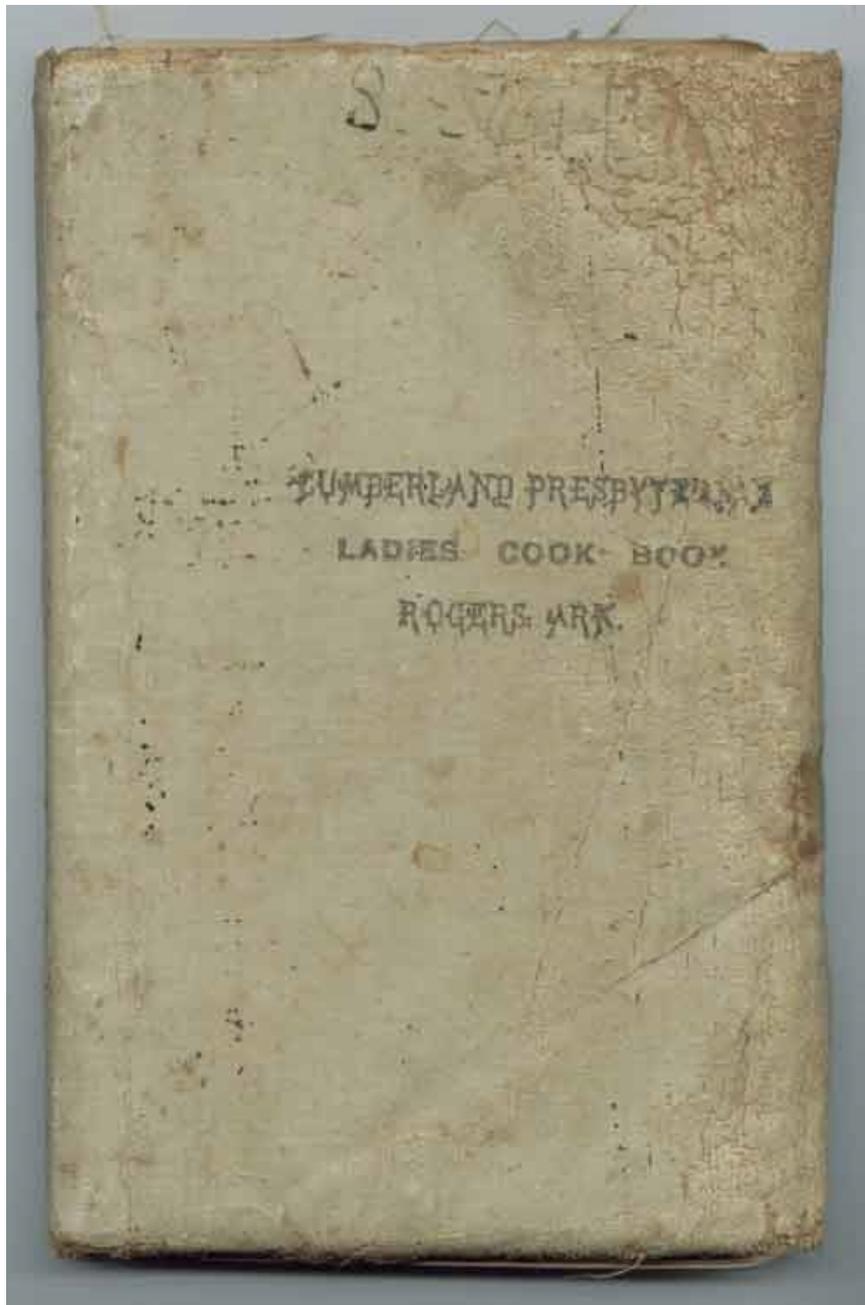


Donation of the Month

Object: Cumberland Presbyterian Ladies Cook Book
Catalog #: 2001.35.9
Donor: Jan Riggs

“Cooking is a fine art, to which you must bring common sense and judgment.” So says *The Rogers Cookbook — A Selection of Tested Receipts Prepared by The Ladies of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church*, printed in Rogers in 1906. This small, cloth-covered volume reflects a wealth of information about cooking history

In early America, most receipts (“received rules of cookery”) were passed on by word of mouth or through handwritten ledgers. The first cookbook written by an American author for an American audience is thought to be *American Cookery* by Amelia Simmons in 1796. Her book proved so popular that many other women wrote books as well, improving and expanding the culinary arts. Nineteenth-century cookbooks often contained more than recipes — remedies, rules of etiquette, household hints — helpful in an era of westward expansion when women left behind the readily available advice of family and friends.



Cookbooks reflect the social, political, technical, economical, and scientific thoughts and achievements of their day. In the 1830s cookbooks like Lydia Marie Child's *The American Frugal Housewife* suggested household economies such as saving every scrap of stale bread to make puddings or placing eggs in lime-water for long-term storage. By the 1840s the growing home economics movement influenced Catharine Beecher, author of the highly influential *Treatise on Domestic Economy*, to advocate school-based instruction for girls in home economics. With the rise of scientific studies of health and nutrition came diet-based cookbooks, such as Dr. Russell T. Trall's *The New Hydropathic Cook-Book*. The cooking-school movement came into play in the 1890s, emphasizing food preparation as a science. It professionalized cooking and spread the word about the role of fats, minerals, proteins, etc., in the diet. Cookbooks seemed to come full circle by the first World War, once again suggesting household economies to make every bite of food count.

Organizational cookbooks like the *Rogers Cookbook* have been around since the mid-1800s. As today, they were used to raise funds for a church, school, or charity. But unlike today they also were also used to promote a cause such as women's suffrage or the temperance movement (whose cookbook featured non-alcohol-based recipes), or they put forth the author's theories about the relationship of food to health or civilization.

The *Rogers Cookbook* was likely produced as a fund raiser for the Cumberland Presbyterian Church which was organized in 1883 by the Reverend Peter Carnahan with 20 charter members. The congregation met infrequently until it built its own building at Fourth and Walnut in 1896. The church merged with others in its early years, first with the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. in 1904 and later with the Congregational Church in 1910, officially becoming the Presbyterian Church of Rogers in 1911.

Early receipts featured simple seasonings and cooking techniques compatible with a limited palette of fresh and preserved foods. Receipts were written colloquially, with ingredient measurements expressed as a "pinch of salt" or a "knob of butter" and cooking temperatures described as a "hot fire" or a "medium boil." Women were expected to know what such descriptions meant because of long years of training at their mothers' knees. It wasn't until the cooking-school movement of the 1890s that Fanny Farmer, the "mother of modern measurements," introduced standardized measures at the influential Boston Cooking School. The *Rogers Cookbook* was written in 1906, when the "science of housewifery" was underway. Its recipes includes both old and new styles of measurements, perhaps reflecting the blending of modern cookery with old-school cooks.

The following recipes come from Mrs. Bert Jackman's edition of the *Rogers Cookbook* which was found in the Park & Frances Jackman home at 601 West Walnut by their great granddaughter, Jan Riggs. The Jackmans had a long and influential history in Rogers. In 1892 Col. H.T. Jackman moved his family here along with sons Bert and Park. He owned extensive tracts of land around Fort Smith, Rogers, and in the Indian Territory [Oklahoma] as well as several prominent businesses, including the Rogers Water Works. The recipes have been copied as written, although a few misspellings have been corrected and punctuation has been altered for clarity. Listed after each recipe is the contributor's name.

Cooking history abounds in a slim volume such as this. For instance, technological advances in food preservation, transportation, and commercialization meant that canned foods were inexpensive, varied, and widely available. At the turn of the 20th century salads set on lettuce leaves or molded into elaborate gelatin creations exploded in popularity as a way to create attractive and tidy foods. With the rise of prepared foods came recipes that were product driven; companies such as Jell-O provided free recipe booklets to eager housewives.

Salmon Loaf

One large can of salmon, three eggs, one cup of cracker crumbs, one cup of sweet milk, one teaspoon of salt, one teaspoon of baking powder. The juice of one lemon, grease cans [used without their tops or bottoms in place of molds] and set in a kettle of hot water and steam for one hour. Serve cold.

Mrs. Wythe Walker

Fruit Salad

One box of jells [unflavored gelatin] dissolved in one half pint of boiling water, when cool add three oranges, three bananas, and one ripe apple, sliced very fine, add juice of one lemon, and set on ice to cool.

Mrs. L.F. Goodwin

The model homemaker proved her worth to her family and peers by serving refined food in a tasteful setting, all the while keeping an eye towards household economies.

Corn Cob Soup

Cut the corn off ten or twelve ears of nice sugar corn, do not cut too close. Put the cobs on to boil with enough water to cover well. Put on lid and boil an hour, set pot back on stove and lift out cobs on a flat pan to cool a little, then scrape them well returning scrapings to the water in which cobs were boiled, of which there should be almost a quart of water, add as much sweet milk, one half cup of butter, pepper and salt and let come to a boil, add a pint of broken crackers set back on stove and let steep two or three minutes, then pour out and serve. If made carefully will be as good as oyster soup and taste very much like it.

Mrs. C.D. Rearick

The influx of Italian immigrants at the turn-of-the-20th-century brought pasta to the American table even though Thomas Jefferson first introduced it in the 18th century. Unfortunately, Anglo-American cooks were timid with this new foodstuff, generally overboiling and underseasoning it to create a bland mush. The following recipe appears to have a bit of flavor.

Spegette

One cup of spegetti boiled with one small onion until tender, have ready one cup of stewed tomatoes, one cup of chipped cheese, one teaspoon butter, salt and pepper to taste, mix all at serving time.

Mrs. A.M. Irelan

In the late 1800s it was commonly believe that women had more refined appetites than men. Women and girls were expected to crave “dainty” foods such as salads, tea sandwiches, and sweets, rather than meat and potatoes, which might explain the large quantity of recipes for cakes, pies, cookies, candies, and other sweets in this cookbook. Some girls even became anemic trying to live up to this popular conception.

Cream Candy

Two cups of sugar, one cup of water, two tablespoons of glucose [corn syrup], a small piece of butter, cook until it will harden in water, then leave until hard enough to mold into small balls. Put half of an English walnut on top of each ball and roll in coconut.

Bonnie Nance

In early America cakes were sturdy creations, made from whole wheat flour, nuts, and fruits in an effort to overcome problems caused by unreliable leavenings and variable stove temperatures.

Excellent Cake

Two pounds flour, two pounds of sugar, two pounds of butter, six pounds of currants, four pounds of citron, ten pounds of raisins, one pound of blanched almonds, twenty eggs, two wine glasses of rose water, one ounce of mace, one ounce of cinnamon, one half ounce of cloves, two grated nutmegs, the yellow of two lemons grated. Beat butter to a cream, add sugar and beat with the hand until very light then add rose water, then eggs well beaten, then juice of lemon, spice and almonds chopped fine and flower, last the fruits dredged in a little flower, bake from four to six hours.

Mrs. Stover

Before ovens and oven temperatures became reliable, cookie recipes and ingredients were fairly simple. Most of the cookies in the *Rogers Cookbook* are variations on the basic sugar, oatmeal, ginger, or molasses cookie.

Molasses Cookies

Two cups of molasses, one cup of butter, two eggs, one teaspoon of soda, one teaspoon of baking powder, one teaspoon of ginger, one teaspoon of cloves, flour to mix soft. Roll thick and bake in a moderate oven.

Mrs. Lizzie Hawkins [Mrs. Hawkins was an early resident of the Museum's historic 1895 Hawkins House]

Snipper Doodles

Three fourth cup of butter, one cup of sugar, three cups of milk, two and one half cups of flour, two eggs, two teaspoons cream of tarter, one teaspoon of soda, mix and drop on a tin in spoonfuls, sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Bake in a quick oven.

Lucy Williams

Recipes for making pickles and preserves abounded by the turn of the 20th century as glass jar technology greatly improved and the food rationing practiced during the Great War encouraged home canning.

Chaw Chaw

One gallon of green tomatoes, one pint of sugar, one fourth cup chopped horse radish, one teaspoon of ground cloves, same of allspice, two teaspoons of ground black pepper, three heads celery cut in inch pieces, twelve good sized onions, add one small cup of salt to the chopped tomatoes, and let stand over night. In the morning press out all the juice and add the ingredients with enough good vinegar to cover, boil all till tender and put away for winter use.

Anna B. Robison

CREDITS

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