowl, then dipped in the sauce or else mounded around a morsel of food in the sauce, and brought to the mouth.

Other dishes mentioned by Ann include: *tigadeguena*, a sauce of peanut and tomato paste, onions and other vegetables with lamb, chicken, or beef, served with semolina couscous or rice; cassava couscous, a dish from Côte d'Ivoire; *djouka*, made from fonio (a tiny-grained African cereal) and ground peanut, which are cooked together until completely integrated; sheep's-head stew with vegetables; *faccoy* or *fakuwoyi*, a mild, dark-green dish from the Songhai people in northern Mali, made from the dried leaves of a certain plant; *gnomi* or *frou-frou*, dollar-sized pancakes; and *bouilli*, a thin, sweet rice-gruel eaten for breakfast. Interesting beverages include a juice made with ginger, baobab fruit, tamarind, and hibiscus pulp; and hot mint tea, much as in Morocco. ■

MORSELS & TIDBITS

A roundup of recent news from CHAA members...

- **Jan Longone**, Curator of American Culinary History at the University of Michigan Clements Library, was interviewed for an article about the foods of Abraham Lincoln, written by Diane Gale Andreassi and appearing on the eve of Lincoln's 200th birthday (*Ann Arbor News*, Feb. 11, 2009).
- The work of Jan and her docents at the Clements was featured in a program broadcast several times in March 2009 on the Big Ten Network. An expanded version of the program, featuring **Jan and Dan Longone** and **Ari Weinzwieg**, was broadcast on WFUM twice in April, after which it was posted to iTunesU.
- **Dan Longone's** exhibition and lecture at the Clements, "500 Years of American Grapes and Wines", were written up in the *Ann Arbor News* (Feb. 18, 2009), *Wall Street Journal* (Mar. 20, 2009), and *Ann Arbor Observer* (May 2009); see our own report on page 17.
- **Yvonne Lockwood**, Curator of Folklife at the Michigan State University Museum, has been appointed to the Advisory Board of the University of Illinois Press's newly announced Heartland Foodways Series. The books in this series will define and celebrate, in an accessible way, what and how we eat in the American Midwest, both now and in earlier times. The Series Editor is Culinary Historians of Chicago President Bruce Kraig, and the Board also includes Lucy Long at Bowling Green State University. *Repast* readers might recall articles by Lockwood and Long on food festivals (Winter 2008) and by Kraig on Turkish *yufka* (Winter 2005).

"Come & Get It! The Way We Ate 1830-2008" is an exhibit running March 28, 2009 through August 6, 2011 at the McLean County Museum of History in Bloomington, IL. The guest curator is Dr. **Robert Dirks**, an emeritus anthropology professor at Illinois State University who has specialized in the study of U.S. and international food traditions. The exhibit explores the eating habits, cooking equipment, methods, and diverse food customs of area residents, including four reconstructed kitchens representing different eras, and interpretive panels on the social and economic changes that have shaped foodways.

Amy Riolo, a member of the Culinary Historians of Washington, D.C. (CHoW) who wrote about "The Evolution of Saudi Arabian Cuisine" in our Summer 2008 issue, is leading a culinary tour of Egypt on October 5-16, 2009 (visit www.handsalongthenile.org for details). Amy has also completed her latest book, *Nile Style: Egyptian Cuisine and Culture* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 2009; 220 pp., \$29.95 cloth). Your editor (RKS) reports that it's a beautiful book, full of interesting information and recipes, including material on the history of Egypt, the different types of people who live there, and the cultural and religious context for culinary development. It is organized into three sections: "Ancient Festivals" considers foods that go back to Pharaonic, Nubian, and Bedouin times; "Significant Ceremonies" features classic celebratory foods of the country's three monotheistic traditions (Jewish, Christian, and Islamic); and "Modern Celebrations" focuses on the newest traditions that reflect metropolitan and

foreign influences. Some friends and I used the book to make a fantastic dish that I'd never heard of before, *mayeena* (pp.38-39), a Sephardic casserole made with whole-wheat matzo, chicken, spinach, and a spicy tomato sauce. Amy cites a Ladino etymology for it (*mina*, "mine", as in mineral), but I think it more likely derives from Arabic (*meena*, "glaze", which would refer to the egg-wash traditionally placed on the top layer of matzo). The book also includes such Egyptian classics as *ta'miya* (fava-bean falafel), *ful medammes* (fava purée), *koushari* (lentils, rice, and noodles with spicy tomato sauce), veal and potato *tajine*, and *maloukhiya* (Jew's-mallow stew).

Jewish foodways are examined in some books issued last year:

- **Maria Balinska**, *The Bagel: The Surprising History of a Modest Bread* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008). Balinska, world current affairs editor for BBC radio in London, debunks some myths about the bagel while exploring its intriguing connections to similar breads among Christians and Muslims. Her account, set mostly in Poland where bagels had appeared by 1600, opens up an avenue into Polish-Jewish history.
- **Jonathan Deutsch** and **Rachel D. Saks**, *Jewish American Food Culture* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008; 141 pp., \$49.95 cloth). Deutsch, who teaches in the Dept. of Tourism and Hospitality at Kingsborough Community College in Brooklyn, and Saks, a graduate student in Nutrition and Dietetics at New York University, have labored here to distill a 350-year history. They begin with an Historical Overview that explains the special significance of food in Jewish identity. Subsequent chapters cover Major Foods & Ingredients, Cooking, Typical Meals, Eating Out, Special Occasions, and Diet & Health. There is also a helpful Resource Guide.
- **David Kraemer**, *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2008; 200 pp., \$95 cloth). Kraemer, a scholar at the Jewish Theological Seminary in Manhattan, seeks to explain the origins of Jewish dietary laws, primarily through a close reading of the Hebrew Bible, rabbinical commentary, and other written sources.

The 28th annual Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery is scheduled for September 11-13, 2009 at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, UK on the theme "Food and Language". A few of the distinguished speakers are **Simon Schama**, **Tu Weiming**, **Barbara Ketcham Wheaton**, **Darra Goldstein**, **Judith Jones**, and **Susan Friedland**. This year's special meals include a Pepys-themed dinner created by **Fergus Henderson**, and a banquet by **Raymond Blanc** exploring the language of French gastronomy. For more information, visit the website <http://www.oxfordsymposium.org.uk/>. Symposia further on:

- July 9-11, 2010, "Cured, Smoked, and Fermented Foods"
- July 8-10, 2011, "Celebrations".

On the Back Burner: We invite ideas and submissions for these planned future theme-issues of *Repast*: Cultivation and Use of Fruits (Summer 2009); Scandinavian-American Food Traditions (Fall 2009); Development of African-American Foodways (Winter 2010). Suggestions for future themes are also welcome. ■

CHAA CALENDAR

(Unless otherwise noted, programs are scheduled for 4-6 p.m. at Ann Arbor Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin Ave.)

Sunday, August 16, 2009

4-7 p.m., Earhart Village Clubhouse
(835 Greenhills Drive, Ann Arbor)

CHAA annual participatory theme picnic:
“A Cruise on the Rhine and the Huron:
Traditional German Foods”

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Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor

Volume XXV Number 2, Spring 2009

First Class