

any one cache of early film, will lead to a wholesale re-write of the histories. Nevertheless, we have learned over the years that, given the harsh reality that more than half the films that were produced in the world prior to 1930 are not known to exist and every film from the silent era is a valuable piece of the mosaic, even when it is at least partially complete it will constitute a vital segment of our common cultural history.



*Arrival of Viscount Byng of Vimy at Quebec City to take up his appointment as Governor General of Canada, 12 August 1921. Frame enlargement from British-Canadian Pathe News, 1921. (Public Archives of Canada)*

The Dawson Collection is a somewhat bizarre but nonetheless effective reminder that by no means all the early film that has survived has been recovered. If the permafrost of the Klondike can yield up a significant collection after half a century, what treasures may still be locked away in the attics and basements of the nation, and in the forgotten corners of the film industry's vaults?

Sam Kula  
National Film Archives

## Archives in the Kitchen

Although I didn't know it at the time, I began researching *Out of Old Ontario Kitchens* when I first learned to cook on the hearth. I had little instruction and fended for myself with firewood which demanded smoking embers, heavy and clumsy iron pots, dough which refused to rise and utensils whose function at first was mysterious. A few years later, entrenched in libraries and archives poring over cookbooks and cooking experiences, I was thankful for having had the management of a nineteenth century kitchen. I had a

much clearer understanding of what I was reading. Recipes instructing that the cooking fire be 'clear', 'strong' or 'high' recalled memories of burnt fingers and stinging eyes, suffered while I learnt to control the source of heat.

The idea for my book and the start of archival research was inspired by requests from visitors to the kitchen of Montgomery's Inn, an historic site in Etobicoke, Ontario. I was engaged at the Inn to organize a working kitchen to produce samples of cooking for visitors to taste. We were following traditional recipes and I decided that if a collection was to be compiled, it should be taken from contemporary publications and writings. As a complete novice, I began to haunt archives, libraries and private collections. I was

THE

CANADIAN HOUSEWIFE'S

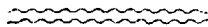
**Manual of Cookery**

CAREFULLY COMPILED

FROM THE BEST

ENGLISH, FRENCH & AMERICAN WORKS,

Especially adapted to this Country.



HAMILTON, C.W.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM GILLESPIE, "SPECTATOR" OFFICE,  
PRINCE'S SQUARE.

—  
MCCCLXI.

*More recipes for Out of Old Ontario's Kitchens were selected from the Manual of Cookery than any other cookbook of the period. (Metropolitan Toronto Library Board)*

Prince Albert Pudding

5 eggs  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. Raisins  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. butter  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. flour  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. powdered sugar  
 beat the butter till it comes to a cream  
 then add flour & sugar & lastly the  
 eggs & raisins chopped very fine 1  
 glass more the juice of half a lemon  
 Butter a plain mould with &  
 strew the inside with  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb of  
 candied peel chopped very fine  
 put the pudding in tie it over  
 with a cloth boil it 2 hours &  
 serve it with a rich custard  
 Same

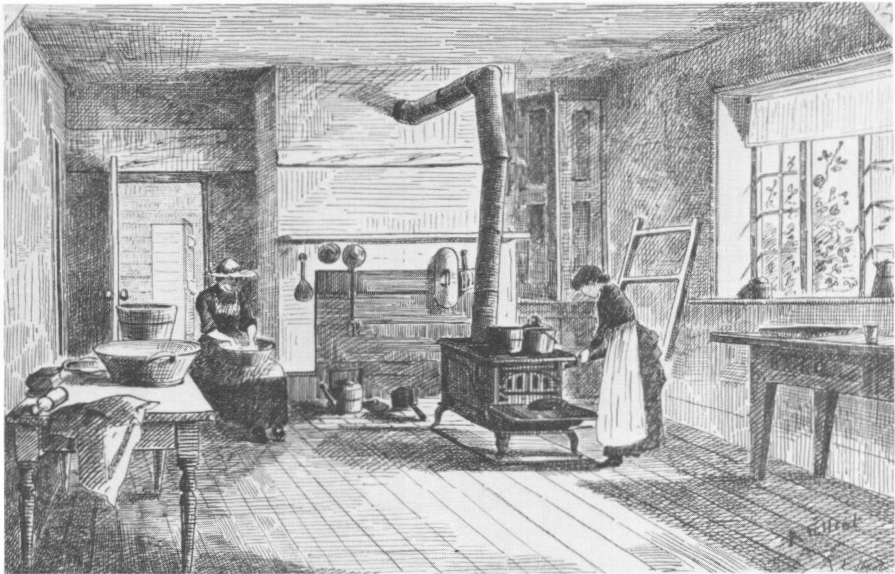
Recipe for "Prince Albert Pudding" from Mrs. Grantham's manuscript cookbook, c. 1860. (Metropolitan Toronto Library Board)

fascinated with what I found. My project of putting together a small collection of recipes changed to a more thorough look at the cooking and eating habits of pre-Confederation Ontario.

It was not difficult to find major cookbooks published in Canada, the United States and Britain. A great deal of information was gleaned from these volumes but I had to take care to ensure that the material was appropriate. Not all families owned cookbooks. Furthermore, what was contained in a cookbook was not necessarily what was prepared. If researchers a hundred years from now wanted to discover what a family ate today, it is doubtful they would get the full picture simply by perusing the cookbook shelf. Important, too, was the origin of the book. The types of ingredients, utensils and style of cooking varied with the country from which the book originated. For example, British cookbooks did not, of course, concern themselves with many of the foods indigenous to North

America. Canadian books, although more appropriate, seldom contained original work, the recipes being adapted or copied directly from British or American books. *The Cook Not Mad*, for instance, published in Kingston, Upper Canada, in 1831 was the first Canadian cookbook but is in fact a direct copy of a volume published in New York the same year. It contains recipes of obvious American sentiment such as "Washington Cake" and "Jackson Jumbles".

Another consideration was the market at which the cookbook was aimed. Many were intended for middle class homes whose circumstances, according to Miss Eliza Leslie's *Directions for Cookery* (1829), "authorize a liberal expenditure". Cookbooks like Miss Leslie's contain sophisticated recipes for a fully equipped kitchen, an amply stocked pantry and a host of servants. These books differ from the likes of Mrs. Lydia Child's *The American Frugal Housewife* (1832), dedicated to "those who are not ashamed of economy". The few humble recipes in these books for the lower classes were interspersed with numerous hints on how to maintain a frugal household.



"The Kitchen. Stafford House" by Arthur Elliot, 1881. (Archives of Ontario, Acc. 3006)

Keeping these considerations in mind, I attempted to complete the picture of the cooking and eating habits of Upper Canadian families by consulting other sources. I was fortunate to find, in both the Metropolitan Toronto Library and the Archives of Ontario, several manuscript cookbooks, where recipes were more closely related to what early cooks actually prepared and preferred. Several had clearly been taken from popular publications but many were original and recorded conversationally, such as this item from an anonymous notebook:

Yeast — Boil, say on Monday evening, 2 oz. of the best hops in four quarts of water, for half an hour; strain it and let the liquor cool down to new milk warmth; then put in a small handful of salt and half a pound of sugar; beat up one pound of best flour with some of the liquor, and then mix well all together. On Wednesday add three pounds of potatoes boiled and mashed,

and it is ready for use. . . The beauty of this yeast is that it ferments instantaneously, not requiring the aid of other yeasts. . . The writer of the above receipt has used this yeast for many months and never had a lighter bread than it affords and never knew it to fail,<sup>1</sup>

Material obtained from cookbooks was most useful when confirmed by contemporary letters and diaries written by early settlers. In particular, the accounts of Catherine Parr Traill, Anne Langton and Mary O'Brien are richly peppered with comments on domestic life.

House Expenses			\$	cts
		1858		
Jan 2 <sup>d</sup>	6 Bus of Indian corn		4	
-	a Fish			25
	1/2 lb Salt Petre			10
- 23	2 lbs Whiting			8
	2 lbs Cast metal			12
- 28	4 lbs Sugar 18 <sup>cts</sup>			72
- 30	1/2 lb of Almonds			30
Feb 4	Candle Wick			11
	2 doz Blacking			25
	1 lb Lead			10
	23 lbs Butter			9
	Car of Groceries			35
	Car of Ducks & Turkeys			50
- 9	22 1/2 lbs Sugar 17 <sup>cts</sup>			382 1/2
-	25 lbs Flour 10 1/2 <sup>cts</sup>			262 1/2
	Box of raisins			175
	7 lbs Tea 25 <sup>cts</sup>			175
	2 lb Coffee 30 <sup>cts</sup>			60
	1 lb Nutmegs 10 <sup>cts</sup> - 10 lb Spice 12 <sup>cts</sup>			22
- 13	3 lbs Cocoa 38			112 1/2
	Bot of Glycerine 40 <sup>cts</sup> - 3 squares Soap 45 <sup>cts</sup>			85
			22	83 1/2
			22	82 1/2

Household expenses of Elizabeth Anderson, Barrie, C.W., 1858. (Archives of Ontario, Mss. Commercial records, #1)

<sup>1</sup> Archives of Ontario, Mss. Miscellaneous Collection #150, Notebook (anon.).

These women settled in the backwoods of Upper Canada and had not the means at first to prepare the fancier dishes many cookbooks advocated. A passage from Mary O'Brien's journal of 1830 makes this very clear, and never fails to evoke empathy from the frazzled cook of all ages:

Accidents began to happen. My little quarter of pork was dangling before the fire at the end of a skein of worsted, for having a loaf to bake I was unable to bake it as usual in the all-accomplishing bake-kettle. I cast my eyes on the said bake-kettle and, behold, its lid was raised upwards of an inch by the exuberant fermentation of the loaf within, which was threatening to run down its side into the ashes. Hastily then I was obliged to resume my labours, and, seizing a knife, I cut from the top of the loaf the exceeding portion and placed it, much to my satisfaction, before the fire on a plate. There I hoped it would soon be converted into capital rusks. Of course the frying pan would have been the natural receptacle, but that was engaged in enacting as a dripping pan for the pork. Oh, who can number up the uses and perfections of a Canadian bake-kettle and frying pan!

I had just turned from the complacent contemplation of my arrangements when a treacherous stick, on which was resting at once for support and heat a saucepan containing a stew of cabbage and an old cock, gave way and my stew was emptied on my rusks. The rusks were spoiled, that could not be helped, but the lucky plate saved my old cock from being buried in the ashes and enabled me to restore my stew. Just then my guests arrived.<sup>2</sup>

I caught many glimpses of the other side of the story—the availability and sophistication of foodstuffs for those who could afford them in settled communities. Canadian newspaper advertisements offered products both domestic and imported, including white prepared flour, refined sugar, oysters, packaged yeast, tons of exotic spices and delicacies, and a myriad selection of ketchups and sauces, such as reported in the *Peterborough Dispatch* in January 1847:

Pickes, sauces and spices — For Sale by the Subscribers, Mogul or real Chetna Sauce, King of Oude's Sauce, Harvey's Sauce, Beefsteak Sauce, Pepper Sauce, Anchovy Sauce, India Soy, Salad Oil, Fine French Capers, Wix's Mustard, India Currie Powder, Jamaica Ginger, Pimento, Black Pepper, Cayenne Pepper, Cinnamon, Cloves, Nutmegs, Mace.

A. MacPhail & Co.<sup>3</sup>

Household accounts were particularly enlightening. Notebooks of Elizabeth Anderson of Barrie, Canada West, include entries for purchases of oysters, salmon, lobster and sardines. Canned goods were available too. Her pantry was well-stocked—at any rate in 1859 when she bought 257 pounds of muscavado or brown sugar and 217 pounds of loaf or white sugar.<sup>4</sup> I found a few printed bills of fare, keepsakes from special dinners, although they were more common in the later Victorian period. One commemorative feast, held in Toronto in 1853, produced a bill printed on silk and attested to the large selection of foodstuffs available at that time. Dessert consisted of “Oranges, Grapes, Melons, Pineapples, Peaches, Figs, Pears, Plums, Almonds, Raisins, Prunes, Citrons, Chow Chow, Ginger, Olives, Ice-creams, Chantilly Cakes, Filberts, Macaroons, etc., etc., etc.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Mary O'Brien, *The Journals of Mary O'Brien, 1828-1838* (Toronto, 1968) p. 141.

<sup>3</sup> *The Peterborough Dispatch*, January 1847. Copy consulted at the Archives of the Peterborough Centennial Museum.

<sup>4</sup> Archives of Ontario, Mss. Commercial Records #1, Household expenses of Elizabeth Anderson, 1857-1895.

<sup>5</sup> Metropolitan Toronto Library, Baldwin Room, Broadside—“Bill of Fare”, 1853.

The culinary traditions of our society are an important part of its history and the sources which describe them remain virtually untapped. *Out of Old Ontario Kitchens* was my contribution to understanding some of these traditions, using some of the archival resources. I feel fortunate not only to have delved into such material but also to have participated in the recreation of domestic activity which, in the words of Catherine Traill, is a part of "the active drama of life".<sup>6</sup>

Christina Bates

Author, *Out of Old Ontario Kitchens*

<sup>6</sup> Catherine Parr Traill, *The Canadian Settler's Guide, 1855* (Toronto, 1969) p. 4.

## Metis Archive Project

In 1972 the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories (N.W.T.), headquartered in Yellowknife and at that time called the Metis and Non-Status Native Association of the N.W.T., hired a researcher to comb through the holdings of the Public Archives of Canada looking for documentation as a basis for land claims preparation on behalf of half-breed scrip holders. While searching for scrip details in various government records, copies of material were obtained that also included other subjects involving Metis people of the N.W.T. Facts about the fur trade, trading post life, transportation, the economy, religion, education and agriculture all involved the Metis and their development as a distinctive people in the north. It was recognised that young Metis could gain much pride and strength from learning about their elders' past. In fact, all Canadians might gain by learning about the Metis of the north.



*Harriet Gladue and Alice (Gaudet) Hardy hunting for birds during an NWT Spring time, c. 1930s. (Metis Association of the Northwest Territories)*