



VOLUME XXX, NUMBER 2 SPRING 2014

Repast

Quarterly Publication of the Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor

Quadricentennial of Dutch-American Food

Part 1: The Hudson and Delaware River Valleys



"Dutch Cottage in New York, 1679" is an 1853 lithograph by George Hayward. The first Dutch settlement in North America was Fort Nassau, erected in Spring 1614 on Westerlo Island, in the Hudson River just below present-day Albany.

FOOD HISTORY WRIT LARGE

Rachel Laudan's *Cuisine and Empire*, reviewed by Wendell McKay on pp. 16-18 of this issue, is the latest in a series of recent books that attempt a sweeping synthesis of the global history of food. Laudan perceives a recurrent historical pattern whereby foodways tend to gain or lose cultural strength based on the relative power of the clashing forces that they represent— whether those forces be classes, religions, nations, or civilizations.

In *An Edible History of Humanity* (New York: Walker & Company, 2010; 288 pp., \$16 pbk.), author Tom Standage likewise sees food history as intimately bound up with society more broadly, but he focuses less on power relations than on social and technological transformation. He summarizes, for instance, how the early domestication of grains led to social surpluses and urbanization; how the Old World adoption of new foods such as corn, beans, the tomato, and the potato led not only to the rise of whole new foodways but to massive population shifts; and how techniques of food supply figured crucially in the victories and defeats of armies such as Napoleon's. Standage has had a lengthy editorial career at *The Economist*, where he has brought his technology background to bear.

The 216-page *Moveable Feasts: The History, Science, and Lore of Food* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2007, \$39.95 hbk.; Lincoln, NE: Bison Books [Univ. of Nebraska Press], 2008, \$18.95 pbk.), by prolific author Gregory McNamee, argues that the interaction of diverse cultures has been the key ingredient in the creation of culinary treasures and in spurring the whole history of cuisine. The author begins with an introduction to food history and its importance, then follows with 30 bite-sized essays on individual foodstuffs, mostly plants, arranged alphabetically from almond, amaranth, and apple to tomato, watermelon, and wheat. He employs a multi-disciplinary approach and includes many illustrative recipes.

Sarah Murray, a contributing writer at the *Financial Times*, highlights the role of food transport and exchange in her *Moveable Feasts: From Ancient Rome to the 21st Century, the Incredible Journeys of the Food We Eat* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007; 272 pp., \$24.95 hbk.). Long-distance methods of transport have evolved from ancient Roman ships carrying *amphorae* of olive oil, dates, or *liquamen* fish sauce across the Mediterranean, to a typical oceangoing, digitally-managed vessel of today, loaded with thousands of containers, each container holding, say, 48,000 bananas. Other marvels of present-day transport include outsourcing to China the job of filleting and trimming Norwegian salmon bound for western markets, and the system in Mumbai, India, that each day delivers by train and bicycle roughly 170,000 tiffin boxes (home-packed lunches) to the correct workplaces, and then returns the boxes to their respective homes. Murray also discusses the historical role of innovations in feeding troops abroad; food systems that sustained far-flung empires; the modern delivery of food aid; and current debates about Eating Local and Protected Designation of Origin.

Written by two authors sympathetic to the Slow Food movement, *Empires of Food: Feast, Famine, and the Rise and Fall of Civilizations* (New York: Free Press, 2010; 302 pp., \$27 hbk.) argues that societies can only endure based on the sustainability of their food production and distribution. The authors, Evan D. G. Fraser, a geographer and social scientist at the Sustainability Research Institute, University of Leeds, and Andrew Rimas, Managing Editor at *Improper Bostonian* magazine, identify problems endemic to managing food production systems that are carried out on too vast a scale, including some pre-industrial systems. Their examples range from ancient to modern times, such as trade networks for grains, spices, or beverages (wine, tea, coffee, orange juice), and China's immense new Three Gorges Dam project. The same two authors criticized the beef and dairy industries in their book *Beef: The Untold Story of How Milk, Meat, and Muscle Shaped the World*, summarized in our Fall 2008 "Morsels and Tidbits" column.

The analysis by Fraser and Rimas is perhaps the one that runs most diametrically opposite to Rachel Laudan's, since it suggests that the viability of a food system is an inherent function of its size, independent of the social forces or power groupings arrayed around it. In fact, for years Laudan has sharply criticized the locavore movement for idealizing small-scale, traditional, and pre-industrial food systems, and she wrote a scathing review of Fraser and Rimas's *Empires of Food* in *Gastronomica* 12:1 (Spring 2012), pp. 113-114.

— RKS

Repast

ISSN 1552-8863

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

<http://culinaryhistoriansannarbor.org/>

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

Editor.....Randy K. Schwartz
CHAA Presidents.....Joanne Nesbit and Judy Steeh
CHAA Program Chair.....Laura Green Gillis
CHAA Treasurer.....Dan Longone
CHAA Website Editor.....Judy Steeh
CHAA Founder and Honorary President...Jan Longone



*The material contained in this publication is copyrighted.
Passages may be copied or quoted provided that the source is credited.*

For submissions or inquiries about *Repast*, contact:

Randy K. Schwartz
1044 Greenhills Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48105-2722
tel. 734-662-5040
rschw45251@aol.com

Subscriptions are \$20/year. To subscribe to *Repast* or to become a CHAA member (which includes a subscription), contact one of our Co-Presidents:

M. Joanne Nesbit and Judy Steeh
tel: 734-213-2412 / 734-665-5813
a2culinaryhistorians@gmail.com

Or download a membership form from the web address given near the top of this box.

AN ENTHUSIASM THAT BUBBLED: HARRIET LARSON

We were saddened to hear of the passing on January 10 of Harriet Larson, 89 years old and a longtime CHAA member. Harriet had relocated last year from Livonia, MI, to a nursing home in Normal, IL, to be closer to her daughter, Lori Rariden. Harriet's other daughter, Linda, died in 1981, while her son, Bill Larson, lives in Albuquerque, NM. Other survivors include her two siblings and 10 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Cremation rites were held in Bloomington, IL, with burial at Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly, MI. Memorial donations may be made to the Friends of the Livonia Library, 32777 Five Mile Road, Livonia, MI 48154-3045, or to Clare House (a volunteer-supported food pantry and soup kitchen), 307 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, IL 61701.

Intensely Involved with Books

Harriet Pauline Brink was born on July 22, 1924, in Kansas City, MO, the daughter of Paul and Maude Koken Brink. After graduating from the University of Kansas, Kansas City, KS, she embarked on a lengthy career as a public school teacher. She taught at elementary and secondary schools in Montana and four other states, culminating at an elementary school in Livonia, the town where she, her husband John Larson, and their three children finally settled. She and John, a mechanical engineer, had married in 1949.

Harriet and John shared a love of books, travel, and local history. She was a longtime member of the Book Club of Detroit and a past BCD President (1998) and Secretary (2000s); a founding member of the Friends of Michigan Libraries and a past FOML Treasurer (2000s); a longtime member of the Livonia Library Commission and a member and past President of the Friends of the Livonia Public Library; and a member and past President of the Livonia Historical Society. Along with James Melosh and Suzanne Daniel, she co-created several books and filmstrips on Livonia history, including *The Big House on the Hill: A Child's History of the Hill House at Greenmead, Livonia, Michigan* (Livonia Historical Society and Livonia Public Schools, 1980), which was illustrated by Harriet's daughter, Lori Rariden. Harriet received the First Citizen Award from the *Livonia Observer* in 1989, and the Community Service Award from the Livonia Rotary Club in 2006.

Harriet loved utilizing and sharing her knowledge of books—in fact, her enthusiasm tended to bubble and boil over, sweeping others along with it. At the Collectible Book Seminar, held biweekly at Off the Beaten Path Books and Café in Farmington, she would enchant people with books from her own extensive collection, such as her first edition of Jonathan Sheder



Buell's *Cider Maker's Manual* (Buffalo, NY: Haas & Kelley, 1869). She was generous in lending or giving away many of her books to friends and acquaintances. In addition, for years Harriet tirelessly organized used-book sales as fundraisers for the Livonia Public Library and the League of Women Voters (LWV) of Northwest Wayne County. A memorial in the LWV

newsletter in February noted, "Harriet could spot a valuable book for which the League could reap a bigger profit better than anyone. She spent many hours at League book sales over the years, and those of us who knew her remember her fondly as a smart, positive, dedicated woman who gave much of herself for the public good. We will miss her."

Honoring Ethnic Traditions and Foodways

Her husband John was the son of Norwegian-immigrant parents from North Dakota, and Harriet was very proud of this heritage. She was a member of the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum (Decorah, IA), the largest and most comprehensive museum in the U.S. dedicated to a single immigrant group. She shared some of this heritage by writing an article on "Norwegian Lutefisk and Lefsa" for a *Repast* theme issue, "Welcome for Coffee: Finnish- and Scandinavian-American Traditions of Food and Hospitality" (Fall 2009).

Harriet joined our organization in Summer 2005, the year that John died. She attended many of our monthly meetings and was an especially avid participant at our semi-annual theme meals. An example of one of her dishes was a Creole chicken and sausage gumbo, which she prepared for our Dec. 2006 meal, "A Salute to Our Friends on the Gulf Coast". Harriet used her grandmother's recipe, but as thickener she decided to replace okra with the equally traditional *filé* powder, a Choctaw borrowing, which is added after the cooking is complete. Before we dug into it, she also explained to us that long, slow simmering made gumbo an ideal dish for women to prepare on washing day, since, once assembled, it can be left pretty much unattended in a pot on the stove.

Further examples of her ambitious creations for our theme meals included Greek orange-and-honey *melomacaronna* cookies (A Silk Road Journey, Dec. 2005), Pennsylvania Dutch macaroni salad (Salads from Around the World, Jul. 2006), Norwegian *leverpostei* (pork-liver *pâté*) and crisp *flatbrød* (Immigrant Family Cooking, Jul. 2008), *œufs Jeanette* (A French Bistro Evening, Dec. 2008), German *springerle* cookies (A Cruise on the Rhein or the Huron, Aug. 2009), and Kentish short breads and Mr. Guinness's cake, the latter a spicy pound-cake made with Guinness stout (Traditional Pub Food from the British Isles, Dec. 2009). ■

AN OVERVIEW

∞

THE INFLUENCE OF THE DUTCH ON THE AMERICAN KITCHEN

by Peter G. Rose

The beginnings of the Dutch colony New Netherland, a vast area wedged between New England and Virginia, go back much farther than 1614, when the Dutch built Ft. Nassau as their first settlement in the region, or even the traditional date of 1609, when Henry Hudson discovered what is now called the Hudson River. Instead, the founding of New Netherland is rooted in the Reformation and the 80-year war with Spain.

As far back as the 14th and 15th Centuries, there had been attacks on the teachings of the Catholic Church in England and Bohemia. In the Netherlands, the writing of Desiderius Erasmus (1466/69 – 1536) about the church's various abuses and practices had a great impact on the thinking of the times. Therefore, when Martin Luther disagreed with the church and in 1520 denounced it, he found a ready audience in the Netherlands. The teachings of Jean Calvin, the French Protestant theologian (1509 – 1564), had another profound impact. A strong and tough opposition to the Catholic Church was mounted in the Netherlands as Calvinism or the Reformed (Protestant) religion became more and more popular.

The country was at that time part of the Spanish empire. When Charles V abdicated in 1555 in favor of his sons Ferdinand and Philip II, the latter, who would govern the Low Lands, continued his father's stringent, cruel persecution of the Protestants. He also wanted to force on them a central government without their input, naming foreigners to the main important posts. Those three points—religious persecution, a centralized government, and foreigners in key positions—were the impetus for the Eighty Year War, which started in 1568.

The Netherlands are United by War

The decisions made at the Union of Utrecht of 1579—when a mutual defensive bond was forged between the Dutch lands—became the groundwork for the forming of the Dutch Republic as a federal state, encompassing the seven northern provinces of the Netherlands.



Peter G. Rose, of South Salem, NY, has written extensively about the Dutch in America and their influence on cooking. She is scheduled to speak in Ann Arbor on September 21 (see CHAA Calendar, page 20). Ms. Rose is the author of nine books, including *The Sensible Cook: Dutch Foodways in the Old and the New World* (Syracuse Univ. Press, 1989), which is an edited translation of *De Verstandige Kock*, a cookbook

first published in Amsterdam in 1667. She was born in Utrecht, the Netherlands, and was educated there as well as in Switzerland. She came to the U.S. in the mid-1960s. In addition to her books, Peter has written a syndicated column on family food and cooking for the Gannett newspaper chain for more than 20 years, as well as articles for *Gourmet*, *Saveur*, *Hudson Valley Magazine*, and *The Valley Table*. Her website is at www.peterrose.com. The essay here is adapted from her book *Food, Drink and Celebrations of the Hudson Valley Dutch* (The History Press, 2009).

Spain suffered a major defeat in 1588 when its armada of some 130 large ships arrived to conquer England, only to be defeated in the Channel by the smaller but much faster ships of the English and Dutch. This defeat not only curtailed Spain's maritime might, but also made England a more willing Dutch ally and in essence saved Protestantism in Western Europe.

Trade and fishing—herring as well as whales—were the main source of wealth for the Dutch Republic, particularly for the most powerful province of Holland, where Amsterdam was the major entrepot for trade goods. The important trade cities other than Amsterdam were Enkhuizen, Hoorn, Rotterdam, Dordrecht, Middelburg, and Vlissingen. These cities would later play a role in the West India Company, with representatives in its Board of Directors.

By the end of the 15th Century, Portuguese traders had found the route to what is now Indonesia, and Lisbon became the entrepot for Asian products, particularly spices. Dutch traders in turn would buy the goods and sell them in the rest of Europe. But when Alva, general to Philip II, conquered Portugal, the King curtailed the trade with Dutch ships. It had a large impact, particularly on the salt trade and forced the Dutch to find their own route to the precious spices. Various attempts were made trying the northerly route, but by 1595 a Dutch ship sailed around Cape Good Hope and made it to Bantam and returned in 1597. In 1602



George Hayward's lithographed replica of a Dutch drawing from about 1667, "New Amsterdam, a small city on Manhattan Island, New-Holland, North America, is now called New-York and is a part of the English colonies".

From Benson John Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution; or, Illustrations, by Pen and Pencil, of the History, Biography, Scenery, Relics, and Traditions of the War for Independence* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1851-1852).

New York Public Library
Digital Collections EM6838

the Dutch East India Company was founded with rights to exclusive trade with countries East of Cape Good Hope.

A truce with Spain was declared in 1609, which lasted 12 years, until 1621. In 1609 also, Henry Hudson was hired by the Dutch East India Company to again search for a northerly route to the Orient. In doing so, he came to the East Coast of North America and traveled from Delaware Bay to and into the Hudson River as far as what is now Albany. By 1614 a fur-trading post was established on Castle Island (now Port of Albany), and some minor trading companies were founded.

When the truce with Spain ended, the West India Company was established with exclusive trading rights in the Western Hemisphere. By 1624 the first colonists arrived in New Netherland (first so named in a document of 1614), who settled variously at Fort Orange (Albany) on the Hudson, along the Connecticut River, or on Burlington Island in the Delaware River.

Documenting Dutch Life

Twelve thousand or so documents remain from New Netherland, translated by the New Netherland Project, now the New Netherland Research Center, in Albany, NY. However, written documents are not the only remnants of the Dutch period: there are many more, some obvious, some not. Every day we eat dishes that can be traced back to the early Dutch settlers, who brought with them well-established and well-documented traditions.

Remaining in Dutch archives, among the many documents that help us understand the foods and meal patterns of the era, is a menu of 1631 considered to be an example of the daily fare of the masses in the Netherlands during the 17th Century. It includes such dishes as wheat bread soup, ground beef with currants, salted meats, fish,

cabbage, beans, peas, breads, and cheeses. Pancakes and porridges were common dishes as well.

The common meal pattern was comprised of breakfast; a main meal eaten in the middle or late morning; perhaps an afternoon snack/meal; and an evening meal. Breakfast consisted mainly of bread with butter or cheese and a *sop*, a thick soup-like mixture of bread and vegetables such as greens, onions, or cabbage. Beer was the main beverage; on the farms, buttermilk was drunk as well. Tea and coffee did not become popular until the end of the 17th Century.

The main meal generally consisted of no more than two or three dishes. The first one was often a *hutspot* (sometimes rendered in English as *hotchpot*), a one-pot dish of vegetables and some meat, or perhaps a grain-based *sop*. The second dish might be fish of one sort or another, or a meat stewed with prunes and currants. The third dish might be fruit, as well as cooked vegetables. On the farm, this meal consisted often simply of porridge, bread, and meat.

A few hours after the midday meal, between two and three o'clock, some bread with butter or cheese was eaten by those who needed additional sustenance. Just before going to bed the final nourishment of the day was served. It could again consist of bread and butter or cheese, but leftovers from midday might be served as well. Or porridge, made from wheat flour and sweet milk, or bread and milk, might be offered. Always, as in other parts of northern Europe, beer was the drink for all meals, since water was generally quite polluted.

The mainstay of the Dutch diet was bread. This included not only regular bread, but also the sweet breads, pastries, and *koekjes* (cookies) of which the Dutch were and are so fond. Professional bakers were responsible for baking the daily bread, but baked goods made at home (still today) in-

continued on next page

DUTCH INFLUENCE continued from page 5

cluded waffles, wafers, pancakes, *poffertjes* (tiny puffed pancakes), and *oliekoeken*, now called *oliebollen*. The last are deep-fried balls or fritters of soft dough, with or without chopped fruit, and are forerunners of the doughnut.

Reading *The Sensible Cook*

While orphanage menus and account books tell us about the diet of the working class and the poor, a period cookbook entitled *De Verstandige Kock* helps us understand the food ways of the more affluent middle class. I have translated this book into English with the title *The Sensible Cook*. Written by an anonymous author and first published in 1667, by Marcus Doornick of Amsterdam, it is generally accepted to be the main cookbook of the 17th Century in the Netherlands, and it had 15 reprints until 1802.

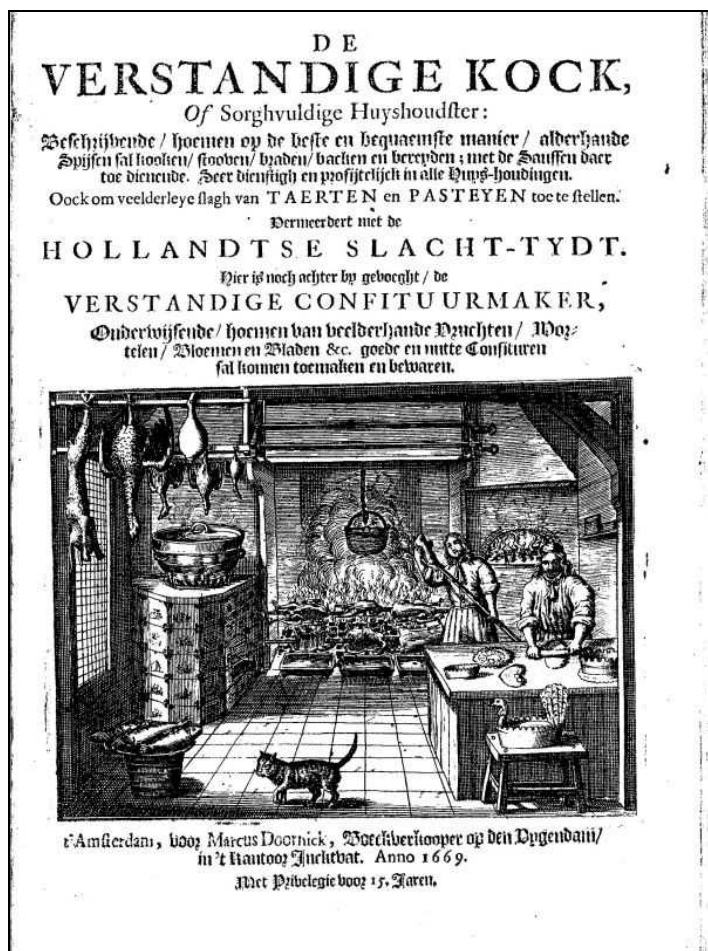
The cookbook is part of a larger volume entitled *Het Vermakelijk Landtleven* (*The Pleasurable Country Life*), which contains extensive sections on orchards, beekeeping, herbs, distilling, medicines, and food preservation. Since the book contains such a wealth of information on subjects important to everyday life, it seems highly probable that this volume was among the many books Dutch settlers regularly ordered from the Netherlands; copies can be found in libraries across America.

The Sensible Cook, although printed in the second half of the century, helps us understand the well-established 17th-Century Dutch foodways in the Netherlands. After all, cookbooks mostly codify already-existing recipes. Studying this book also helps create a framework for other information about New Netherland, derived from a variety of sources and archeological evidence.

The book's recipes abound with (then) rather exotic items of the times, such as lemons, mace, nutmeg and pepper. Spices and wines were among the items that were imported from faraway lands by Dutch seafarers.

The Sensible Cook gives a full spectrum of recipes for salads and vegetables. Altogether, about 25 varieties of vegetable are represented, including artichokes, asparagus, beets, Belgian endive, Brussels sprouts, various cabbages, carrots, celery, chicory, cucumber, fava beans, many varieties of lettuce, leeks, onions, parsnips, peas and sugar peas, pole or green beans, purslane, radishes, spinach, and turnip, and also a New World import: Jerusalem artichokes.

The book's recipes for meats include the preparation of beef, lamb, mutton, pork as well as suckling pig, haunches of sheep, veal, and particularly several recipes for meatballs, then and now a favorite dish. The poultry recipes discuss many ways of making chicken, but also pigeons, ducks, capon, partridges, goose, and another New World import: turkeys (both Jerusalem artichokes and turkeys reached Europe through earlier explorations of the Americas). In a seafaring nation, it isn't surprising to see a lot of fish on the menu; mentioned in the book are sturgeon, bream, pike, carp, salmon, cod fish, tench, roach, haddock, eel, lobster, crab, oysters, and mussels, representing both salt-water and fresh-water fish.



Other recipes in *The Sensible Cook* are for baked goods, including savory raised pies and pastries such as various kinds of apple *taert*, a baked good made at that time with short-crust dough. A wedge of *Appeltaart* (in modern Dutch spelling) is still a very common treat in the Netherlands today.

A separate section entitled "The Sensible Confectioner" confirms that food preservation was part of the affluent Dutch kitchen. It provides recipes for preserving "for a whole year" fruits, fruit juices and sauces, or sometimes for preserving by drying. Another separate section, "The Dutch Butchering Time", instructs "how one shall supply oneself with a stock of Meat against the Winter." It gives directions on how to prepare a tub for salting meat to preserve it for the cold months, and talks about smoking meats, making sausages, head-meat, or rolled tripe.

Cooks-in-a-hurry seem to have been as timely a topic then as it is today, because the book begins with a one-page cooking index in which are mentioned "all dishes that are usually prepared so that if one is in a hurry, this list will help to think of what to prepare."

In short, the book gives a full overview of what a well-to-do household should know about food preparation. The book was written for the ever-growing middle class of people who had invested well and could afford to buy country houses where fruits and vegetables could be grown.

As indicated by the ample number of vegetables that were mentioned and of recipes that were provided for them, this work took a step away from medieval cooking manuals, and can be viewed as a more modern cookbook. Nevertheless, it still followed the medieval medical theories first set down by Galen (Galenus) of Pergamum, who lived in the 2nd Century AD. Professor Johanna Maria van Winter, a medievalist, explained in her book *Spices and Comfits* that these theories were based on a scheme of correspondences among sets of four qualities, bodily fluids, and temperaments. The four qualities were cold and warm, dry and humid; the four fluids were blood, phlegm, and yellow and black bile. The four temperaments, and their corresponding qualities and main fluids, were as follows:

- sanguine: warm and humid (blood)
- choleric: warm and dry (yellow bile)
- melancholic: cold and dry (black bile)
- phlegmatic: cold and humid (phlegm).

The seasons of the year and the stages of life also fit into this scheme: youth, like Spring, was considered warm and humid; adolescence, like Summer, warm and dry; middle age, like Autumn, cold and dry; and old age, like Winter, cold and humid. Foods and medicaments were characterized in this way as well. In case of illness, it was judged that the balance between the humors had been disturbed by external causes, and the imbalance could be treated with foodstuffs or pharmaceuticals possessing the qualities in deficit. We find this clearly reflected in the recipes. Fish, for example, was thought to be cold and humid; this quality needed to be balanced in the preparation, by boiling or spit-roasting the fish, and by adding a sauce or seasoning with warm spices.

Adapting to America

Those practical merchants who formed the West India Company intended that New Netherland be not only self-sufficient, but also able to provision the company's officials and ships engaged in the fur trade and the Atlantic trade.

The settlers brought fruit trees such as apples, pears and peaches, seeds for vegetables such as lettuce, cabbages, parsnips, carrots, or beets and for herbs like parsley, rosemary, chives, or tarragon. Farm animals such as horses, pigs, or cows were also brought here. Aboard ship they had their own stalls and often each had an attendant, who would get a bonus when the animal arrived safely.

The new land was very fertile. Jacob Steendam, one of the three major Dutch-American poets of New Netherland, called the colony "a land of milk and honey". Adriaen van der Donck, who wrote *A Description of New Netherland*, published in 1655, to entice his fellow countrymen to come and settle in the new colony, also was impressed with its fertility. He reports that by the middle of the 17th Century all sorts of European fruits and vegetables "thrive well", and marveled at the native fish, fowl and other wild life that was available in great abundance.

Trade with the Indians was an important aspect of life in New Netherland. The Dutch traded cloth, beads, and ironware such as brass kettles for beaver skins. They used their baking skills to produce breads, sweet breads, and

cookies to trade with the Indians, who valued the wheat bread of the Dutch, which had been unknown to them. An ordinance for Fort Orange and the village of Beverwijck (now Albany) forbids such baking of bread and cookies for the Indians. Evidently the bakers were using so much flour for this trade that not enough was left to bake bread for the Dutch community. Noting this regrettable state of affairs, the ordinance commands the bakers to bake bread twice a week for the settlers. There is even a record of a court case in which the baker is fined because "a certain savage" was seen coming out of his house at a time of grain scarcity "carrying an oblong sugar bun".

In their new country, the colonists continued to prepare the dishes to which they were accustomed. From ship records we know that the West India Company ships brought the settlers the necessary kitchen tools, such as frying pans to fry their favorite pancakes, or irons to make their hard and soft waffles. The Dutch settlers tried to duplicate life in the Netherlands.

Although they continued their own foodways, they did incorporate native foods into their daily diet in ways that were familiar to them, for example, when they made pumpkin cornmeal pancakes (cornmeal instead of wheat flour), or pumpkin sweetmeat (instead of quince paste). For lovers of porridge, it was easy to get used to *sapaen*, the Indian cornmeal mush, except that the Dutch added milk to it. This dish became an integral part of the Dutch-American diet and was eaten in Dutch families until late in the 19th Century.

The daily fare might have been frugal, as the Swedish traveler Per Kalm recounted (we might say "griped about") in his diary entries of 1749-50 when he visited the Dutch in Albany. The frugality was contrasted by real feasts for holidays, special occasions, or guests. From Mrs. Anne Grant's *Memoirs of an American Lady*, published in 1809, we learn that "for strangers a great display was made." She was a Scottish woman, who described in her book her youth spent with the Schuyler family of Albany, and wrote that "In all manner of confectionery and pastry these people excelled...." In the recipe collection of the Albany Van Rensselaers, we see again that the old Dutch recipes for baked goods survived.

Although many descendants might have forgotten the native tongue, they did not forget the taste of the foods of their forebears and continued to enjoy the pastries and other items connected with feasts and holidays, not only well into the 19th Century, but to the present day. Cookies, pancakes, waffles, *oliekoeken*, pretzels, and coleslaw are some of the items that were brought to America by the Dutch colonists. Vestiges from those original food ways can be found in the American kitchen today. The next time you have a doughnut for breakfast, enjoy the crunchy coleslaw that accompanies your sandwich at lunch, or eat a cookie with your afternoon tea, you too will be perpetuating foodways brought here by Dutch settlers more than 400 years ago. ■

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DUTCH FOODWAYS IN THE DELAWARE VALLEY

by Susan McLellan Plaisted

For our monthly demonstration at Pennsbury Manor on June 16, 2013, the volunteer foodways team decided to honor the Dutch contributions to the foodways of the Delaware Valley. We selected and prepared 10 Dutch receipts (recipes) from Peter G. Rose's translations of the 1683 edition of *De Verstandige Kock* (*The Sensible Cook*), an Amsterdam cookbook known to have also been used in the American colonies. This photo story is a record of the event.

The dishes prepared at the hearth for this occasion are assembled at table in the photo below. On the left side, starting at the rear, are a cherry *taert*, rice *koexlens* (fritters) garnished with batter-fried borage leaves, and a bacon fritter.

The receipt "To make a Cherry taert" requires "the most beautiful Cherries". A fine paste was prepared and the bottom crust sprinkled generously with sugar to cover. Each layer of cherries was followed by both sugar and Ceylon cinnamon until full. The *taert* was covered with a top paste and baked in a bake kettle.



Susan McLellan Plaisted is the Proprietress of Heart to Hearth Cookery (web address www.hearttohearthcookery.com), a food history concern based in Bucks County, PA. Her business offers demonstrations of 17th- to 19th-Century Colonial American and European cooking practices as well as Native American foodways; hands-on workshops and classes; slide presentations and lectures; and an educational DVD series. Susan is also the Coordinator of Foodways at

Pennsbury Manor, the recreated 1680s home of William Penn, where she organizes demonstrations on the third Sunday of every month. She is a founding member, Past President, and past newsletter editor of the Historic Foodways Society of the Delaware Valley, a member of Culinary Historians of New York, Culinary Historians of Washington DC, and Past Masters in Early American Domestic Arts. In addition, she is a member of the Food History Committee of both the Association of Living History Farms and Museums (ALHFAM) and the International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP).



©SusanMcLellanPlaisted Heart to Hearth Cookery

Peter Rose describes rice *koexlens* as fritters the size and shape of cookies. These were prepared by boiling rice in fresh milk until thick, but keeping the rice whole. When the mixture is thick, saffron, cinnamon, crushed rusk that has soaked in rose-water, sugar, and eight eggs were stirred in. The batter was fried in butter and presented to table with grated sugar.

"To fry a Bacon fritter" was prepared by laying four strips of bacon in a pan, soaking white bread (with crusts removed) in fresh milk, and mashing the bread fine when completely saturated. Eight eggs were added and the mixture poured over the bacon and fried.



©SusanMcLellanPlaisted Heart to Hearth Cookery

The plate of rice *koexlens* was garnished using the receipt “To fry green leaves”. The stems of new leaves of borage were broken off from the leaves, the ribs removed, and the leaves washed. While these were draining dry, eggs were beaten and placed in a flat dish so that the leaves could be dipped in the egg. Once two leaves were dipped, the leaves were fitted together with the back of the leaf to the outside and fried in butter. Sugar was grated over them prior to being presented as garnish to the plate.

We move now to the middle column of dishes displayed on the table, and again start at the rear. A batter jug was instrumental in preparing the receipt “To fry the best kind of pancakes”. First, the batter was made with six eggs beaten with water and spiced with cloves, cinnamon, mace, and nutmeg. Some salt was added and wheat flour until it would just pour nicely from the batter jug.



©SusanMcLellanPlaisted Heart to Hearth Cookery



©SusanMcLellanPlaisted Heart to Hearth Cookery

“To stew a Hen with Sorrel” was prepared by stewing a hen until almost done and adding freshly harvested sorrel, blades of mace, whole pepper, verjuice, and lemon. The receipt called for a lemon preserved with salt, but a fresh lemon was used in the demonstration.

continued on next page

DELAWARE VALLEY *continued from page 9*

The receipt for "To stew Fava Beans" was prepared with freshly harvested fava beans cooked in water until done, then drained. Butter, chopped parsley, and salt were infused over heat in some mutton broth, and then the cooked fava beans were added. The beans were presented to table on a bed of parsley.



©SusanMcLellanPlaisted Heart to Hearth Cook



Moving on to the rightmost column of dishes, and again starting at the rear, we come to Currant Soup. To prepare this dish, red currants were freshly picked, stripped from their stems, and steeped in Rhenish wine, water, some butter, and sugar. White bread was placed in a pewter dish, the soup was poured over it making the bread soggy, and this was sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon.

©SusanMcLellanPlaisted Heart to Hearth Cookery

All sorts of herbs were indicated as ingredients in the receipt "To make Egg-fritters which are good", but the cooks were limited to what was available in the local historic gardens, which included borage, catnip, spinach, calendula, fennel, violet leaves, sorrel, leaves of currants, and leeks. These herbs were finely cut together and mixed with eggs and finely-crushed rusk, and the mixture was then fried.



All of the cooks were excited by the success of the receipt "To fry waffles". The preparation of the ingredients was quite simple, combining a pint of fresh milk to each pound of wheat flour. To this was added some melted butter with four eggs and a spoonful of yeast. More complex was the heating of the waffle iron, the buttering of the iron, and determining with smell and sight when it was time to open the iron.

THE BATTERIE DE CUISINE OF HOLLAND

by Alice Ross

The good citizens of Holland have traditionally taken great pride in their pots and pans, a good many of which were made of copper and brass. They were cleaned and polished assiduously. It would seem the chief intention was to keep them looking bright and shining, almost to the point of not wanting to soil them or incurring corrosion by cooking in them. Other pots were made of iron or ceramics.

Their cuisine was a simple one, typified by *hutspot*, a stew that combined pork, beef, and lamb with vegetables. This national dish was prepared in a single pot according to the general rules for stewing: start with the cubed meats, and when they are almost tender, add the onions, potatoes, carrots, and finally peas.

World-famous for their gardening—their canal system afforded them ample irrigation—the Dutch used vegetables and berries prolifically. They were also noted for Edam and other cheeses, products of their ample dairy herds. Although the Dutch maintained Asian colonies that exported spices (largely nutmeg and cinnamon), their cuisine remained fairly bland, with the important exception of their colonial Indonesian *rijstafel* (“rice table”), a lengthy meal consisting of a number of different highly-seasoned dishes served at the same sitting, accompanied by individual rice bowls, to be sampled according to the whims and preferences of the participants.

In compiling the following information about the traditional kitchens of Holland and New Netherland, I have relied on a few different types of sources. First, over a period of many years I have gathered a collection of heritage pots and pans, and have often used these in my hearth cooking and my teaching. Books on Dutch history, kitchen and farm antiques, eating habits and utensils, and cooking have been especially helpful to the research, in particular these three:

- Donna R. Barnes and Peter G. Rose, *Matters of Taste: Food and Drink in Dutch 17th-Century Art and Life* (Albany, NY: Albany Institute of History and Art and Syracuse Univ. Press, 2002)
- David Steven Cohen, *The Dutch-American Farm* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1992)
- Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Knopf, 1987).

Dutch paintings offered another venue from which to glean material, notably those of Vermeer (for example, “Lady Pour-



Dr. Alice Ross is a co-founder of the Culinary Historians of New York and a member of the International Association of Culinary Professionals. She earned a Ph.D. in food history at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and lives in Smithtown, Long Island, where she teaches classes in traditional cooking techniques at her Alice Ross Hearth Studios (<http://www.alicross.com/>). In addition, she teaches about food and culture at Queens College and other schools, and has served as a consultant for museums on the East Coast. Dr. Ross writes a monthly column, “Hearth to Hearth”, for the *Journal of Antiques and Collectibles*.

ing Milk”) and Vincent Van Gogh (“The Potato Eaters”). Also helpful are old collectible trade cards printed in Holland that depict relevant objects.

Cooking for Lean or Rich Times

The Dutch *batterie de cuisine* is broad, encompassing a variety of materials and designs. It seems to reflect two distinctly different styles of dining: the somewhat frugal, routine meat-and-potatoes of daily eating, and the rich banqueting mode. These two styles were commonly interspersed—the lean meals being the custom most of the time, but when there was an occasion to celebrate, they let down the bars!

Delft plates and tiles depict a number of different food-related activities: perhaps most impressive is the calendar of food-related events. Some show gathering firewood, raking hay and filling a horse-drawn wagon, shooting geese flying overhead, and picking apples. The Metropolitan Museum of Art sells a calendar-related series of Delft dinner plates, appropriately decorated: March, for example, shows the garden being planted, and April picking herbs; September is the apple-picking month, October is for beer-making, and November is represented by slaughtering. Other ceramics represent farming processes: one plate shows a farmer hoisting milk cans onto his horse-drawn cart while his wife milks the cow; the background shows the calf eating hay, windmills, the farmhouse, and ducks and geese. In another a woman cooks at the hearth, sitting on a stool; she holds a small frying pan in one hand and a spatula in the other, while a bowl (probably holding batter) rests on the floor beside her.

Dutch pots tended to be generous in size and shape, with bulbous bellies. Pitchers had ample shoulders, and *chocolatieres* had fully rounded bottoms as well as pierced lids through which the stirrer could be inserted. Tea pots were often generous as well.

The Dutch love of sweets and decoration was reflected in gingerbread cookies (*koekjes*) and the elaborately-carved *speculaas* (gingerbread) boards that were used in making them. Patterned after objects of daily life, these cookies were given such forms as people, vehicles, buildings, animals, or foods.

They drank numerous flavors of beer and spirits (particularly gin), for which they blew glass bottles and wine glasses, or produced ceramic or pewter bottles, flacons, mugs, and tankards; the wealthy used silver. Although they favored coffee, they also drank tea, and manufactured appropriate pots for their preparation. These were made of copper or brass: the coffee pots were straight-sided, tall, slender affairs with C-shaped handles, while the tea pots, with the same C-shaped handles, were bulbous, coming to a narrow top with a hinged lid and pouring spout. They used tin basins for washing dishes and pots, rinsing carefully under a steady stream of water.

Metal and Ceramic Utensils

In the traditional Dutch kitchen, utensils made of iron were perhaps the most common, reflecting the ordinary meal. There was a variety of sizes of three-legged cast-iron kettles with bale handles, including frying pans (some without legs and others with three) and spun-iron pans (with and without legs). There were also iron and ceramic three-legged *posnets* (early frying pans with rounded bottoms); stewing pots; saucepans; copper, brass, and ceramic pans and kettles; preserving pans; tea kettles and coffee pots; spits (for holding meats to be roasted) and spit stands; gridirons for broiling thin cuts of meat or fish; lid lifters; forged-iron spoons, ladles, flesh forks, slotted spoons, and skimmers; and, of course, sharp knives of all kinds for slicing, cutting, dicing, or mincing. Additional equipment included hand-pierced tin graters, sieves, flour and pepper boxes, mortar and pestle sets, and colanders.

Those of moderate means also had wafer irons and waffle irons, and perhaps copper baking pans and patty pans (for making small cakes). Some folk used forged toasters to crisp bread slices; these ranged in complexity from a simple long-handled forged-iron fork to a bread-holding gadget that sat on legs before the hearth. Every fireplace needed its own bellows to aid in fire-making, as well as a set of poker, tongs and an ash shovel and ash bucket. Also handy were cooking trivets for holding pots above cooking coals, and pot chains or trammels and S-shaped pot hooks from which to suspend pots over the heat. And every household needed a large cast-iron pot in which to heat dishwashing water, and a basin or wooden tub or pail in which to do the washing.

A family that had a cow also needed a churn to turn cream into butter, and wooden firkins, tubs and ceramic pots to store the butter. Dutch residents produced fine butter. They carved wooden butter-bowls and paddles with which to press out the buttermilk, cleansing it to prevent rancidity. They also created carved wooden butter molds in fanciful designs. Sometimes butter was wrapped in a cloth and stored in a basket set in a cool cellar or a well. Buttermilk was (and still is) delicious when allowed to stand overnight and sour, and for this purpose jars, lidded tin containers, and stoneware or ceramic pitchers were used, often covered with a cloth to keep out flies. Leather and wood buckets were common among the less affluent. The Dutch also wove cheese baskets, used for draining cheeses-in-the-making, among them the famous Edam.



"The Cook", painted during 1657-67 by the Dutch artist Gabriël Metsu

Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

Dutch ovens. It is entirely reasonable to visualize the Dutch buying their cakes and cookies from commercial bakeries. (Later, with electric and gas stoves and ovens common in homes, this all changed.) Oven peels of wood or forged iron were a necessity for those with brick ovens (the Dutch were enthusiastic consumers of breads baked from wheat, rye, barley, oats, and corn), although they frequently baked their breads directly on the hearth, using a "hearth stone" covered

continued on page 18

FURTHER NOTES ON DUTCH FOODS IN EARLY AMERICA

by Randy K. Schwartz

In addition to Peter G. Rose's 1989 edition of *De Verstandige Kock* and the other books referred to in the foregoing articles, a number of additional resources are helpful to those interested in reconstructing early Dutch-American recipes, cooking techniques, and food traditions, as well as understanding their process of Americanization.

Sources and Routes

The household receipt book of the Van Rensselaer family, whose Cherry Hill estate still sits alongside the Hudson River in Albany, provides insight into the dining customs of relatively wealthy Dutch-Americans. A published version¹ assembles kitchen recipes, home remedies, and farming instructions, all drawn from handwritten copybooks maintained during 1785-1835 by Maria Van Rensselaer and her daughter and two granddaughters. Their timber-frame, Georgian-style home, now a museum, was built by Philip Van Rensselaer in 1787 less than a mile from the site of the original Ft. Nassau.

A sample recipe from the Van Rensselaers is that for yeasted fruitcake balls deep-fried in lard, which they called "oly cooks", from the Dutch *oliekoecken*, literally "oil-cakes". Such *oliekoecken* were among the main progenitors of the American doughnut. The anthropologist Paul R. Mullins, author of a recent book on doughnut history, points to a recipe in *De Verstandige Kock* as the clearest ancestor.²

"Puffert" (Dutch *poffertje*, "puffy little thing") is one of the recipes found in a tiny manuscript cookbook compiled in the first half of the 1800s at the Lefferts House in Brooklyn, the home of a prominent Dutch-American family whose papers are kept at the Brooklyn Historical Society. The pufferts are small, puffy, half-globe pancakes made in a special indented stove-pan. The entire recipe reads, "2 lb of flour ½ lb of Sugar ½ lb of Butter a pint of milk 10 eggs some yeast".³ Clearly this was just a memory-aid for a treat that was prepared over and over again in typical Dutch households. Apparently, when made by the Leffertses, plain flour had replaced buckwheat flour, a very inexpensive ingredient that was traditional in Holland. Other interesting recipes in this particular cookbook include Jumbles, Oly Cooks, Cruller, Rusk, Rice Custard, and various kinds of muffins, fritters, waffles, cakes, and sweet or savory pies. Of the 84 recipes, fully 17 are for puddings.

The New Netherland Research Center, housed in the New York State Library in Albany, maintains a vast collection of early documents and reference works on America's Dutch era. "New Amsterdam Kitchen" is their exhibit of pots, bottles, and similar artifacts assembled by the New York State Museum; several of

the items can be viewed online.⁴

Not every Dutch influence in American cookery can simply be assumed to have been brought by settlers from Holland. The Dutch were already influencing British and other cuisines before Henry Hudson sailed westward. An important introduction to this subject is Paul Brewin's 37-page survey of Dutch foods appearing in cookery books in England during the 1600s and 1700s, from Hollandaise sauce to wafers and pancakes. Brewin's paper, which won high commendation in the competition for last year's Sophie Coe Prize, includes historical recipes and is available online.⁵

Dutch cuisine's early incorporation of rice, sugar, spices, citrus fruits, and other Asian foodstuffs is well known. It stemmed largely from the trading monopoly exercised by the Dutch East India Company, founded in 1602. But to what extent did these trade goods, many of them luxury items, reach the New World? Helping answer this question is a recent study focused on Margrieta van Varick, a Netherlands native who with her husband set up in 1686 a retail shop in Vlacked Bos, Breuckelen (now called Flatbush, Brooklyn). She had formerly lived in Malacca, a Dutch-ruled settlement on the Malay Peninsula, and had maintained ties there and to other Dutch trading posts in Asia. A study of the inventory made after her death in 1695 revealed that the Brooklyn shop purveyed a rich variety of Asian goods.⁶ This study also formed the basis for a 2010 exhibit in Manhattan, at the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture.

Hardy Vegetables

Among Europeans, the Dutch, especially the Flemish, were famed for their cultivation of cabbages and other hardy vegetables, and for their use of these in preparing salads (*sla* in Dutch), pickles, and other dishes. The legacy is still felt in America, especially in the Eastern states with their cole slaws, wilted salads, and assorted relishes. One reporter recently observed that kale is "so ubiquitous in Brooklyn that it could be named the borough's official vegetable".⁷

One of the earliest direct accounts of Dutch-American cooking techniques can be found in *Travels into North America*, written by Finnish-Swedish scientist Per Kalm following his 1748-52 visit to New York and New Jersey. Kalm observes, for instance, that Mrs. Visser, his Dutch-American landlady in Albany, makes a salad of shredded cabbage dressed with vinegar and oil or melted butter, something that he has never seen before. He also relates that the Dutch grow a large gourd they call *pumpkin*; its flesh is mashed and then boiled with water and milk to make porridge, or else combined with cornmeal to make thick *pannekoeken* (pancakes), which can either be boiled in water or fried in lard. Molly O'Neill includes extensive excerpts from Kalm in her anthology⁸, while Mark Zanger provides brief excerpts and modern adaptations of Kalm's descriptions of Dutch cabbage salad and celery salad.⁹

Meats and Fats

Jan Longone has written and spoken recently about the shambles (meat market) founded in 1658 on De Breede Wegh (Broadway) on Manhattan, and specifically about the activity there of Asser Levy, a Jewish butcher living under Dutch rule. Levy's kosher meat shop was the first Jewish-owned

establishment of any kind in North America. He would eventually own a slaughterhouse and a tavern as well.¹⁰

The Dutch in the American colonies raised their own beef and dairy cattle, chickens, and (except of course among Jewish people) hogs. Cow's milk and cream was used not only in fresh form but in making porridges and soups, baked goods, excellent butter and cheeses, and other foods.

Virtually every part of the hog was used in some fashion. Pork fat was rendered for use in frying, as noted above in connection with *oliekoecken* and *pannekoeken*. Scrapple (*pon haus*, *panhas*), a sliced pudding of highly-seasoned pork offal and scraps that involves both boiling in water and pan-frying in lard, was first introduced by settlers in the Delaware Valley. It was already an old, frugal custom in the Old Country, in a region that straddled Germany and Holland; the American innovation was to use cornmeal as a binder along with the traditional wheat or buckwheat flour.¹¹

Baked Goods

Among the first few hundred settlers on Manhattan Island was Abraham Molenaar Pieterse van Deursen, i.e., Abraham the miller, son of Peter from Deursen (a town in North Brabant, Netherlands). He arrived, unmarried, in his late 20s sometime before Feb. 1627, with an agreement to operate a windmill for grinding grain; he was apparently the first miller in New Amsterdam. He would later own and operate a number of such mills and a tavern. This miller Abraham has roughly 200,000 direct descendants alive today, scattered across the Americas, including the great majority of all Van Dusens (no matter the spelling), as well as Martin Van Buren (the only U.S. President for whom English was a second language) and Franklin D. Roosevelt.¹²

As millers and bakers, the Dutch played a key early role in the overall history of baked goods in America. In New Netherland, bakers generally used tile stoves, as opposed to the cruder masonry hearths of British settlers. Refined flours of wheat or rye, generally scarce and expensive in 17th-Century New Netherland, were customarily mixed with the more plentiful cornmeal in preparing breads and puddings.

Cornmeal, however, made for a product that was heavy and difficult to leaven. To address the problem, Dutch bakers introduced a European method of using potash, an alkaline baking powder derived from the burnt ashes of wood, seaweed, or deer antler.¹³ This chemical form of leavening was much less expensive than yeast or eggs, and much more effective than simply beating or kneading the dough, which was also toilsome. A refined form of potash called pearl-ash, essentially pure potassium carbonate, was exported from New Netherland, and its use spread through the northern colonies. Amelia Simmons's seminal 1796 work *American Cookery*, published in Hartford, CT, was the world's first cookbook to recommend pearl-ash for leavening.¹⁴

Among the pearl-ash products in Simmons's cookbook are the earliest known American recipes for sweet, crumbly cookies (*koekjes*) and New Year's cakes, traditions introduced by the Dutch. The New Year's cake was essentially a larger version of the cookie, spiced with ingredients such as caraway seed,

powdered coriander or cardamom, or grated orange peel. It was usually disk-shaped, circular or oval, and stamped with an elaborate design, originally made with wafer irons and later, by the mid-1800s, with a specially-carved mold of mahogany wood. Weaver's book and two recent works of Kimberly Sørensen discuss how the cakes and molds were produced, and also cover the whole culture surrounding the New Year's cake tradition and how it gradually spread from Dutch- to English-speaking people in America.¹⁵ Zanger relays a recipe for the somewhat similar *doed koeken* (funeral cakes), which were intentionally baked quite hard to last several years as mementos of loved ones.¹⁶ ■

References

1. Jane Carpenter Kellar, Ellen Miller, and Paul Stambach, eds., *On the Score of Hospitality: Selected Receipts of a Van Rensselaer Family, Albany, New York, 1785-1835*, Revised edition (Historic Cherry Hill, 1986).
2. Paul R. Mullins, *Glazed America: A History of the Doughnut* (Univ. Press of Florida, 2008), p. 38.
3. <http://www.brooklynhistory.org/exhibitions/lefferts/mrs-lefferts-book/>, image 5.
4. <http://www.newnetherlandinstitute.org/history-and-heritage/digital-exhibitions/new-amsterdam-kitchen/>.
5. Paul Brewin, "The Dutch Way: Dutch Recipes in English Cookery Books of the 17th and 18th Centuries", <http://sophiecoepze.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/dutch-way.pdf>.
6. Deborah L. Krohn and Peter N. Miller, eds., *Dutch New York, Between East and West: The World of Margrieta van Varick* (Yale Univ. Press, 2009).
7. Elaine Sciolino, "Trendy Green Mystifies France. It's a Job for the Kale Crusader!", *New York Times*, Sep. 22, 2013.
8. Molly O'Neill, ed., *American Food Writing: An Anthology with Classic Recipes* (Library of America, 2007), pp. 1-4.
9. Mark H. Zanger, *The American History Cookbook* (Greenwood Press, 2003), pp. 20-21, 33.
10. Janice Bluestein Longone, "A Beautiful and Fruitful Place: Dutch Contributions to the American Table", *The Quarto* (Univ. of Michigan Clements Library), no. 31 (Spring-Summer 2009), pp. 11-13.
11. William Woys Weaver, *Country Scrapple: An American Tradition* (Stackpole Co., 2003).
12. Alison Leigh Cowan, "The Van Dusens of New Amsterdam", *New York Times*, Jul. 24, 2011.
13. Betty Fussell, *The Story of Corn* (North Point Press, 1992), pp. 220-229; William Woys Weaver, *America Eats: Forms of Edible Folk Art* (Harper & Row, 1989), pp. 133-134.
14. Randy K. Schwartz, "Getting a Good Rise", *Repast*, 28:1 (Winter 2012), p. 15.
15. Weaver, *America Eats*, pp. 112-117, 122-125; Kimberly L. Sørensen, "Prints Charming: Nineteenth-Century New York Cake Boards and New Year's Cake", in Mark McWilliams, ed., *Celebration: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2011* (Prospect Books, 2012), pp. 326-334; Kimberly L. Sørensen, "New Year's Cakes: A Forgotten Tradition", *NYFoodstory: The Journal of the Culinary Historians of New York*, Vol. 2 (Fall 2013), pp. 1, 14-17.
16. Zanger, *American History Cookbook*, pp. 45-46.

Book Review

WHY FOODWAYS RISE AND FALL

Rachel Laudan,
Cuisine and Empire: Cooking in World History
Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013
460 pp.; \$39.95 hbk.

by Wendell McKay

CHAA member Wendell McKay of Ann Arbor is a cook at Zingerman's Delicatessen, where he has been employed for several years. Originally from Baton Rouge, he holds an M.A. in history from the University of Akron and has taught classes on Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian history and culture. Wendell has reviewed several other books for Repast, most recently Susanne Freidberg's *Fresh: A Perishable History* in our Spring 2011 issue. He has also published horror stories and film reviews.

Histories of cooking, like histories in general, can't have it all. Some manage to take a grand, expansive look at a general subject area, while others focus narrowly on some smaller field. When it comes to food and cooking, the histories usually examine their own specific area of interest. Michael Symons, in *A History of Cooks and Cooking*, looked at the historic culture of cooking from a lyrical, Antipodean perspective. Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, in *Food: A History*, propounded a more global perspective, but from the mildly skewed angle of a rightfully renowned world historian who couldn't stand butter. Reay Tannahill, in probably the best-known attempt at synthesis, *Food in History*, tended to straddle distinct histories of both food and cooking, often from a perspective heavily indebted to high and courtly culture. All of these had their advantages, but a substantial general history of cooking seemed, at least to this reader, like an unattainable ideal. Rachel Laudan's *Cuisine and Empire* isn't *quite* that ideal, but it comes closer than any other work of my acquaintance.

Laudan's book might be not only the most comprehensive history of cooking, but also the most systematic. The author, who was originally a scholar in the history of science, is now an accomplished food historian living in Texas after long stints in Hawaii and Mexico. *Cuisine and Empire* frames the history of cooking in terms of global "foodways", each anchored to a particular staple: mil-



let, rice, wheat, etc. Starting with the process's prehistoric origins, she tracks it through different eras— rather than stages— of civilization, each growing shorter with the passage of time and the increase of communication.

Each foodway tended to gain its cultural strength from a certain power group, be it the Fertile Crescent civilizations that grew wheat or the Han Chinese who developed rice cultivation after their imperial expansion into South China and Southeast Asia. One of the major factors in the success of this approach is the growing strength of European and American imperialism. As economic power centered more and more on the North Atlantic, the major staples— beef and grain— proliferated throughout South America and Australasia. Additionally, "New World" products like potatoes and tomatoes migrated east and west across the Pacific and Atlantic, transforming Asian and European cuisine. Previously disparate areas of treatment— geographically and culturally— come together for a more global perspective. Normally, these matters would be individual subjects of food history, but Laudan manages to treat them in a way that makes them central to the history of food's transformation— via cooking.

Laudan runs along a familiar track, but with different wheels. The traditional periodization of world history—prehistory, antiquity, medieval, and so on—is dutifully followed, but the newness of methodology and freshness of approach make it an exciting journey for even the most jaded student of history. The needs of Neolithic cultures and the earliest civilizations entailed not only the cultivation of grains—wheat in some places, millet in others—but also the development of cooking cultures and foodways, especially in complex and highly organized societies such as Sumer or China. These latter marked the beginning of a long association—in most of the world’s cultures—between culinary practices and constructs of political and social power.

As cultures and cuisine developed, their meaning took on added force with the clash of civilizations and empires. Not only was cuisine a way to define status within societies, but it could also reflect differences between rivals—often with an explicit moral meaning. One early example Laudan explores is the condemnation by Greek and Roman writers—Plato and Cato the Elder, most famously—of the overdeveloped, over-prepared richness of “Eastern” food, particularly cuisines belonging to rivals like Persia and Carthage. That these protests emerged at a time when Athens and Rome were busy conquering their own empires was hardly coincidental.

The care and importance given to matters of cuisine—in ancient times as well as our own—was always reflective of an idea that the act of eating was in some sense a morally loaded one, a process that ensured the continuity of life and the proper order. Although the centrality of diet is obvious to “moderns” on a biological level, it was just as obvious to people like Plato on a spiritual level. Bread, for example, in all its simplicity, was the perfect metaphoric vehicle for a new belief such as Christianity to spread its message through the ancient Roman world. As transformative missionary religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam began to rise on the backs of old, decaying empires such as Rome, Persia, and even Han China, these religious connotations became even more paramount. Ashoka, ruler of India’s Mauryan Empire during the Third Century BCE, promoted simpler Buddhist cuisine, as much as he promoted the religion’s ideals, in his quest to purify and—perhaps more importantly—unify his variegated realm.

The need felt by these religions to expand, and the resulting clashes between them, saw new hybrid cuisines created, particularly in early multiethnic hotspots such as Spain and northern India. The complexity of the Christian-Muslim interaction, especially in the form of the Crusades, was reflected in the Muslim influence on medieval European food, an importance codified with the prominence of sweets and sugar in Taillevent’s 14th-Century *Le Viandier*. Continent-wide upheavals such as the Mongol invasions did their own work of culinary transmission; the popularity of stuffed dumplings throughout Eurasia, from kreplach to samosas, testify to their longevity.

Just as European political power profoundly affected the society and culture of many lands, so it was with food—

beginning with Europe itself. Changes in political and religious ideas, the growth of the nation-state system, and the development of science brought about the growth of what Laudan calls “middling cuisines”. There, the principles of “high” cuisine were married with the ease and relative economy of “low” cuisine to create the mainstream foodway that has held court in “Western”—and, increasingly, world—society ever since.

New scientific theories and the growing dominance of France in European affairs boosted the importance of sauces and mixtures in cooking, a pride of place that trickled down into middling and other cuisines and permanently remade world cooking. Although the new cuisine faced certain pockets of resistance—especially in Spain and England, both rival colonial and world powers—it was there to stay, and provided the theoretical and ideological basis for European culinary world conquest in the following centuries. English “gentry cuisine” tried to weather the storm, and survived to an extent, as shown in the woodcuts of early cartoonists like Charles Williams (a more unusual example than, for instance, Hogarth’s *Roast Beef of Old England*).

Middling cuisine’s relative accessibility made it the dominant foodway of both the European heartland and its colonial outposts or descendants—especially the United States. Just as raw grains such as wheat or rice characterized the cuisines of the great civilizations of antiquity, so white bread and beef characterized the new Anglo-American dominance, although the old French *haute cuisine* still held sway among society’s elites. The new mainstream was buttressed with apparently ironclad scientific evidence from chemists like Justus von Liebig, whose *Animal Chemistry* (1842) first popularized the indispensability of protein.

Although the great cultural centers of the non-European world, such as India and China, and newly aggressive political powers, such as Japan, resisted as best they could, middling cuisine’s commercial supremacy affected even them. During its rise to East Asian prominence during the 1920s and 1930s, the Japanese Army made an attempt to counter Western influence by co-opting it, incorporating “Western” foods and preparation in its army rations. By the end of the 20th Century, the semi-ubiquitous burger joint proudly symbolized the European culinary conquest of the world.

Despite this probable truth, pockets of resistance and pushback had always endured, and grew stronger by the end of the 20th Century. “Ethnic”, or specific national, cuisines had never gone away, and grew, if anything, more powerful through their diffusion by emigrants into new regions like North America and Australasia. For some, a little *too* powerful; American political figures such as Samuel Gompers and James G. Blaine railed against the influx of Chinese food, especially rice, into the Anglo-American world, seen as just as much a threat to American working manhood as its cooks’ very existence was to American labor. Resistance could be global. The explosion of packaged noodles on the other side of the Pacific, from Sumatra to the Kurils, and largely led by Japan, was countered with local

continued on next page

CUISINE & EMPIRE *continued from p. 17*

variants; the Indonesian brand Indofoods habitually dominated sales figures in maritime Southeast Asia around 2000, in contrast to the more “mainstream” Japanese brands.

The sheer affluence of Western society, too, led to an interest in “slow” or “traditional” food, now readily available to those with the time and money to afford it and purposed as a defense against the depredations of industrial agriculture and the mainstream Anglo-American foodway. This strategy, too, spanned oceans: the Slow Food movement, founded by Italian activist Carlo Petrini, was originally a movement to safeguard and rejuvenate European national cuisines; only later did it resonate in the Anglo-American heartland. The story ends, as it exists today, with a globally dominant foodway under increasing and myriad challenges from traditional cuisines, from new ways of thinking about and eating food, and, to some extent, from its own success.

Although Laudan’s “final thoughts” occupy only a few short pages at the end, they cast a long conceptual shadow. Her interpretation applies as much to our own time as to those in the past, and the moral interpretation of food for political purposes comes into play just as much. Whether it’s the call for simpler eating from commentators like Michael Pollan (perhaps the result of an “agrarian-romantic myth”), or the “obesity panic” that’s grown so prevalent since the turn of the present century, they fit just as easily into the existing and immemorial pattern of elites dominating the discourse on both food and cooking (with, perhaps, just as much scientific justification as earlier conceptions of food and its worth). Whatever one thinks of their rights and wrongs, they fit just as recognizably into a parade of successive “truths” that went by the wayside on the next discovery.

The story Laudan tells has been told before, most of all by the chroniclers already mentioned, but it’s never quite been told with the breadth and detail demanded by Laudan’s own concerns. Although *Cuisine and Empire* involves itself plenty with the social construction and organization of cooking—utensils, machinery, methods, ingredients, professional specialization, and so on—she never loses sight of the fundamental political questions that cooking and its development have posed to human society. Every advance, every development, comes always in tandem with some change or flux in the power structure. To some extent this is only common sense: people live in societies, they need food to live, and so those who control the society must needs have at least some control over the food—or its preparation—itsself. Laudan, though, exhaustively demonstrates the elusive how and why, and on deeper background than ever before, in the process setting a new standard for global culinary history. ■

BATTERIE DE CUISINE *continued from p. 13*

with an iron bowl and firing it with embers to produce a makeshift oven.

Specially designed pans of cast iron with indented pockets were used to make a type of small globed pancake called *poffertje*. These cakes were flipped with knitting needles, and were often sprinkled with powdered sugar and served as dessert. Griddles were used to make flatcakes, in particular *appelkuchen* or *appel pannenkoeken* (apple pancakes). They were so popular that Holland became known for its snack-food restaurants specializing in them.

Dishes and Storage Vessels

Pewter, porcelain, ceramic, and wood dishes and platters were used in food preparation, storage, and consumption.

As one British traveler observed of Amsterdam in the late 1800s, the Dutch manufactured “mighty” metal dishes and wooden trenchers “big enough to hold the princely swan or the kingly peacock, or an ostrich, or whatever small game happened to be in fashion at the time.”* There were spoons, chargers, plates, serving bowls and dishes, mugs, tankards and flagons made of silver, pewter, and wood. The *krug*, a type of pitcher or jug, had a bulbous bottom, narrow neck, sometimes a hinged lid, and a large C-shaped handle. Coffee roasters or grinders and spice grinders abounded. Strainers were constructed of loosely woven horsehairs stretched over deep wooden rims.

Bowls came in assorted sizes, from one-cup size to others that were very large. (Bread rising required a large one, naturally.) Earthen pots stored meats for souring, spicing, or vinegaring. There were tea cups, sugar bowls, and creamers. Serving bowls were dipped into with spoons; sometimes family members helped themselves from the serving bowl directly, without benefit of individual place settings. In wealthier homes there were silver chafing dishes and fish plates, and tin plate covers to retain heat before serving; most homes had platters, cheese plates, or trays.

Ceramics were gaily colored and patterned, typified by Majolica dishes and Chinese porcelain (copied by Dutch potters), dishware in green or yellow glazes, or blue and white painted table service. And there was hand-blown glassware for beverages. Of particular interest was the communal serving dish from which each family member helped himself, in a strict order according to family standing. Tall, tapered water buckets with lidded narrow necks and bale handles held milk or water.

Woven baskets were essential for food storage, for carrying quantities of produce, or displaying items for sale at public markets. Scales and weights were important to farmers who sold their butter and cheese. Wooden chests, cabinets, and buffets, highly decorated with carved and painted motifs, were used to store, present, and process food before serving. There were eel and fish traps and fishing gear used in the canals—the Dutch delighted especially in eels, which were consumed raw or smoked—and perhaps guns for hunting water fowl. ■

* George Henry Boughton, *Sketching Rambles in Holland* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1885), p. 31. The passage originally appeared on p. 177 of his “Artist Strolls in Holland”, *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, vol. 6, no. 392 (Jan. 1883).

MORSELS & TIDBITS

Twice weekly this Summer, the **Arab American National Museum** in Dearborn, MI, is offering a free YallaEat! tour (Yalla! being Arabic for Let's go!). The guided walking tour along Warren Avenue in East Dearborn allows participants to explore the diverse food businesses there and to learn how Arab Americans began to revitalize this shopping district in the early 1980s. Admission is free, but online registration is required at http://www.arabamericanmuseum.org/yallaeat_warren.

Michelle A. Lee has curated "Eating Cultures", an exhibition of artworks inspired by Asian American food and foodways, running May 1-30 at the SOMArts Cultural Center in San Francisco. Using food as a lens, over 30 emerging and established Asian Pacific American artists share stories of global migration, adaptation, entrepreneurship, and the central importance of food in Asian communities around the world. The show has been organized in conjunction with the 17th annual United States of Asian America Festival.

CHAA member **Margaret Carney**, director of Ann Arbor's Dinnerware Museum, announces a Sep. 2-29 exhibition at the Ladies' Literary Club in Ypsilanti, "The Art of High Chair Fine Dining", showcasing the best in contemporary dinnerware for babies and small children by artists in all media. Margaret will treat CHAA to a tour on Sep. 7 (see Calendar, p. 20). Displayed works will be selected as part of the museum's first annual national competition, juried by **Marie Woo**; submit applications electronically by Jun. 23 at <https://www.callforentry.org>.

Two requests from CHAA founding member **Jan Longone**:

- For a Fall 2015 Univ. of Michigan exhibit on "Dining Out: Menus, Chefs, Restaurants, Hotels and Guide Books", Jan is seeking older menus (pre-1976) from all over the U.S.
- For an exhibit on *Gourmet* magazine, Jan seeks a copy of the issues for March 1941 and January 1942, and any of the five-year Indices after 1990.

Anyone willing to give or lend materials should contact Jan first at jblong@umich.edu.

When the famous Florida writer **Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings** scored wide acclaim for her "Utterly Deadly Southern Pecan Pie" and other local recipes in her *Cross Creek Cookbook* (1942), she gave virtually no credit to the source of most of the recipes, her African-American cook **Idella Parker**. "All I ever got from the cookbook was an autographed copy, but in those days I was grateful for any little crumb that white people let fall, so I kept my thoughts about the cookbook strictly to myself", Parker later recalled. "Our relationship was a close one, but it was one that often felt burdensome to me." Of course, the lot that befell Idella Parker was typical treatment for "Black domestic help" under Jim Crow, as we learn in rich detail in *Cooking in Other Women's Kitchens: Domestic Workers in the South, 1865-1960* (Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2010; 304 pp., \$35 hbk., \$24.95 pbk.). All too often, these women were not only subjected to a degrading anonymity, they were paid a pittance for the crushing hours of cooking, cleaning, and nannying. Author **Rebecca Sharpless**, an associate professor of history at Texas

Christian Univ., to a large extent lets them speak for themselves, relaying the often-vivid words found in letters, servants' memoirs, and oral histories such as the Federal Writers' Project narratives. She supplements these stories with data distilled from plantation account books, census records, and other archives.

Thunderous applause, please, for three *Repast* authors:

- **Adrian Miller** won the 2014 James Beard Award in the Reference and Scholarship category for his book *Soul Food: The Surprising Story of an American Cuisine, One Plate at a Time* (Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2013; 344 pp., \$30 hbk.). Adrian wrote the article "'Cold Tea and Colored Cooks': African Americans and Congressional Foodways in the 19th Century" (*Repast*, Spring 2013).
- **Andrew F. Smith** of the New School Univ. in Manhattan will teach two courses there this Summer, "Drinking History: Fifteen Beverages that Shaped America" and "Professional Food Writing". His course this Spring, "Innovators of American Cuisine: A History of the Culinary Arts in the U.S.", was offered as a free Mass Open Online Class (MOOC). Andy will also moderate a panel discussion on "Marcella Hazan: Culinary Luminary" at the New School on June 4. His most recent article in these pages was "Starving the South" in our theme issue on "Dealing with Deprivation: Responses to Foodstuff Scarcities in the Civil War" (*Repast*, Summer 2011).
- **Sean Takats**, who earned his Ph.D. in early modern French history at the Univ. of Michigan in 2002, is now an assistant professor of history at George Mason Univ. in northern Virginia. He published his doctoral research in book form, *The Expert Cook in Enlightenment France* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Univ. Press, 2011; 203 pp., \$60 hbk.). Sean's earlier summary of that material, "Constructing the Cook: The Professionalization of Taste in Eighteenth-Century France", was the cover story of our theme issue on "Paris and the Rise of *Gastronomie*" (*Repast*, Fall 2002).

The second biennial **Dublin Gastronomy Symposium**, with the theme "Cravings/Desire", will take place Jun. 3-4 at the School of Culinary Arts & Food Technology, Dublin Institute of Technology; for more info, visit <http://arrow.dit.ie/dgs/>. This year's **Oxford Symposium** on Food and Cookery, with the theme "Food and Markets", will take place Jul. 11-13 at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, UK; for more info, visit <http://oxfordsymposium.org.uk>. The **Leeds Symposium** on Food History and Traditions took place in York, UK, on May 17, with the theme "Kitchen Technology in England from 1600 to the Second World War".

"Corn!" is the theme of the **Greater Midwest Foodways Alliance** conference, to be held in Sep. 2014 at the Kendall College School for Culinary Arts, Chicago, IL. For more info or the Call to Presenters, telephone 847-432-8255, or e-mail greatermidwestfoodways@gmail.com or visit the website www.greatermidwestfoodways.com. ■

CHAA CALENDAR

Sunday, Jul. 20, 2014

4:00-7:00 p.m., Ladies' Literary Club
(218 N. Washington Street,
Ypsilanti, MI),
Members-Only Participatory Theme
Meal, "Feeding Michigan".

Sunday, Sep. 7, 2014

2:00 p.m., Ladies' Literary Club
(218 N. Washington Street,
Ypsilanti, MI),
Dinnerware Museum Dir. Margaret Carney
gives a private tour of the new exhibit,
"The Art of High Chair Fine Dining".

Sunday, Sep. 21, 2014

3:00-4:30 p.m., Ann Arbor District Library
(343 S. Fifth Avenue),
Peter G. Rose, "Art in Food and Food in Art",
a slide-talk on food and drink in the 17th-Century Dutch
Masters and their relevance to the American kitchen today.
Ms. Rose will also discuss her new book,
*Delicious December: How the Dutch
Brought Us Santa, Presents and Treats*.

Sunday, Oct. 19, 2014

To be announced.

Sunday, Nov. 9, 2014

3:00-4:30 p.m., Ann Arbor District Library
(343 S. Fifth Avenue),
Louis Hatchett, author of *Duncan Hines:
The Man Behind the Cake Mix*.

On the Back Burner: We welcome ideas and
submissions from all readers of *Repast*, including
for the following planned future theme-issues.
Suggestions for future themes are also welcome.

- Summer 2014: Quadricentennial of
Dutch-American Cooking—
Part 2, The Great Lakes Region
- Fall 2014: Mid-20th-Century Cookbooks.

REPAST
1044 GREENHILLS DRIVE
ANN ARBOR, MI 48105-2722

.....

Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor

Volume XXX Number 2, Spring 2014

First Class