

On the Trail of Jacques Marquette

Part 2: Food Legacies of
the French Canadians



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Rita Cyr (née Dumond, age 18, wife of potato farmer George Cyr, Sr.) in her farmhouse kitchen near Van Buren, Maine, in 1940 with children Geraldine and George, Jr.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

In honor of the 350th anniversary of Sault Ste. Marie, MI—the first permanent European settlement in the central interior of North America—our Summer and Fall issues are examining French food traditions of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence regions. Our Summer issue focused on the earliest French foodways, especially in Canada; now we shift our focus to their legacy, especially in the U.S.

A number of organizations have worked hard to help preserve and promote French heritage in America. The French-Canadian Heritage Society of Michigan (P.O. Box 1900, Royal Oak, MI 48068-1900; <http://www.habitantheritage.org>) has a purview that includes all of North America. Their quarterly journal, *Michigan's Habitant Heritage*, has been published and archived since 1980; in the first two decades, recipes were regularly included. The group meets more or less monthly, usually at the Mt. Clemens Public Library, and has an annual potluck with French-Canadian dishes.

Franco-Americans are the largest ethnic group in the state of Maine. Lewiston, that state's second-largest city, has a population

that is 60% French-Canadian in ancestry. In Lewiston there is the Gendron Franco Center for Heritage and the Performing Arts (<http://www.francocenter.org>); the Franco-American Collection at the Univ. of Southern Maine (<https://usm.maine.edu/franco>), which also hosts the Lewiston-Auburn Poutine Festival featuring all foods Québécois; and, in nearby South Freeport, L'École Française du Maine (<https://efdm.org>). In the far north, there is the Maine Acadian Heritage Council (<http://www.maineacadian.org>).

Published English-language resources relevant to French foodways in North America include:

- Voyageur Heritage (<https://voyageurheritage.com>), a website about Great Lakes French Canadian culture (including recipes), begun in 2013 and based in Michigan, with editor James LaForest
- The website of the Canadian Museum of History (Gatineau, Quebec) has much about the foods of New France (<https://www.historymuseum.ca/virtual-museum-of-new-france/daily-life/foodways>), including interesting material on maple sugar
- Dennis Au, Pat Vincent, Wilma Price, and Sue Rodich, *Old French Town Cookery, including Receipts from the Cookbooks of Descendants of French Residents of Monroe County, Michigan* (Monroe, MI: Monroe County Historical Society, 1979)
- Vern Sneider, "Voyageur Cooking", *The American Sportsman*, Summer 1969, pp. 64-67
- Ralph J. Naveaux, "Remnants of 'Mushrat French' Cuisine in Monroe County, Michigan", *Repast*, Spring 2007
- Special issue on the surviving French tradition of muskrat eating in Michigan: *Repast*, Winter 2004. ■

Repast

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MORSELS AND TIDBITS *continued from p. 19*

meal (*Repast*, Winter 2007), we had mentioned a widespread theory about the parent dish from southern France, *jamabalaia*: that it evolved from European rice paellas and pilafs, and that the Occitan word echoes the main French and Spanish terms for ham (*jambon* and *jamón*), which was a frequent ingredient. But in "Hopping John and Its Surprising Connection to Jambalaya: Celebrating Survival with Food and Dance", linguist and New York resident Anthony F. Buccini argues that jambalaya originated as a genre of Summer vegetable stew, akin to ratatouille, and that the word's root, *jamb*, had descended from *ciambotta*, 'a peasant stew of offal' in the Neapolitan dialect of late medieval southern Italy. It was in Languedoc and Provence, he writes, that jambalaya evolved into a stew that typically included chicken or other fowl, and white rice. This dish was brought to the Gulf Coast, as was a Caribbean-influenced stew of rice and beans that was known in Louisiana French as *jambalaya au congris* and in Louisiana French Creole as *jambalaya defèv* ('bean jambalaya'). In that region, most likely in what is now coastal Alabama, Buccini says, bilingual Black speakers of Louisiana French Creole and English misunderstood "jambalaya" as a Louisiana French Creole phrase *Jan bale* (pronounced *jāmbalé* with the emphasis on the final vowel /e/), 'John the dancer', and translated this into English as 'Hopping John'.

THE CORBETTS AND FRENCH COOKING IN OLD DETROIT

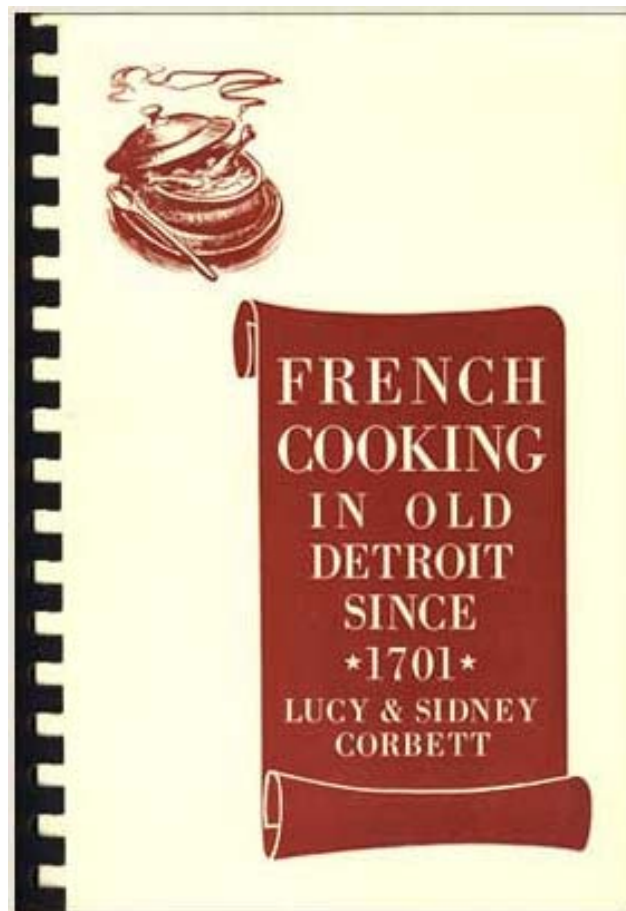
by Robin Watson

Longtime CHAA member Robin Watson is a veteran Detroit-area food and feature writer. Among the publications for which she has written are The Oxford Companion to Cheese; the magazine Culture: The Word on Cheese; and the in-house magazine of Gordon Food Service (GFS). She and her husband live in Taylor, MI.

In the early years of the 18th Century, French and French-Canadian explorers, *voyageurs*, trappers, traders, *engagés*, and settlers arrived in Michigan on various quests: to expand New France ever westward beyond its foothold in Canada; to make a fortune in the fur trade by trapping animals and trading their pelts; to serve out their time as indentured servants; or to put down roots in the New World. Along the way, they made amazing discoveries and shaped history. Their legacy includes the site for *La Ville du Détroit*, its Paris-inspired city-center layout, and the establishment of narrow ribbon farms that extended down to the Detroit River.

The French crown's foothold here was a fairly brief one, lasting just under 60 years before giving way to British, then American rule. Its legacy is still visible in local street and place names, such as Gratiot, Beaubien, Livernois, St. Aubin, Grosse Ile, and River Rouge. Less apparent is a specifically *culinary* legacy. Unlike other North American cities twinned with a French/French-Canadian identity— Québec City, Montréal, and New Orleans— French fare has fared far less well in the Detroit area, at least based on the evidence provided by commercial restaurants.

Contemporary food writer and culinary historian Bill Loomis has written that ads for French restaurants— along with those offering other cuisines— appeared in Detroit newspapers as early as the 1860s. But by the early 20th Century, it was the “exotic” experience offered by Chinese restaurants that most captivated diners. True, French dishes such as *entrecôte*, *bœuf à la bourgignonne*, and cherries jubilee appeared as a hallmark of sophistication on fine-dining menus. More accessible and more widely enjoyed throughout the area were frog legs. At taverns, bars, and casual-dining restaurants, such as The French Village in Detroit, Corrigan's in Wyandotte, and the Frog Leg Inn (which still serves them to this day) in Erie, MI, frog legs came to be a star attraction. They were so popular that the ingredient was eventually being exported to other states, to such an extent that local frogs were over-fished.



Recovering a Faded Legacy

The foodways of the area's early French were not altogether lost. Ironically, two of the cuisine's greatest champions weren't French at all.

Lucy and Sidney Corbett wrote about local history and food from their home on Grosse Ile (French for “big island”). The island is situated in the Detroit River, midway between what is now called the Downriver area, on the west bank, and Amherstburg, Ontario, on the east bank. Significantly, Antoine Cadillac had overnighted on Grosse Ile and considered it briefly as the location of a major French outpost, but moved on after deciding that an island couldn't provide enough lumber to support a stockaded fortification and settlement. On leaving Grosse Ile, Cadillac sailed upriver and straightaway found the straits that would become Detroit.

The Corbetts' folksy food column, “Pot Shots from a Grosse Ile Kitchen”, ran in *The Detroit News* from 1946 to 1953, and then moved to the *Detroit Free Press*. Employing the storytelling narrative style that's in vogue today, the Corbetts wove together the flavor of the past with some of the tenor of their own times. Their columns and charmingly illustrated books (see the sidebar *Vive l' Héritage!* on next page) won fans locally and critical acclaim nationally. Lucy Corbett would pass away in 1955, and Sidney Corbett in 1961.

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THE CORBETTS

*continued from page 3**Vive l'Heritage!*

The Corbetts' books, unlike so many that are quickly remaindered today, are still in print and are available at online booksellers:

- Lucy and Sidney Corbett; illustrated by William Thomas Woodward
Pot Shots from a Grosse Ile Kitchen
(New York: Harper & Bros., 1947)
- Lucy and Sidney Corbett; illustrated by William Thomas Woodward
Long Windows: Being More Pot Shots from a Grosse Ile Kitchen
(New York: Harper & Bros., 1948)
- Lucy and Sidney Corbett
French Cooking in Old Detroit Since 1701
(Detroit: Wayne Univ. Press, 1951)

When reading the works of the Corbetts, it becomes clear how much food writing and culinary-history reportage have changed. The Corbetts focused on engaging tales rather than on rigorous attributions and authenticity. Specifically, they noted that in their book *French Cooking*, recipes were presented “in an American way for an American kitchen.” In contemporizing the recipes, they added references to such conveniences as coffee cream, canned tomato soup, frozen fish fillets, paper bags, etc.

Much, much earlier, and much more authentic, versions of the dishes in *French Cooking* can be found in a pair of 18th-Century cookbooks cited by the French-Canadian Heritage Society of Michigan as significant works. One is *The Professed Cook: Or, the Modern Art of Cookery Paftry, and Confectionary Made Plain and Easy*. B. Clermont, a French cook working in Great Britain, published the third edition of this book in 1776. It was a translation of *Les Soupers de la Cour, ou l'art de travailler toutes sortes d'aliments pour servir les meilleures tables (Court Suppers, or the Art of Working All Kinds of Food to Serve the Best Tables)*, published in 1755 by Menon (the pseudonym of an unknown French cook and author).

The more authentically Old World character of the recipes that can be found in such classics doesn't mean that the Corbetts were off base. About these books—essentially, *The Joy of Cooking* of their time—the French-Canadian Heritage Society of Michigan observes: “Our ancestors may have learned how to cook similar dishes prior to their immigration [sic] to New France and used their knowledge to prepare meals with the foods available to them.”

Published to mark the 250th anniversary of the French founding of Detroit, *French Cooking* is of its time—the 1950s, postwar America. Another notable aspect of this is that the writing is not politically correct. It is peppered with references to “Indians”—Indian raids, fear of Indian raids on *habitans'* livestock, and fur traders hot-footing it on trails or paddling madly in canoes to avoid attacks and capture by Indians or Brits.

But, read beyond that and you'll find insights that help explain how the French influence did or didn't translate to the New World. For example, the Corbetts suggest that the peripatetic nature of the explorers and *voyageurs* helps explain why they didn't leave behind much written documentation of French foodways. On the other hand, such wandering likely also accounts for why the French adventurers who subsisted on cold foods—e.g., cornmeal mixed with bear fat, or maple sugar wrapped in sun-dried, pounded-thin pieces of venison—so revered more elaborate, long-cooked French fare—such as soups and casseroles—when they were holed up at a fort or farm.

Two additional factors also diluted the French culinary legacy in Detroit: (1) the gradual assimilation of French people who remained there, and (2) the migration of others away from the city center following defeats to the British and Americans. This second factor would create a sort of “French diaspora” within what is now Southeastern Michigan. As the Corbetts explained:

Wherever a Frenchman might be transplanted, his kitchen went with him and his new home was built around it. After the old wooden town burned down and the new Detroit sprang up purely American, the *habitan* of the outlying ribbon farm clung stubbornly to his ancient customs. Rather than give them up, he moved away to the St. Clair and Erie marshes above and below the town.

Creativity and Sophistication

Beating back hunger and adapting to the resources and conditions of the New World, while also fulfilling their deeply-held cultural expectations about food, required the French to rise to many challenges. The *habitans* had, wrote the Corbetts:

a determination to serve the finest of foods and to prepare them with loving imagination. If the equipment was primitive the result was always civilized and often sophisticated. For centuries the Frenchman has always known exactly what he wanted in culinary art and how to get it.

Flavor was essential, and the *habitan* went to great lengths to maximize it:

For roasting, he had the open fireplace and the spit, turned by one of the earliest known American labor-saving devices, a little dog trotting endlessly in a birdcage treadmill. Under the spit was the basting trough. Ah—the basting trough! Never in French cookery must we lose sight of that. For here was caught all the dripping meat juices to be further enriched with herbs and spices, then ladled back, over and over the slowly turning roast as it browned before the fire.

In what follows, I present a sampler of the Corbetts' outlook on the historical foodways of Old Detroit, category by category.

Hors d'œuvres. Examples:

- Pickled Mushrooms
- Macedoine of Vegetables

- Smoked Salmon Canapés.

More than mere party food, *hors d'œuvres* were a strategic way to cobble together meals and keep hunger at bay when game fled or were driven deep into the forest, when storms sent fish to the depths of Lake Erie, or when raids destroyed livestock, crops, and grain stores. Moreover, they offered a way to keep up appearances— something very important to the prideful French— by creating an aura of abundance. The eyes could be tricked by a multiplicity of offerings, even if they were a little on the light side:

Every bit of left-over vegetable, meat, game or fish or garden produce in over abundance was pickled, salted, smoked, corned or marinated in a spicy preservative sauce. These were put down in stone crocks and carefully doled out as an adjunct to the harder come-by or often unattainable main dish. Usually they were served as the first course at dinner or as the main course with a luncheon salad or preceded by a thick potage or onion soup, ever favored for supper.

The Corbetts reported further that as Detroit grew in the

1700s, a *charcuterie* was established in the stockade. From it came more elaborate items, such as sausages, headcheese, and liver pâté. These were served with home-cured beef or venison salad, smoked fish, pickled beets, or marinated cabbage and were presented in little wooden bowls.

Casserole Dishes. Examples:

- Cassoulet
- Chicken with Beans
- Chicken Marengo
- Coq au Vin
- Tripe à la Mode de Caen.

Lacking cookstoves, *habitans* relied on the *pot-au-feu* method— cooking food in a kettle suspended over an indoor fireplace. To avoid the heavy cast-iron pots and soot, housewives turned to cooking *en casserole* using clay pots placed in the conical or beehive-shaped oven that was used for baking bread. This oven, called a *four*, was sometimes made of bricks, but more often a mixture of clay and sticks. As the Corbetts described the process:

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How French Food Came to Detroit

The first Europeans to settle in Michigan and the Great Lakes region were French missionaries, fur trappers, traders, and farmers. Michigan was part of the French province of Louisiane from 1682 until 1762, when Britain defeated France in the French and Indian War and the region fell under British control.

Explorer and navigator Samuel de Champlain and his followers had first encountered Indian tribes while searching for new waterways around 1620. Champlain was integral to opening North America to French trade, especially to trappers in search of the beaver pelts used to make men's top-hats. The traders were called *coureurs des bois* or *voyageurs*, the former working independently and the latter employed by government-licensed companies. Their staple foods, adapted from local tribes, included *sagamité*, or hominy stewed with the fat of hogs, deer, moose, or bears; *soupe aux pois*, or split-pea soup (see Denise Paré-Watson's article in our last issue); and *sucre d'érable*, or maple sugar. It was the French who introduced metal cookery implements to our area, such as knives, spiders, griddles, and Dutch ovens.

In 1701 Antoine Cadillac, a French military officer and former fur trapper, founded Fort Pontchartrain du Détroit, a fortified fur-trading settlement. Along with Sault Sainte Marie, it was one of the earliest European habitations west of the Appalachians. Land outside the fort was subdivided into family farms, typically ribbons 3 by 40 acres, with 3 acres fronting the river. Détroit, on the west bank of the river, grew into the largest French settlement between the Upper St. Lawrence and Lower Mississippi valleys, with 800 people in 1765.

Local game had long been depleted by earlier Indian settlers, but the French farmers were able to produce pork, beef, mutton, grains, beans, garden vegetables, and orchard fruits (apple, pear, peach and, after 1793, cherry). In addition, they gathered native wild berries (blueberry and cranberry) and fished in local waterways. Some of these settlers were able to

reproduce classic French dishes on Michigan tables, including *coq au vin*, *bœuf à la bourignonne*, the bean stew *cassoulet*, and black walnut cake. For the more working-class descendants of the fur traders, many of whom intermarried with native peoples, the typical foods included leavened bread loaves; *bouillon*, a soup made with peas, beans, or corn, and flavored with salt pork; *patat et pois*, a dish of new potatoes and peas served in a milk-flour gravy; meat and vegetable stews called *fricassées*; meat-balls, -dumplings, and -pies, called respectively *boulettes*, *glissances*, and *tourtières*, which were often smothered in meat gravy or maple syrup; *boudin* sausage; and fish and other aquatic creatures such as duck, turtle, frog legs, and muskrat, which were often served with wild rice. That fish were still plentiful in the Detroit River itself until 1868 is suggested by these heavily-accented verses:

Up to de fall of seexty-hate
De feeshing it was all O.K.
Along de Reeve of de Strait,
Dere feeshing all de naight and day.

Dey catch de tourgeon and doré
An de whitefeesh all de tam
An wat you spose dat cost you, eh!
Wan poisson blanc for haf a dime.

— excerpted from William Edward Baubie, "The Old-Time Fishing on Detroit River", *French-Canadian Verse* (Chicago, 1917), pp. 44-47.

Baubie (1854-1922), whose great-grandfather Jacques Bâby had migrated from Montréal to Detroit in the mid-1700s, has many descendants scattered around Southeastern Michigan today (<http://babyfamily.org>). Significant concentrations of French-speaking people survived into the late 1800s in Detroit and in certain outlying communities such as French Town in Monroe.

—RKS

THE CORBETTS

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A fire was put in at night— a generous stoking of long burning hardwood logs. In the morning the ashes were raked out and in went the casserole with its succulent contents to chuckle and simmer its day-long untended way. At night it was brought to the table and when the cover was lifted— ah, the cloud of fragrant steam, redolent of tender meat and delicate vegetables bathed and nourished together in their rich juices.

Soups. Examples:

- Pot-au-Feu
- Petite Marmite
- Fish Chowder
- Soupe aux Pois [split-pea soup].

Leaving a pot of soup to simmer over a fire might not seem very exciting to us today, but the Corbetts recognized that for the French, it was seminal:

No wonder the French fur trader and trapper cherished his soup kettle and what went into it. It was a hallmark of civilization. It meant a snug house secure within a stout stockade. It meant a leaping fire on a warm hearth with a tall clay soup pot or marmite buried in the hot ashes. Or an iron kettle swinging from a crane arm, bubbling fragrantly for hours on end. But more than anything it meant the way of life of his motherland far across the sea.

Eggs and Cheese. Examples:

- Omelette
- Oeufs au Beurre Noir [eggs with a browned-butter sauce]
- Egg Croquettes.

Dairy products were introduced from France to the Detroit family farms, and thence to the town markets:

In every French barnyard there is *Madame Vache* with her quarts of milk and cream, her fresh butter and of course a hen coop.... In the early days of the *habitans'* ribbon farms, these barnyard treats were largely for home consumption. But as the town grew, the *bonne femme* was to be seen on market day in the stockade with her prints of fresh butter [i.e., butter imprinted with a design using a wooden stamp], baskets lined with moss displaying brown or white eggs and a wide variety of cheeses of her own making.

Meat, Poultry, and Game. Examples:

- Venison Ragout
- Rabbit Stew
- Canard Sauvage à la Presse [wild duck with a sauce made from its blood and marrow, extracted using a special press]
- Blanquette de Veau [veal in a white sauce]
- Rognons au Vin Blanc [calf's kidneys stewed in a sauce made with white wine].

“It is impossible for us moderns to imagine the staggering abundance of game within easy reach of the little settlement”, the Corbetts wrote. Wild ducks, geese, rabbits, bears (prized for their fat and pelts more so than for their meat), and especially

Trout in Corn Husks

Excerpted from *French Cooking in Old Detroit Since 1701* (p. 82):

This is a method designed primarily for brook trout, but any pan fish— perch, small bass or pickere!— can be used. It's camp fire, open air cookery, and the less time from lake or stream to glowing embers, the better.

Clean and scale the fish and in the cavity place a generous lump of butter, a liberal sprinkle of black pepper, and a strip of raw bacon. Have ready for each fish, a green corn shuck from which the ear of corn has been removed. Insert the fish to replace the ear, smooth down the shuck, and tie it at the silk end. Shove it into the edge of the fire and rake some live embers over it to cover it well. About fifteen minutes will cook the fish to perfection.

deer, were in abundance. So, too, the now-extinct passenger pigeons, which:

were in such numbers as to be a menace. When they roosted at night in a pear orchard the sheer weight of the enormous flocks broke down the trees. To save his orchard, the *habitan* clubbed them to death by the thousands.

Domestic livestock, while harder to maintain, also contributed to the diet:

When it comes to veal, the Frenchman is completely ‘in his plate.’ A cow was kept only for her milk and her calf was not allowed to graze for fear of marauding Indians. It was weaned as quickly as possible after three or four weeks, and immediately slaughtered.

The Corbetts wrote that every part of an animal was used, noting that the French do marvelous things with offal and the lesser cuts of meat.

Fish and Shellfish. Examples:

- Fish Filets Baked in Milk
- Frog Legs Meunière
- Fish Pie.

The pristine waters of the Detroit River and Lake Erie in the 18th Century were teeming with fish— salmon, trout, perch, walleye, lake sturgeon, etc. Two methods taught to the *habitans* by local tribes were planking and roasting fish (especially trout) wrapped in corn husks. Classic French techniques of smoking, poaching, and sautéing were also used. Chowders and improvised *bouillabais*ses, prepared with whatever the *habitans* could get their hands on from the water, were cooked in *chaudières* or fish kettles. Frog legs— which Loomis has written were “the last vestige of French cuisine”— were much loved.

Vegetables. Examples:

- Haricots Verts, Lyonnaise
- Petit Pois, Bonne Femme
- Tarte A L'Onion [sic]

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THE DETROIT *HABITANTS*



NOT CONTENT TO LIVE ON “CORN AND GREASE”

by Randy K. Schwartz

A thesis by Ray De Bruler, Jr., *Land Use and Settlement Patterns in Michigan, 1763-1837*, is a goldmine of information for those wishing to learn more about the imprint of New France on the Great Lakes region. This doctoral dissertation in history was completed at Western Michigan University in 2007 and is available online in PDF form (<http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dissertations/838>).

De Bruler compares and contrasts French and British practices before and after the British took control of French territory in what is now Michigan. In addition, he compares and contrasts settler life at three fortified trading outposts that have been excavated by archaeologists: Ft. Saint Joseph (1691), on the lower St. Joseph River near its mouth on Lake Michigan; Ft. Pontchartrain (1701), on the Detroit River between Lakes Erie and St. Clair; and Ft. Michilimackinac (1715), on the straits between Lakes Huron and Michigan.

Unlike the British colonials, the French valued their North American outposts primarily for their commercial and military role rather than as centers for large-scale settlement (De Bruler, pp. 27-28, 85). Nevertheless, there was some good land around these three forts that could potentially support thousands of settlers. To populate New France, the French monarchy granted tracts of land to *seigneurs* who agreed to bring in a specified number of *habitants*, or settlers. The *seigneurs* had the right to collect rent from the *habitants*, but were required to provide them certain amenities such as a mill for grinding grain (pp. 48-49).

Many of the *habitants* of Detroit had migrated there from the older Canadian settlements of New France, rather than from France itself. This helped shape a culture in Detroit that was somewhat different from that of French settlements elsewhere in Michigan. For example, De Bruler writes, “it is at Detroit that the basic shape of the *habitant* farms, long narrow strips, sometimes called a ribbon farm, was most obvious” (p. 47). Ribbon farms fronting on the river were a land-use innovation borrowed not from France but from the St. Lawrence River settlements in Canada; the pattern contrasted with land use at Mackinac and St. Joseph, which followed a nucleated-village type of layout.

Under French law, a widow could inherit property, and each surviving child was entitled to an equal share of the estate. In conditions where land plots took the form of narrow strips each with a small but crucial riverfront, this meant that the strips became narrower and narrower over time (pp. 12, 14, 48-49).

The French in Detroit successfully grew cereal crops—wheat, oats, and corn (maize)—but their biggest farming success came with tree fruits:

Pear and apple orchards in particular garnered high praise. Bela Hubbard and Silas Farmer noted this phenomenon often in their writings. Hubbard referred to the apple orchards as a “distinguishing feature in the river landscape.” Most farmers had pear trees on their property as well. Pear trees were considered to be “the crowning glory” of the *habitant* farm. The earliest pear trees apparently originated from seeds brought by Jesuits from Normandy (p. 94).

By contrast, trade at the Straits, for example, stayed on a more rudimentary level. The French population there was small and had to rely on the cooperation of local Indian tribes (pp. 15-16). The *habitants* at Ft. Michilimackinac showed no ambition to exploit the land on any large scale. A French official who visited there in 1749 complained:

They prefer living on corn, fish, and deer or moose grease rather than take the least pain to better their life.... Although this piece of land is quite barren, they could nevertheless give themselves some of the comforts of life if they were more laborious.... To put it briefly, they are content as long as they have their corn and grease to live on all year round, which makes me think that for as long as there will be one single pelt to be had in these countries they will never engage in any other business (p. 151).

The “deer or moose grease” is a reference to *sagamité*, a humble stew of hominy and animal fat that the fur traders (*voyageurs*) and other French settlers adapted from local Native American tribes and turned into the staple of their diet.

Given these contrasts, it’s not surprising that after Great Britain took control of most of New France under the Treaty of Paris (1763), French customs persisted in Detroit more than was the case elsewhere in Michigan. The treaty guaranteed continued property rights for the *habitants*, and “because French land use was so ingrained in Detroit, British and American law often had to accommodate the *habitant* population” (p. 47). Evidence shows that French-speakers were only gradually assimilated into Detroit’s Anglo population, and that their culture persisted well into the 1800s (p. 15). De Bruler concludes:

The Detroit area was the most “French looking” of the three locations examined in this dissertation and maintained its Francophone land use for the longest duration. The built environment, the settlement patterns, the language, religion and culture all reflected a distinctly Franco-American way of life, even during the first decades of the American era (pp. 86-87). ■

A *TOURTIÈRE* RECIPE FROM SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN

by Michele Sadler

Michele Rene Sadler, 61, is a longtime resident of Sault Ste. Marie, where she worked in food service for seven years at Lake Superior State Univ. and for two more years at Aramark Corp. CHAA President Mariam Breed and Editor Randy Schwartz met Michele and her husband at Sault Ste. Marie's 350th anniversary festival last July; the couple were staffing a booth for the Chippewa County Genealogical Society and encouraging visitors to explore their family heritage. Michele agreed to write about her own family research for Repast.

I was always told by my family that we are French Canadian, but I did not know what that meant— until my husband and I decided to find our past. What a journey that became! After a couple of years of digging, I now know a great deal about my French Canadian heritage.

My search began with my maternal grandmother, Margaret M. Perron (Nov. 25, 1907 – Aug. 2, 1940). She lived in Sault Ste. Marie but died when my mother was only 6, so not much was spoken about her. However, a picture of her hung on our living-room wall from as far back as I can remember, and I have always been taken by her. Curiosity is a powerful tool!

I also knew that the fur trading business has been a central part of Sault Ste. Marie since the settlement was founded 350 years ago, and I suspected that there had to be a family connection there somewhere. I researched my lineage via Ancestry, Wikitree, and other resources, and what I found was amazing.

As it turns out, my 9th great-grandfather, François Peron (Nov. 15, 1615 – Sep. 18, 1665), had a fur-trading business in Aunis, a province on the west coast of France. He sent his son Daniel to New France to further his business and expand into the new land. Daniel married one of *Les Filles du Roi*, the “Daughters of the King”, which was a royal program to help populate New France by shipping hundreds of Frenchwomen there for fur traders to marry. The bride's name was Louise Gargottin, born about 1637 in La Rochelle, Aunis. The couple lived in Montmorency, a few miles downriver from what is now the city of Québec.

Eight generations separated Daniel and Louise Perron (the new spelling) from my grandmother Margaret Perron. In the 1800s, that line of ancestors left Québec and settled further west in Russell, Ontario, near Ottawa. Later, my great-grandfather, John

Nelson Pascal Perron (Mar. 7, 1876 – Sep. 28, 1948), relocated from Russell to Michigan. My maternal grandmother Margaret was one of his children.

The accompanying recipe for French meat pie (*tourtière*) came from my mother, Jenette Jane Woodgate (Jan. 23, 1934 – Sep. 23, 1990). The copy that I have is on a file card in her handwriting— but she in turn got the recipe from her aunt, who was great with pie making. We would visit this aunt on New Year's Day every year, and we always thought of the meat pie as a New Year's Day Pie.

An important note: the recipe says to mix the potatoes and meat together— which I've heard of people doing— but in our family we always had two separate pies, one meat and one potato!

When I make these pies myself, I roll the dough between two pieces of wax paper. This uses less flour than flouring the surface—which can tend to make the dough too tough— and it also makes it easier to roll the crusts onto the pie plate. I use this same crust recipe for most of my other types of pie, as it is the best such recipe that I have— and I have many.

I hope that this information stirs up interest in others, perhaps to find out where their own families came from and what they journeyed through to become who they are today. The French-Canadian Heritage Society of Michigan (<https://habitantheritage.org/about.php>), based in Royal Oak, has been an amazing resource for me about the fur trade. They have done extensive research on this topic and have a great team; the two whom I have contacted for help are Diane Wolford Sheppard and Suzanne Sommerville. ■

Meat Pie

3 lbs. ground beef and pork
1 tsp. salt and pepper
½ tsp. savory
¼ tsp. sage
¼ tsp. allspice
dash of cloves or parsley
3 large onions
1 clove garlic

Chop onions and garlic. Simmer all ingredients together in a saucepan for 30 mins. Place the mixture in a 9-inch pie plate lined with a crust (see below), and seal with upper crust. Bake at 400° F. for 30 mins., then at 450° F. for another 30 mins. or until golden brown.

Pastry Pie Crust

3 cups flour
1 Tbsp. salt
1 cup shortening
1 cup cold water

Sift flour and salt together twice in a bowl. Use a pastry cutter or a pair of knives to cut in the shortening until pea-size. Add the water a little at a time until dough clings together. Form the dough into two balls, and roll out each one with a rolling pin to form a crust.

A 19TH-CENTURY TOURTIÈRE RECIPE FROM MICHIGAN'S COPPER COUNTRY

by Agnes Dikeman

Agnes Louise Schettenhelm Dikeman and her husband, George Gardner Dikeman, live in Lodi Township just west of Ann Arbor. Agnes is now an Emeritus Director of the Saline Area Historical Society (SAHS). In Sep. 2007 she gave CHAA members a tour of the Depression-era farmstead and kitchen at the Rentschler Farm Museum, which is operated by SAHS. Agnes's previous article for Repast was "Depression-Era Cooking on a German-American Farm in Michigan" (Spring 2007).

My husband's maternal ancestors were French-Canadians from Québec. Jean Baptiste Vinet emigrated from France in 1672 and settled in Trois-Rivières (Three Rivers) on the St. Lawrence River. Although he had little formal schooling, he was knowledgeable about soil and forestry. He was industrious and successful as a *journalier* (day laborer). Several generations later, in the 1880s, his descendant Didace Vinet made his way to the Keweenaw Peninsula in Houghton County, MI. He found work there with the Calumet & Hecla Mining Company, the leading copper producer in the U.S. at the time. Didace was a lumber surveyor, supplying lumber for the mines, and he supervised lumbermen in area camps around Calumet, Lake Linden, Hubbell—all small towns that grew around the camps.



Tourtière

1 lb. lean ground beef
½ lb. ground pork
1 small egg
1 tsp. salt
¼ tsp. black pepper
¼ cup water
1 onion, chopped
1½ tsp. ground cloves, scant

Thoroughly mix the ingredients with your hands. Prepare pie crust and line a 9-inch pie plate; top with second crust and vent with a decorative cut. Bake at 325° F. for 2 hours. Serves 2 or 3.

Didace and his wife Joanna raised a family of eight. At the same time, Joanna ran a boarding house for lumberjacks. She was a good cook.

Tourtière, or what we know as French Meat Pie, was an integral part of holiday-time meals for French Canadians. It is a dish that was eaten only once a year. On Christmas Eve, the family went to Midnight Mass at their local Catholic Church. When they came home, everyone was hungry and the mouthwatering aroma of the meat pie met them at the door. It had been in the oven, slow-cooking for at least two hours.

We shudder to think of having a glass of wine and a piece of the heavy pie and then going right to bed, but that's what they did. It was tradition for young and old.

Didace Vinet's daughter, Marguerite, was born in the 1890s. I met her more than 60 years ago and until she could no longer do it, she carried on the tradition of her family. In due time, she taught me to make the French Meat Pie and gave me the recipe printed here, which she said was her mother's.

Sources tell me that the recipe changes not only regionally, but also family to family. Some cooks use browned meat; others add potatoes, carrots—whatever is handy. The spices also vary: I've seen allspice, garlic, bay leaf, even cinnamon. My mother-in-law made her crust with suet, which is very difficult to blend with flour. She advised me to use a commercial crust. She said, "Don't make your own crust; it will be too flaky." I've followed her recipe for almost 60 years and my husband loves it on Christmas morning. ■

In this family photo from Copper Country, ca. 1910, Stéphanie (née Monette) and Henry Bourbonnais are the older French Canadian couple, seated in the front row flanking a grandchild. Henry, born in Coteau-du-Lac, Québec, in 1838, arrived in Michigan in 1859 on a Lake Superior vessel and worked for mining companies, first as a lumberjack and then as a carpenter. Information and photo from Dr. John P. DuLong of Berkley, MI, via his website <http://habitant.org>.

A DEPRESSION- ERA LOGGING CAMP IN COPPER COUNTRY

by G. Walton Smith and Clarence J. Monette

The account below is excerpted from G. Walton Smith and Clarence J. Monette, A Copper Country Logger's Tale (Calumet, MI: Greenlee Printing Co., 1974), pp. 13-18. Smith, who worked for decades as a lab technician for the Calumet and Hecla Mining Company, had been a lumberjack for several years right out of high school. He died in 1974 just as the book was being brought into print by his co-author, Monette, a prolific local-history writer.

Calumet, a town in northern Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula, was the world's leading copper-mining center from the 1860s to the 1920s. French Canadians and 31 other ethnic groups worked for the copper companies there. The Frenchmen were generally involved in stamping, smelting, logging, or other surface operations; they almost never worked underground as did most of the other groups. Each group had its own church in the town, including Ste. Anne (built in 1901) for the French. When the Great Depression struck and the price of copper plummeted, the mines closed for a number of years and many of the French workers took to private lumberjacking. During 1934-35, Smith and two buddies were hired by a contractor boss to fell timber in the woods around the hamlet of Rabbit Bay and chop it into cordwood. They used one of the boss's little cabins as their base camp; it had a combined kitchen-living room with a wood-burning stove. Smith and Monette's book is a true account of this three-man French Canadian logging crew; only the names were changed. The endnotes here have been added by Repast.

Although Joe did most of the actual cooking, such as the meals and baking bread, the rest of us would give him a hand. Like most cooks, Joe never measured anything and used whatever was on hand, doing much substitution when necessary. Tibay was elected as the "sweets" cook, and his specialties were chocolate and butterscotch pies.

Our main meat supply was furnished by the state¹ and consisted of venison, prairie chicken, partridge and rabbit. Sam [the logging boss] was a terrific hunter and kept the camp well supplied. An occasional raccoon or beaver would also be added to the meat box. The wooden box was located at the front of the cabin. When meat was obtained, it was put in this cold storage box², with a large rock for weight and our split wood for the

stove piled on top. We would bring a supply of wood into the cabin each evening to rebuild the pile and to ensure we had dry wood. When a fresh supply of meat was put in the box, we lived like kings, eating steak every meal. When the contents were used up, boiling³ and hamburger were eaten until a fresh meat supply could be obtained.

As far as eating went, we did not know there was a depression going on. Breakfast consisted of pancakes, salt pork, eggs, fried potatoes, and homemade bread, which was toasted on top of the stove and spread with real butter. This was topped with coffee, sugar, and canned milk. Lunch was usually venison meat loaf and pea soup. The pea soup was made in a large kettle, and after it was cooked, the soup put outside and kept frozen. When we wanted some for a meal, one of us would chip off a few chunks and heat it on the back of the stove. We had to watch it carefully because pea soup burns easily when being rewarmed. The usual staple of beans was prepared with venison and salt pork. This was a fairly steady and tasty diet, and we never tired of these foods.

Once in a while, we were able to barter with a nearby farmer for dishwater veal. This was a calf that was fattened on dishwater, without the soap. Supper was our main meal, and we often had beef or venison steaks, roasts, prairie chicken stuffed and roasted, rabbit booyaw⁴, vegetables and always a dessert. We had either cake, cookies, or pies and sometimes frozen cream, which was not bad for lumberjacks.

All of us were from French-Canadian families and were used to French cooking. Joe usually made his Soupe Aux Pois (pea soup) as follows. Before he went to bed, Joe would soak about four cups of whole yellow peas (or whatever kind he was given) overnight in cold water. In the morning, before he left the cabin to work in the woods, Joe would drain the peas and put them in a large dutch oven or iron kettle, whichever was clean. He then covered the peas with cold water, added a hunk of salt pork (about a pound or two) with a piece of venison, several onions, salt and pepper. Sometimes rabbit, squirrel or muskrat was also included. The soup simmered the rest of the day on the back lid of their wood burning stove. It was stirred occasionally by whoever was around and would put more wood in the stove. If the soup got too thick, a bit more water was added.

When a leg of venison was taken from the box, Joe would wipe the leg clean, sprinkle with salt and pepper and dredge with flour. Bacon or strips of salt pork was put on the top. The roast was then put in the oven for several hours. Sometimes, about a half hour before the meal was to be served, a little water was added for gravy, along with potatoes, turnips, cabbage or whatever vegetable was in season or whatever they could get their hands on.

When Joe decided to make bread at night, after working all day in the woods, he would set the yeast and start mixing the bread, as this was a full night's work. Since we usually had a good supply of homemade moonshine, Joe would start nipping. After a few nips, he would always get his fiddle out and play for his own pleasure. For a while the music was pleasant, but after several more nips, he would get louder and more boisterous. With all of this activity, it was impossible to get any sleep, espe-

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GROWING UP FRENCH CANADIAN IN MASSACHUSETTS

by Bernadette Pelland

Bernadette Alicia Pelland is a retired college professor and administrator and a licensed counselor who lives in Ann Arbor, MI. After growing up in Massachusetts, she completed undergraduate studies at Siena Heights University (Adrian, MI), graduate studies in French and German at Catholic University (Washington, DC), and a graduate degree in counseling at Siena Heights University. She was a Dominican nun for 26 years. Last May she sat down for a recorded interview with a neighbor, Repast Editor Randy Schwartz. What follows is a condensed and edited version of their conversation.

Tell me about your family, and the town where you grew up.

I grew up in the 1930s in Willimansett. It's a community within the city of Chicopee in central Massachusetts, near Springfield and Holyoke. Willimansett and Holyoke are old mill towns on the Connecticut River, very working-class and mostly Catholic. The street where I grew up was very French—most of the families there spoke French. For the most part, what that meant is that their ancestors had come from French Canada. Over many years, French Canadians had come to New England for jobs in the textile, paper, and lumber mills there. In Willimansett, everybody I knew, relatives and family, were all French. The services in our church were in French. Our doctor could speak French, and the family that owned the grocery store could speak French for customers who preferred French.

Growing up, there were four of us children. I had a sister, Anita, and two brothers, Roger and Adrien. My father's parents lived below us on the ground floor of our house, and our own family lived in a four-bedroom place upstairs until I was about 12 or 13. My paternal grandfather, Zacharie Pelland [1870-1934], was born in Joliette, in Québec Province, and had been a silk weaver. His ancestors had migrated to Canada from Morbihan, a department in Brittany, France. He married Sophranie Betie [1871- ca. 1937], who was from St. Lambert near Montreal. After a number of years they left Canada looking for better job opportunities. My grandfather did find work in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, in the lumber operations surrounding the copper mines there. Later, they moved back east and settled in central Massachusetts, where they raised a family. My grandfather continued to work in lumber mills there, eventually became a tavern owner, and was active in local politics.

French Meat Dressing

This is a recipe handed down from Bernadette Pelland's mother, also named Bernadette.

2 medium-sized potatoes
2 generous Tbsp. butter
salt and pepper to taste
1-1½ medium-sized onions
2½ lbs. lean ground beef
½ lb. ground pork
¼ tsp. ground cloves
¼ tsp. poultry seasoning
pinch of ground cinnamon (optional)
1 apple

Peel and boil the potatoes. Drain the water, and mash the potatoes in a bowl with most of the butter, and the salt and pepper.

Chop and sauté the onions in remaining butter until clear. Add the meat and cook it, then drain off the fat. Sprinkle the spices on the mashed potatoes, then add the meat-onion mixture to the bowl of potatoes gradually, stirring really well with a slotted spoon.

Peel and core the apple and slice it. Place the slices in the bird's cavity, alternating with the meat-potato mixture.

This recipe is for an average-sized turkey. Reduce by half for a 4½-pound chicken, but will still have some meat left over.

To make a meat pie (*tourtière*): Reduce the above recipe by half; if desired, the quantities of pork and beef may be equalized. Take the meat-potato mixture (with no apple) and add some crumbs to it, made by crushing 8 Ritz crackers with a rolling pin. Add only enough crumbs to make a light, fluffy mixture. Fill a 9-inch pastry-lined pie plate with the mixture, and cover with a second pie crust. Brush top crust with milk. Bake at 425° F. for 30-35 mins.

Both the baked pie and the meat-potato mixture alone freeze well. If an entire pie is frozen, thaw it first before warming in oven, or else top crust will be less flaky. Can be eaten with ketchup if desired.

My father, Alcide Joseph Pelland, nicknamed Zack, had followed his father Zacharie into the lumber industry. Later he worked as a machinist and also took over the tavern. My mother, Bernadette Ducharme, was from the Boston area originally, but was of French Canadian heritage like my father. Her own parents lived only about six blocks away from us in Willimansett. All four of my grandparents spoke mainly French, but in our own family we usually spoke to each other in English, with some French mixed in occasionally.

continued on next page

MASSACHUSETTS *continued from page 11*

In Willimansett, those of us who were Catholic belonged to either the French church, the Irish church, or the Polish church. Because of the language differences, we did not interact or intermingle very much. The French church had an elementary school; members of other churches attended public school. At the French school, nuns taught us in English in the morning and in Canadian French in the afternoon. Most people who went to that school, like my sister and I, could already speak some French because they came from families where it was spoken. We were all definitely expected to be able to speak French Canadian there.

Many families had sons and relatives who served in the military in World War 1 and 2. Both my father and brothers joined the service. My older brother died in a ship explosion during the Korean War.

Did your mom do all of the cooking in your family?

Yes. I would not say that she was an excellent cook, but I think whatever skills she did have in cooking came from exposure to her mother, who was very competent as a cook. My own mother was very shy, and I think she and her mother didn't get along that well, so my mother did not get the skills for cooking that her mother had.

How commonly did you eat dishes that you would think of as French?

Eating French food was common enough that it was not unusual. It was not a daily routine, but it wasn't just for special occasions, either.

Ragoût, for example, was a French Canadian dish that was very common. I remember I used to help my mother roll the meatballs. The dish was balls of ground beef cooked in a meat sauce, and as I recall, it was usually served over boiled potatoes. The sauce was generally not tomato-based like it would be for spaghetti sauce. Instead, it was more like a broth, cooked down and with some of the meat added to it, so there was a taste of the meat in the sauce, too. *Ragoût* was very, very popular.

My mother also made *tourtière*, or meat pie, and she did it well [see sidebar on previous page]. It's made basically with hamburger and a little bit of ground pork, and potato that's boiled and then mashed up with the meat, and then spices are put in. This mixture would be used to stuff a turkey at Thanksgiving time, or to stuff chicken or game at other times. But most often it was just a dish by itself, eaten plain from a plate. It could be called either *tourtière* or meat pie, but actually people in Willimansett almost never ate it in a pie shell.

As Catholics, we weren't supposed to eat meat on Fridays, but this rule wasn't followed very strictly in Willimansett except during Lent, and especially on Good Friday.

I don't recall that there were any French restaurants in town. The times when we would see French dishes outside the home were at weddings and church-related events.

What were some other French dishes that you remember?

I remember my mother would sometimes make *crêpes*, thin wheat pancakes, for breakfast or lunch, along with maple syrup and sausage or something like that. When she made a soup, she would make it with salt pork even if the soup was mainly a vegetable soup. She would let the soup simmer on the stovetop for four hours or so. *Navets* were turnips, eaten as a vegetable side dish.

A *fricassée* was something my mother made in a saucepan by frying potato and onion and meat. *Boudin* was pork sausage stuffed in a casing, but this would be purchased rather than homemade. I remember the dark blood-sausage type of *boudin*—my siblings and I wouldn't eat it. At times, my father would be the only one in our family who would eat a particular dish. He ate liver and loved it, and my mother would cook it for him, but she never forced anybody else to eat it. Which was very nice of her, because all of us hated the smell of it! ■

LOGGING CAMP *continued from page 10*

cially in such small quarters. The bread was baked the next morning by someone who was still able to know what they were doing.

Joe did not always have time to bake bread, and on those occasions when the bread ran out, he would make Petit Galette (fry bread). In a large bowl, Joe would mix about four cups of flour, three tablespoons of baking powder, a bit of salt, and about a tablespoon of bacon grease or salt pork fat. (Bacon or salt pork fat was never thrown out.) He would mix these ingredients and would then add liquid which was usually a mixture of half canned milk and water to make a cup. After mixing the dough, he would roll it out (using a clean bottle as a roller), cut it into squares, and he would then fry it until golden brown in whatever grease he had on hand. The men would eat the fry bread hot as regular bread or topped with gravy, jam, cheese, or whatever they had on hand.

After our evening cribbage sessions, someone would always ask Tibay, "Are you going to make toast and cocoa for the school teachers and us pansies?" This was our favorite snack, but the men hated to admit the fact.

Editor's Notes

1. This appears to be a sarcastic reference to poaching.
2. This too is whimsical, a reference to the cold weather.
3. Possibly a reference to *bouillon*, which for Franco-Americans is a soup made with peas, beans, or corn, and salt pork.
4. Booyaw is Canadian French for stewed meat and vegetables, a corruption of the French term *bouillon*, "broth, soup".

MORE FRENCH HERITAGE RECIPES

Boudins [Quenelles of Poultry]

From *Culinary Landmarks, or, Half-Hours with Sault Ste. Marie Housewives*, Third Edition, revised and enlarged (Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario: St. Luke's [Anglican Cathedral] Woman's Auxiliary, 1909), p. 39. The entire cookbook is available online in PDF format at <http://www.culinaryhistorians.ca/resources/CanadianCookbooksOnline>.

Note: The word *boudin*, which is related to our word “pudding”, can also mean a casing-stuffed sausage.

Chop small bits of cold poultry very fine and add to each pint one teaspoon salt, a dash of cayenne and a tablespoon chopped parsley. Put in a saucepan one tablespoon butter, one gill of stock, and two tablespoons stale bread crumbs, stir till boiling, add the meat, take from the fire and add two well-beaten eggs. Fill into small greased moulds, stand in hot water and cook in the oven fifteen minutes. Serve hot with cream sauce. — Mrs. J. W. LeBlanc Ross

Glacies de La Salle [Dumplings La Salle]

Adapted from Dennis Au, et al., *Old French Town Cookery* (Monroe, MI, 1979), via Voyageur Heritage (<https://voyageurheritage.com>).

Note: *Glacies* are also called *glissantes*; both terms can be translated as “sliders”. La Salle is a township in Monroe Co., MI.

1 stewing chicken
1 Tbsp. chopped onion
1 Tbsp. chopped celery
1 egg
½ cup milk
½ tsp. baking powder
1 cup flour

Cut up chicken, place in pan, fill water to cover chicken. Add chopped onion and celery, salt and pepper lightly. Boil until chicken is tender and fat forms on surface of water.

While chicken cooks, beat egg in bowl and pour in milk. Add salt and pepper. Gradually add baking powder and flour to make a thin batter; it should have the consistency of heavy cream.

Remove cooked chicken from pan and bring broth to rolling boil. Spoon 2 Tbsp. of batter at a time into the boiling broth. After cooking 5-7 minutes, spoon out each cooked *glacie*. Serve with the boiled chicken.

Cretons Français [Pork Spread]

One of several Québécois recipes contributed by Robert Blais to Voyageur Heritage (<https://voyageurheritage.com>). They had been handed down from his grandmother, Rosa Roy-Blais, and his mother, Catherine Blais.

1½ lbs. ground pork
1 cup dry bread crumbs
1 onion, chopped fine
salt and pepper to taste
⅛ tsp. ground cloves
½ tsp. ground cinnamon
1 cup milk

Combine all ingredients and simmer in a stove pot 1-1½ hours (do not brown), stirring occasionally. Skim off some of the fat. Place in bowls or molds and chill.

THE CORBETTS *continued from page 6*

- Epinards Chantilly
- Pickled Beets.

The Corbetts observed:

The French had a decided flair for vegetables, which are most important in every Gallic household. Usually they are honored by being served as a course, separate from the meat. Often two or more vegetables are combined, cooked with a little salt pork or bacon and served as the main dish. The French *bonne femme* simply hung an iron pot over a crackling fire and put a lot of water into it so she wouldn't have to watch it all the time. When the water boiled she tossed in her vegetables.

Breads and Pastries. Examples:

- Vol-au-Vent
- Croissants
- Brioche
- Marriner Pie [sic].

The beehive-shaped ovens used for casseroles did double duty for baking bread and pastries. “The French housewife of long ago performed amazing feats of bakery art with her primitive oven heated with huge hickory logs”, the Corbetts wrote. “The crusty loaves of good French bread were baked first. When the oven cooled a bit, *petits pans*, delicate *briches*, and flaky *patisseries* came from its warm depths.”

Desserts. Examples:

- Grape Tarts
- Currant Tarts
- Black Walnut Cake
- Fruit Cake.

With no *patisserie* in place, the *bonne femmes* of Old Detroit, unlike their counterparts in France, were forced to make their own desserts. Apples, pears, and cherries grown on ribbon-farm orchards, as well as nuts and wild grapes, currants, and berries, added local flavor to the baked goods.

CLOSE TO THE LAND



A FARM MEAL FROM 19TH-CENTURY MICHIGAN

A platter of several ears of freshly-cut corn, still in their green husks, was the serving-table centerpiece on Sunday, July 15 for “A Seasonal Farm Meal from 19th-Century Michigan”. Three dozen members and friends of the Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor (CHAA) participated in this theme meal, held in the late afternoon at the Ladies’ Literary Club of Ypsilanti. CHAA member Phil Zaret and Club caretaker Rebecca Brinker have our gratitude for orchestrating this memorable event.

The meal’s theme was inspired by Laura Bien’s May 20 talk to CHAA, “Local Farm Foodways: Hints from the Diaries of the ‘Farmeress’, the Poet, and the Schoolgirl”. In that talk Laura, a local author and historian who has studied the archives at the Ypsilanti Historical Society for decades, shared some of what she’s learned from 19th-Century manuscript journals and farm diaries kept at four Washtenaw County farms by William Lambie, Mamie Vought, Phebe Wheelock, and Mary Seaver and her sister.

This was the latest in CHAA’s decades-long series of biannual “potluck” theme meals. Weeks beforehand, the participants thought about the theme and suggestions provided by Phil and selected a dish or two to prepare, using a recipe from a manuscript, a published cookbook, a website, or one handed down from ancestors living in Michigan or beyond. We were fortunate to have Laura Bien as one of our guest participants at the meal. Before literally digging into the dishes, people took turns speaking briefly to the whole group about what they’d made. Below, we summarize the treasure of information shared.

Fruits of the Earth

All four of the local farms studied by Bien were generalist ones selling to local buyers and stores. Their output included cereals (oats, wheat, barley, corn), beans, potatoes, and animal products (beef, pork, lamb, wool, chickens, eggs, and domesticated turkeys). The diaries refer to such typical farm chores as gathering eggs, milking cows, churning butter, baking bread and cakes, harvesting from fields and vegetable gardens, canning fresh produce, salting pork, and making tallow.

Many of the diaries also refer to growing or picking apples, pears, cherries, grapes, berries, or other fruits, either for home use or for sale. Washtenaw Co. and Michigan have been widely known for fruit production, although the orchards of these particular farmers represented merely a sideline activity.

William Lambie of Superior Twp., for example, a Scottish-immigrant farmer who kept a diary during 1863-99, maintained groves with about 400 grafted apple trees in 30 varieties, as well as some peach trees. Some of the apple cultivars that he mentioned in his self-published book, such as Baldwin and Northern Spy, are still popular today, while others are rarely heard of in the Midwest, including Rhode Island Greening, Western Seek-no-further, and Twenty Ounce Pippin.¹ Apples and cider from Scotland itself were world-famous until the late 1800s, when refrigeration allowed lower-cost producers to take over the market.

In the era before refrigeration, pickling and canning were key ways to preserve fruits and vegetables so that they could be utilized year-round. The small, round Seckel pear, first cultivated in the Philadelphia area in the late 1600s, was a favorite for pickling. Teenager Mamie Vought, who kept diaries in 1886 and 1889 at her parents’ 160-acre farm in eastern Superior Twp., mentioned pear pickles in an entry from Sept. 17, 1886. Dorothy Kapp Shear, in a memoir of her German-American girlhood on the Kapp farm just north of Ann Arbor, introduced a recipe for “Mother’s Pickled Pears” by recalling, “Mama also made pickled pears, which were a treat served only on special occasions such as Thanksgiving or Christmas.”²

Pickled peaches, made with a similar artisanship, were brought to our meal by veteran CHAA member and retired caterer Sherry Sundling (née Claxton). Following a recipe from her great-grandmother Claxton, she blanched the peaches in boiling acidulated water before peeling, halving, and pitting them, then simmered these in a syrup that she’d made from water, sugar, apple cider vinegar, and a cheesecloth bag of spices



Ypsilanti Historical Society archives, via *Ann Arbor Chronicle* (Nov. 4, 2011)

An 1870s photo of Scottish-Americans William Lambie, his oldest child Anna, and his wife Mary in the background, on the porch of their farmhouse in Superior Twp. north of Ypsilanti, MI.



Mariam Breed

Sherry Sundling uses her great-grandmother's recipe to pickle and can fresh peaches.

(whole cloves and allspice, cinnamon sticks, and a dash of salt). Sherry writes, "I like to make the syrup the day ahead and let it sit overnight to increase the spice flavors." She simmers the peaches in the syrup for "about five minutes, or until still a bit *al dente*", and finally packs them into sterilized pint jars having tight lids, covering them with the warm syrup to a half-inch from the top of each jar.

Fruits were also front-and-center in some of the other preparations at our meal:

- Stewed fruits, featuring prunes, apricots, figs, and lemon slices, were prepared by Rita Goss using her mother's recipe from Kentucky.
- A fruit salad [contributed by Celeste Novak] of watermelon slices and blueberries was garnished with leaves of orange mint.
- Candied orange peel and lemon peel [Laura Bien and Fritz Passow, with their neighbor Dan Foster] was a huge hit at our meal.

Vegetables Stewed in Butter or Fried in Oil

For men and women living on farms in the days before electricity and mechanization, grueling toil was pretty much the daily norm. To sustain their health, they needed to eat lots of fruits and vegetables for vitamins and other nutrients, and lots of fats (dairy products, fatty meats, and oils) for calories.

CHAA member Barbara Zaret brought us a dish of red and green bell peppers stewed in ample amounts of butter. She used a recipe from a farm journal and receipt book kept by Robert Andrew Sherrard (1789-1874) and his daughter, Nancy Sherrard, near Steubenville in southeastern Ohio. This manuscript journal, running nearly 500 pages, was discovered and purchased about 40 years ago by CHAA founding members Jan and Dan Longone at a rural sale in upstate New York, and more recently was transcribed and commented on by Barbara's husband, Phil.

From the Sherrard journal entry that Barb used, we get a sense of the style and format of farm kitchen "receipts" as they were written down in 19th-Century America:

Stewed Peppers. Cut red or green peppers into halves; remove stems and seeds; cut each half into five or six pieces lengthwise. Put three heaping tablespoonfuls of butter into a saucepan and when hot add the pepper. Shake over the fire for fifteen minutes, then add enough boiling water to cover the peppers; add half a teaspoonful of salt and a dash of paprika, cook slowly for twenty minutes. Serve hot as a garnish to plain boiled rice (p. 342).

Other dishes featuring vegetables and legumes at our meal:

- Deep-fried potato croquettes [Laura and Dan Gillis] were made using a recipe from the 1884 edition of *Mrs. Owens' Cook Book*.³
- Boston baked beans [Larry and Miriam Imerman] were prepared using a 1900 charity cookbook from Michigan's Upper Peninsula, a rare and fragile volume passed down by Larry's grandmother.⁴ He cross-referenced this with an online recipe from the late 1700s, and also added maple syrup along with the molasses. Michigan is historically famed for its beans.⁵
- A salad of fresh string beans and red radishes [Glenda Bullock and guest Susan Davis] dressed in a vinaigrette. The dressing, made from vegetable oil, tarragon vinegar, and onion juice, was from a Sarah Tyson Rorer recipe.⁶
- A salad of greens, heirloom tomatoes, and cucumber [Celeste Novak], dressed in a vinaigrette. The dressing, made from apple cider vinegar, olive oil, and garlic, was made using a recipe from Celeste's grandmother in Michigan.

Corn Dishes and the Light Touch

The kitchen skills of a farmer's wife were pivotal in nourishing her family and the hired help, keeping them together as a reasonably happily-functioning unit. This fact was colorfully highlighted by Samuel Smiles (1812-1904), a Scottish self-help author and public reformer:

Bad cooking is waste—waste of money and loss of comfort. Whom God hath joined in matrimony, ill-cooked joints and ill-boiled potatoes have very often put asunder (*Thrift*, 1875).

We ran across this quotation on the title page of a 1904 church fundraising cookbook from Ann Arbor.⁷ New CHAA member Glenda Bullock had used the book to prepare a corn pudding for our meal. Following a recipe contributed by a Mrs. R. Waples, she cut the corn kernels finely and mixed them in a custard made from eggs, flour, milk, butter, sugar, and seasonings, then baked this in a greased dish.

After their first encounters with maize, European settlers in the Americas generally preferred their own wheat to the alien corn, which was considered "heavy". Most of the corn grown in Michigan in the 1800s was yellow flint corn used as animal fodder. Smaller amounts of corn were used to make corn pone, cornmeal mush, and other unleavened dishes, but the scarcity of wheat often required adding cornmeal to yeasted breads. In the Civil War era a highly effective, industrially-made chemical leavening agent variously called sodium bicarbonate, saleratus,

continued on next page

FARM MEAL

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Mariam Breed

Laura Gillis's deep-fried potato croquettes.

or baking soda, was becoming commercially widely available even to farming families. Baking soda and, later on, baking powder, began to replace both yeast and pearl ash (an earlier-generation chemical leaven) in the home baking of corn breads and other quick breads.

In Ann Arbor in 1867, students at the Univ. of Michigan elected “maize and blue” as their class colors, and these were later made the official school colors. Appropriately, we enjoyed two other maize dishes at our meal:

- Corn bread [Mae and Len Sander] was prepared with commercial baking powder and baked in an oblong casserole dish.
- Sweet corn kernels fried in butter with diced onion [Sherry Sundling] was made with a recipe from Sherry's great-grandmother Ott in Indiana.

Giving Thanks for Meat on the Table

William Lambie, mentioned earlier, was 18 years old in June 1839 when he and his parents and eight siblings arrived in Detroit after a 4000-mile journey directly from their village of Strathavan, just southeast of Glasgow, Scotland. Soon, the family purchased at auction the Moon Farm near the Huron River in Superior Twp. They built a new farmhouse there and settled in. William later recalled:

We... had a fair, square battle with privations, exile and penury for many a day. ... The contrast experienced between mercantile activity in the old country and the solitude of the woods in these early days was something stunning and almost stupifying [sic].⁸

But William's father was able to buy a herd of 150 sheep to provide meat and wool, and he built a spinning wheel and a weaving loom. Ypsilanti, a nearby village incorporated in 1832, would later establish a stockyard where farmers could take some of the animals they'd raised for sale or slaughter.

William Lambie later took over the 80-acre farm, growing oats, beans, wheat, barley, corn, apples, chickens, sheep, and some cattle. Occasionally he hunted rabbits or turkeys. Mary

Campbell, his wife, came from another local family of Scottish immigrants. The Scottish farmers helped popularize dishes such as lamb and mutton, corned-beef hash, and stir-about (oatmeal porridge).

From Phebe Wheelock we have local farm diaries dated 1889 and 1891. Her entry of March 21, 1889, mentions chicken pot pie, still a favorite today. Later that year she wrote that the family “Had chicken pie Cold” for Thanksgiving (November 28, 1889). The succulent version at our meal [Marion and Nick Holt] featured pieces of chicken breast, carrot, celery, green peas, and a white sauce made from a roux with chicken broth, herbs, and spices. Marion used pre-made frozen pie crusts on the top and bottom; in the 1800s, people

making chicken pot pie usually used dumplings of bread dough rather than rolled-out pie crusts.

Other meat dishes at our meal:

- A chicken salad [Judy Steeh and Bob Giovanni] was made from a recipe contributed by a Mrs. L. B. Wheat to a Kansas charity cookbook of the time⁹, and was decorated with sliced hardboiled eggs.
- A skillet hash [Phil and Barbara Zaret] was made with chopped roast beef and diced potato and tomato.

What the Continent Brought to the Meal

The French were the first Europeans to stay in Michigan, including in our corner of the state. Beginning in 1701, they built a settlement of long, narrow lots (“ribbon farms”) fronting on the Detroit River and protected by Fort Pontchartrain. In the middle of the river, Île aux Cochons, or Hog Island (now called Belle Isle) was established as a place where hogs and other livestock could range freely. Hogs proliferated so easily that pork was much less expensive than beef. The French farmers grew very prosperous, but they and their descendants continued to favor pork and lard for many decades. The slaughter of a fattened hog or two, and the salting of its meat for Winter storage, was a traditional Autumn farm task in Michigan as in other places on both sides of the Atlantic.

To honor this French legacy, Robin Watson made us two dishes of breaded salt pork. One of them paired the pork with sliced cabbage, apple cider, and allspice and other seasonings; the other one, with boiled potato instead, was sauced with a gravy also made with salt pork. Both dishes were adapted from recipes in books by Lucy and Sidney Corbett (Robin's article atarting on p. 3 of this issue describes how the Corbetts helped preserve the French cooking of Detroit and Grosse Île, MI).

Michigan was admitted to the Union in 1837, and in the following decade larger numbers of immigrants began to arrive to settle on farmland there. First and foremost were the Germans, whose legacy is most visible on the west side of Ann Arbor and on local old farms with names such as Rentschler (east of Saline), Kleinschmidt (east of Dexter), Kapp (north of Ann Arbor), and Kaercher, Wenk, and Zeeb (all west of Ann Ar-



An 1870s photo of Ignatz and Eva Wenk, German immigrant farmers in Freedom Twp. west of Ann Arbor, MI. Photo via <http://hausegenealogy.com>.

- Pickled beets [Sherry Sundling] were made using a recipe from Sherry’s late husband’s great-grandmother in the Hansen family, which was of Norwegian and Swedish heritage. Sherry simmers and crinkle-cuts the red beets to maximize surface area, packs them in sterilized jars, and covers them with a syrup that she boils from apple cider vinegar, sugar, cinnamon, allspice, and cloves.

The Just Desserts of a Farmer

During the Civil War era, Hiram and Mary Seaver had a farm just south of Ypsilanti. From Mary and her sister we have diaries kept in 1863 and 1870. When Mary mentions the “pie plant” (Apr. 18, 1863), she is referring to rhubarb, which was so often used to make pies. Our rhubarb pie [Judy Steeh and Bob DiGiovanni] was baked according to a very simple recipe from Judy’s grandmother in upstate New York: rhubarb pieces, sugar and seasoning, and a flaky crust on top and bottom— no custard and no strawberries. An 1854 farmer’s notice about the

“Pie Plant” and its eponymous use advised, “Pies of this material cannot be kept long; they are only fit for eating when fresh.”¹⁴

The same charge could never be leveled against the dense and sugary confection known as a transparent pie [Laura and Dan Gillis]. This is a simple baked pie of sugar (and in later decades, corn syrup as well), butter, and eggs, similar to a pecan pie but without the pecans. It is most famous in Kentucky, yet it was mentioned by local farm diarist Phebe Wheelock (Jul. 6, 1889), who had no immediate ancestors from there. Laura tried a recipe contributed by one Mrs. Fred Dresel of Maysville, KY, to the earlier-mentioned *Mrs. Owens’ Cook Book* (p. 186)— but it failed, at which point she turned to the recipe in *The Joy of Cooking* with excellent results.

Wheelock also mentioned (Aug. 21, 1889) molasses cakes [Rita Goss], which are simple but satisfying little cakes, very dark brown in color, flavored with molasses and cinnamon. Rita used white sugar along with the molasses, but otherwise stuck pretty close to an 1847 recipe from Eliza Leslie, which calls for batter “about as thick as pound-cake batter”, leavened with pearl ash or the then-novel baking soda, and baked in patty-pans.¹⁵

Teen diarist Mamie Vought once mentioned (Nov. 25, 1886) making cookies as dessert for a large Thanksgiving Day turkey meal for family and friends, but she didn’t specify the type of cookie. Perhaps they were molasses cookies [Bill Walker and Margaret Carney], medium brown in color, flavored with sugar, molasses, cinnamon, and ginger, and leavened with baking soda. By the 1880s those ingredients, as well as others such as nutmeg, cloves, allspice, dried figs, dates, raisins, and whole coconuts, were imported products offered at local grocery stores. Bill uses a farm recipe from Grandma B, his great-grandmother Lydia Smith Bateman. He recounts:

She was born in 1879, and it is thought that this recipe may have come from *her* grandmother. This is the only family recipe known to date back to that

bor). By the 1890s, the population of Freedom Twp., west of Ann Arbor, was almost entirely German immigrant farmers, around 1000 families, mostly Swabians from southern Germany.¹⁰ The high tide of immigration, for the state and for the country as a whole, occurred in the years around 1900.¹¹

In addition to the French pork dishes, other non-British influences were also evident at our meal:

- Salmon mousse [Jan and Dan Longone], a French specialty, was made using *The Silver Palate Cookbook* (1979) by Julee Rosso (a Michigander) and Sheila Lukins.
- Baked macaroni and cheese [Bob and Marcella Zorn] shows a Franco-Italian influence. Bob used a nationally-celebrated recipe from the Clarkston Union restaurant (located inside an 1840s church on Main Street in Clarkston, MI) that calls for Parmesan, Pinconning, and sharp white cheddar cheeses, and panko crumbs for a crispy crust; he used *ziti* instead of *penne rigate* noodles.
- *Grünkohl* or green kale [Maria and Howard Bromberg and family] is a German braised dish with bacon, onion, and apple.
- *Kartoffelsalat* or warm German potato salad [Randy Schwartz and Mariam Breed] is made by pouring a boiled dressing of water, flour, and vinegar over the cooked diced potato, onion, and bacon. The couple used a recipe that Michigan-native food writer Robin Mather located for them in a local community cookbook in her collection¹², and they cross-referenced this with a Pennsylvania “Dutch” cookbook¹³.
- Cole slaw [Judith Pasich], brought to the Americas by the Dutch (*koolsla*) and Germans (*krautsalat*), was made with Judith’s mother’s recipe using grated red and green cabbage, carrot, and a balsamic vinaigrette.

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time. She lived all her life in New York State, but she had some cousins in Michigan. Her flour bin housed an old coffee cup with the handle broken off.

The success of a communal meal like this one is a small miracle. It relies on the perseverance and ingenuity of our farmer ancestors, and of later generations determined to rescue and preserve foodways now more than a century old. ■

Endnotes

1. William Lambie, *Life on the Farm: And Selections in Prose and Poetry* (Ann Arbor, MI: The Courier, 1883), pp. 49-50. For more on the heritage apples of Michigan and Washtenaw, see J. Amadeus Scott, "These Branches Still Bear Fruit", *Repast*, 25:3 (Summer 2009), pp. 5-10.
2. Dorothy Kapp Shear, *Farm Girl in a Feed Sack Dress: Memoirs of a 1940s Michigan Family Farm* (self-published, 2011), pp. 47-48.
3. Frances Emugene Owens, *Mrs. Owens' Cook Book and Useful Household Hints, Revised and Illustrated* (Chicago: Owens Publishing Company, 1884), p. 110.
4. Church of the Redeemer, *The Presbyterian Ladies' Aid Society Cook Book: Tested Recipes from the Ladies of Manistique* (Manistique, MI: Tribune Publishing Co., 1900).
5. See a previous meal report, "Michigan: Feeding Itself and the Nation", *Repast*, 30:4 (Fall 2014), in particular pp. 19-20.
6. Sarah Tyson Rorer, *How to Cook Vegetables* (W. Atlee Burpee & Co., Seed Growers, Philadelphia, PA, 1891), p. 126.
7. The Ladies' Aid Society of the [First] Congregational Church, *The Ann Arbor Cook Book*, Second Edition (George Wahr: Ann Arbor, MI, 1904), p. 254.
8. Lambie, pp. 51, 109.
9. Kansas Home for the Friendless, *The Kansas Home Cook-Book: Consisting of Recipes Contributed by Ladies of Leavenworth and Other Cities and Towns* (Leavenworth: John C. Ketcheson, 1874), p. 72.
10. Dale R. Herter and Terry Stollsteimer, "A History of the German Settlers in Washtenaw County 1830 to 1930" (2009), <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~miwashte/washtenawgermansettlerhistory.pdf>.
11. For more on German-American farm cookery, see Agnes Louise Schettenhelm Dikeman, "Depression-Era Cooking on a German-American Farm in Michigan", *Repast*, 23:2 (Spring 2007), pp. 7-10.
12. Ladies Aid Society of St. John's Evangelical and Reformed Church, *The Rogers Corners Cook Book* (Rogers Corners [in Freedom Twp., Washtenaw Co.], MI, 1951).
13. J. George Frederick, *Pennsylvania Dutch Cook Book* (The Business Bourse, 1935; republished by Dover Publications, New York, 1971), s.v. "Dutch Hot Potato Salad", p. 96.
14. *Prairie Farmer* [Chicago, IL], 14:6 (Jun. 1854), p. 209.
15. Eliza Leslie, *The Lady's Receipt-Book* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1847), p. 226.

Eleanor Hoag, 95

We regret to report the passing of longtime former CHAA member Eleanor Hoag this past Sep. 30 in Hamilton, Montana, at age 95. She had been an active and very well-liked member of our group during 2000-14 before moving from Ann Arbor to Haines, Alaska, to be with family. She had relocated to Hamilton last January for health reasons.

Born Eleanor Mathilda Bartz in Chicago, she earned degrees in English at the Univ. of Illinois and Columbia Univ., and worked as a high school English teacher in a few other cities before moving to Ann Arbor in 1951. Eleanor taught English as well as World History & Geography for 27 years at Ann Arbor High School and later at Pioneer High School. In 1954, she married fellow educator Leonard B. Hoag, with whom she would raise a son and a daughter.

Her thoughtfulness and largeness of mind were the characteristics that we treasured most in Eleanor. "Listen more and talk less"

was one of her frequent sayings; she would dole out such admonitions with a big dollop of humor. She was always seeking knowledge, interested in world affairs, and active in the community; years of extensive travel had further broadened her outlook. At a CHAA theme meal on "Immigrant Family Cooking" in July 2008, Eleanor reminded our group about the rich depictions of immigrant Nebraska communities in the novels of Willa Cather. Cather had railed against the urge for sameness, and once wrote, in words that Eleanor appreciated: "This passion for Americanizing everything and everybody is a deadly disease with us. We do it the way we build houses. Speed, uniformity, dispatch, nothing else matters." For that meal, Eleanor baked us a loaf of Swedish *limpa*, faithfully following a recipe from the "Pioneer Families" section of the *Nebraska Centennial First Ladies' Cookbook* (1967), which calls for several ingredients not so common or easy to find in America: rye flour, sorghum syrup (purchased from an Amish goods dealer in PA), lard, candied orange peel, and caraway seed. She greatly enjoyed these semiannual theme meals, and dove right into them every time. In Oct. 2005, Eleanor traveled to Kendall College in her native Chicago to attend an all-day symposium celebrating the publication of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, organized by the Culinary Historians of Chicago. She herself was a very good writer, and contributed an extensive report on that event for *Repast* (Winter 2005).



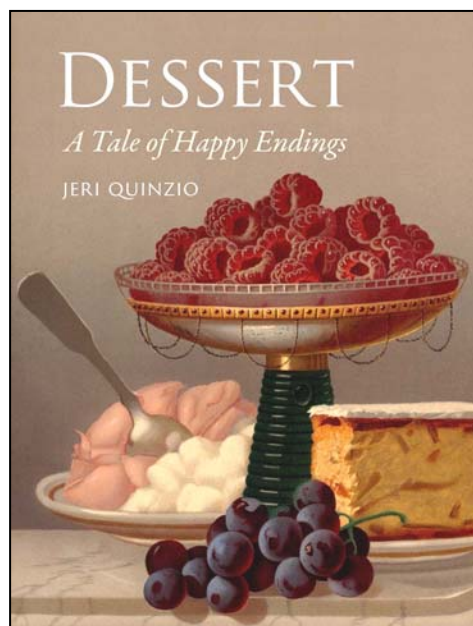
MORSELS & TIDBITS

In partnership with the Ann Arbor District Library, the Ann Arbor-based International Museum of Dinnerware Design (IMoDD) has an exhibit, “Tabletop Stories”, running at the library’s downtown branch Dec. 3 – Jan. 26. The exhibit pairs memorable literature with related dinnerware, such as 1930s dishes from Vernon Kilns inspired by Rockwell Kent’s famous illustrations for *Moby Dick*. CHAA member Dr. Margaret Carney, who is director of the museum, presented an Oct. 3 lecture, “China’s Pompeii: Julu, a Northern Song Ceramic Legacy”, sponsored by the Confucius Institute at the Univ. of Michigan. She described how ceramics, buried and preserved in the silt of a great flood in southern Hebei Province in 1108 CE, have been used to interpret the daily life of the time.

The New York Municipal Archives has organized a Sep. 2018 – Mar. 2019 exhibit, “Feeding the City: The Unpublished WPA Federal Writers’ Project Manuscript” at the First Floor Gallery of the New York City Dept. of Records and Information Services, 31 Chambers St. in Manhattan. “Feeding the City” was a Depression-era writing project of the local branch of the Works Progress Administration. Like the WPA’s national *America Eats* project, the city volume was never published, but the Archives hold a trove of the raw material collected by local writers.

The Smithsonian Institution held its fourth annual Food History Weekend on Nov. 1-3 in Washington, DC. The theme this year, “Regions Reimagined”, used cooking demonstrations, hands-on learning, dynamic conversations, Smithsonian collections, a black-tie gala, and dance performances to explore the history and changing dynamics of regional food cultures in the U.S.

The library and research team at the Arab American National Museum requests help to expand its collection of Arab American restaurant menus. The restaurants can be based



anywhere in the U.S., past or present. The collection will be available for researchers and inclusion in future exhibitions.

Please mail such menus to Library & Resource Center, AANM, 13624 Michigan Ave., Dearborn, MI 48126.

Jeri Quinzio, longtime Newsletter Editor for the Culinary Historians of Boston, has published *Dessert: A Tale of Happy Endings* (London: Reaktion Books, 2018). Desserts as we know them are neither as old nor as ubiquitous as many of us believe.

Quinzio traces the entire history of desserts and the way they, and the dessert course itself, have evolved over time. Her book includes recipes; texts from chefs, writers, and diarists; extracts from cookbooks, menus, newspapers, and magazines; and many illustrations.

The Global Tea Initiative for the Study of Tea Culture and Science was launched three years ago by the Univ. of California-Davis. The Global Tea Initiative is a multidisciplinary project of teaching, research, and outreach to explore ways that tea, the number one prepared beverage in the world, influences everything from ceramics to gender roles to health practices.

In this year that marks the 125th anniversary of the still-running Maxim’s restaurant (1893) in Paris, we take note of several recent books related to the history of dining in the City of Lights:

- Now translated into English by J. Weintraub, *Paris à Table 1846* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2018) by celebrated editor, journalist, critic and gastronome Eugène Briffaut (1799-1854), contains piercing observations of the eating habits of rich and poor strata in the city.

- David Downie’s *A Taste of Paris: A History of the Parisian Love Affair with Food* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2017) is a series of engaging neighborhood vignettes and brief reflections, accompanied by historical recipes and organized chronologically into chapters.

- In *A History of the Food of Paris: From Roast Mammoth to Steak Frites* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), baking-history expert Jim Chevallier uses an engaging narrative style and a wealth of primary sources to trace the entire evolution of Parisian cuisine and its corresponding literary discourse.

- Justin Spring has written *The Gourmands’ Way: Six Americans in Paris and the Birth of a New Gastronomy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017), which chronicles the lives of key American writers (A. J. Liebling, Alice B. Toklas, M.F.K. Fisher, Julia Child, Alexis Lichine, and Richard Olney) sojourning in Paris during 1945-75, and how their love affairs with French food helped spark a revolution in American taste.

- In *A Bite-Sized History of France: Gastronomic Tales of Revolution, War, and Enlightenment* (The New Press, 2018), Stéphane Hénaut and Jeni Mitchell show, in 52 brief chapters, how social, political, and religious factors have shaped French cuisine from the Roman era onward.

The 2018 issue of *NYFoodstory* (<https://www.nyfoodstory.com>), the annual journal of the Culinary Historians of New York, includes a detailed culinary and linguistic reinterpretation of the origins of the classic Gulf Coast dishes jambalaya and Hopping John and their relation to one another. In our report on a Gulf Coast theme

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CHAA CALENDAR

(Unless otherwise noted, programs are scheduled for 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. and are held at the Ann Arbor District Library – Malletts Creek Branch, 3090 E. Eisenhower Parkway.)

Sunday, November 18, 2018

Certified Cheese Professional Michael Donnelly,
“Curating the Ultimate Cheese Board
for Your Holiday Parties”

Sunday, December 9, 2018

4-7 p.m., Ladies’ Literary Club of Ypsilanti
(218 N. Washington St., Ypsilanti),
“Exotic Seaports”, a participatory theme meal
for members and guests of CHAA

Sunday, January 20, 2019,

Miranda Brown, Prof. of Chinese Studies,
Univ. of Michigan,
“Of Cheese and Curds in China”

Sunday, February 17, 2019,

Matthew Jaber Stiffler and Ryah Aqel from the
Arab American National Museum (Dearborn, MI),
“Familiar and Exotic: The Long History of
Arab Restaurants in the United States”

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

- Spring 2019: The Food Industry: Pages from History (Part 4)
- Summer 2019: Immigrant Foods of Steel Country.

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