

Culinary Chronicles

Newsletter of the Culinary Historians of Canada

Asian Foodways

Rice Journeys: Asian Cuisines, New Canadian Foodways

By Jo Sharma and Dan Bender

Jo Sharma and Dan Bender are cultural historians, food scholars, and 'chowhounds' living in Toronto.

"How are you? Have you eaten rice today?"

Asian social encounters frequently open with this question, or a variant thereof. Where rice is the staff of life, this comprehensively covers health and well-being. Rice, in use for the last 15,000 years, is cultivated in an astounding 8000 varieties all over the globe. South Asia's oldest literature, the Vedas (circa 1500-500 BCE) used the word 'dhanā' for rice, as synonymous with food. In fertile river valleys, planting, transplanting, and harvesting rice became the main agricultural activity. Everyday meals comprised plain boiled rice, with sides of lentil, vegetable, chutney, pickle, fish, or meat, available with purse and occasion. Talented householders transformed rice into fried, steamed, parched, and sweet nibbles for in-between times.

In the late-19th and early-20th century, Asian migrants to Canada found a very different situation where its population mostly used rice to alleviate pantry shortages, with rice pudding and croquettes as culinary highlights. While migrant demand increased rice supplies, it awaited the late-20th century globalization of migration, capital flows, and commodity trades for Canadians to discover myriad delicious incarnations of rice. This essay will focus

on two such rice dishes transported from South Asia to Canada: the biryani/pulao and the lamprai/lamprie.

Historic Sanskrit and Tamil literature (circa early centuries CE) spoke of how rice was mostly boiled, but for festive occasions, cooked with lentils, or meat, and garnished with ghee (clarified butter). Such special rice preparations reach us today in the form of the well-known biryani and pulao preparations. The Persian term 'birinj' for rice, and the Sanskrit term 'pallao-mevach' are both cited in the etymology of such dishes (as is Arabic 'pilaf'). Literature from the Mughal imperial court (circa 15th-16th centuries CE) refers to such rice dishes elaborately cooked with spiced meats and ghee, or less commonly with fish or lentils. Chefs' spices included fresh ginger, saffron, black cumin seed, cinnamon, clove, black pepper, cardamom, coriander seed, and anise seed. The chilli, a New World product, entered South Asia sometime in the 16th century, but its literary absence suggests it was not yet in dietary vogue. Mughal elites, influenced by Persian culture, introduced the use of dry fruits such as sultanas and raisins into such festive preparations, an innovation that proved lastingly popular.

Chinese Restaurant Syndrome in Canada, 1968-80

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As South Asians migrated globally, they carried such dishes far afield. In Canada and elsewhere, many migrants, unable to find other openings despite professional qualifications, entered the food business. However, given limitations of time, capital, tastes, and of the cooks themselves, the most interesting cooking, especially of home-style regional dishes, often remained confined to private homes. The biryani is commonly available at almost every South Asian restaurant, but the flavour and subtlety that the dish acquired through its long historical evolution, is seldom met in its commercial incarnations. Yet, we still continue to try it in our home city of Toronto, especially in interesting regional variations such as the kacchi biryani of Hyderabad and Bangladesh or the workmanlike yet delicious ones at South Asian migrant-operated restaurants in the 'hood.

Unlike standard 'restaurant curries' which homogenize a number of South Asian styles, such dishes are richly evocative of particular regions, their histories, ecology, cultural traditions, and the labour-intensive cooking and preparation techniques intrinsic to each. An interesting contrast to the subtle biryani is the fragrantly fiery lamprai. This banana-leaf wrapped 'parcel' provides an apt signature for the complex cuisine that Sri Lankan refugees fleeing civil strife brought into Canada. Sri Lanka, the island known to historians as Ceylon, blends multiple religious traditions (Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Christian) with cuisines of European, Arab, and Malay traders, and Tamil settlers. By the 17th century, Sri Lankans adapted the Dutch fondness for meatballs and their own love of aromatic grain into a single serving dish of rice boiled in stock and spices, gently baked in a banana leaf.

A few hundred years later, the colonial Dutch meatballs gave way to mutton, chicken, or fish curries. In a nondescript Toronto strip mall, we find a full meal for two in a chicken lamprai. When opened, the banana leaf covering releases a waft of steam redolent of chilies, cloves, cardamom, and cinnamon. Nestled alongside a large mound of chicken curry is a neat little pile of eggplant pickle, a boiled egg, a few chillies, and a round 'fish chop'. A large stack of small-grained samba rice nestles in the middle, its turmeric-yellow a fetching contrast to the brown curry and the green chili. In it, we taste the spice trade between Europe and Asia, rice's travels to the New World, the civil strife that propelled Sri Lankan professionals into Scarborough kitchens, a complex history distilled into Styrofoam boxes. Asia meets Canada here, in global encounters that bridge pasts, presents, and futures of foodways, people, and commodities.

References:

Achaya, K.T., A Historical Dictionary of Indian Food, New Delhi: Oxford, 1998.

Bender, D.E., "Food for Thought," UTSC Commons, Fall 2011.

Husain, Salma, Ed. and Trans., Nuskha-e-Shahjahani. Pulaos from the Royal Kitchen of Shah Jahan, New Delhi: Rupa, 2004.

Taylor, Margaret and Frances McNaught, The New Galt Cook Book, Revised, Toronto: McLeod & Allen, 1898.

Select Locations (all in Toronto):

Anando (Bengali/Bangladeshi) 2891 Danforth Avenue

Anjappar Chettinad (South Indian) 3090 Eglinton Avenue East

Canbe Foods (Sri Lankan) 760 Ellesmere Road

Hopper Hut (Sri Lankan) 880 Ellesmere Road

Iqbal Kebab (North Indian/Pakistani) 2 Thorncliffe Park Drive

Makkah (North Indian/Pakistani) 1020 Danforth Avenue



Letter from the Editor

Janet Kronick

Greetings members!

This is our new electronic newsletter.

In this emailed PDF format, you can read it in full colour and it costs nothing to print or mail to you. We're all very excited to be making this electronic leap together, and we hope the expenses we save can be put to new use building other areas of our organization. The environmental savings are also a welcome aspect.

The printed newsletter was often the most expensive portion of our budget. Now, with the electronic version, it will be one of the least expensive. We think there maybe different ways to use membership money.

It's not without some trepidation that we've made this transition. Many organizations have faced similar choices in recent years and find that either electronic or a combination of print and electronic communication serve their purposes. I have a Kobo digital reader and I enjoy the simplicity and it's capacity to hold so many books and journals in one light handheld device, but I also crave the feel, sound and scent of old books or fresh print. Many share this sentiment, so for those who feel strongly about it, we'll happily send you a paper copy and there are some members without email who will naturally receive them.

As an organization that embraces our culinary history we are in the process of digitizing the recipes and food lore found in historic Canadian cookbooks and posting them on Canadian Cookbooks Online (CCO) inviting a huge new audience to free online access to celebrate our culinary heritage. The library is growing and makes excellent use of this digital format. As well, our website needs are also increasing, requiring more attention and updating as we embrace our growing online presence. The savings gained by the newsletter's conversion will help all these aspects. There is a likelihood that we'll have some problems to solve with the PDF version of the newsletter, but be patient, we'll straighten everything out.

Let us know if you prefer a paper copy and we'll be sure to send one, or just drop us a line to tell us your thoughts. We'd love to hear from you!

janet@culinaryhistorians.ca,

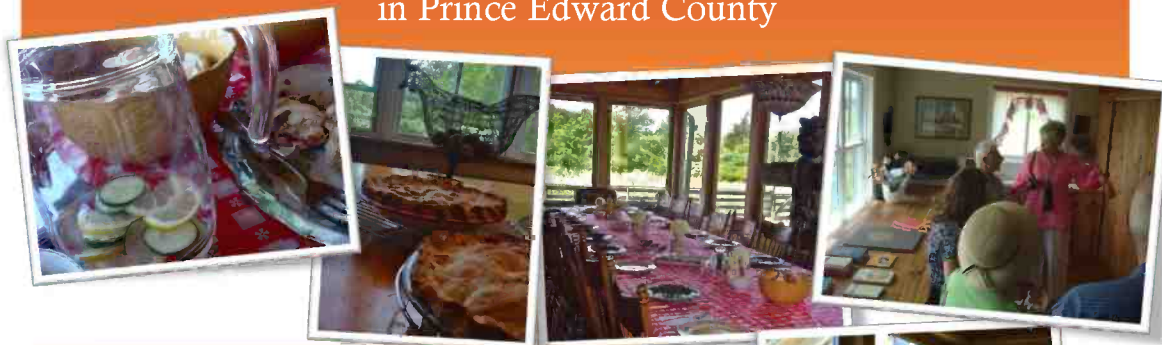
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Janet Kronick

Upcoming Events

Picnic in the County

CHC 's 5th Annual Summer Potluck Picnic
in Prince Edward County



Saturday July 21st, 2012

From the Farm Cooking School
12 - 3 pm

At this year's annual potluck picnic for CHC members (and their partners and children) we are returning to "From the Farm Cooking School" - about a 2 hour drive from Toronto. CHC member Cynthia Peters runs the school in her 1830's loyalist farmhouse furnished with antiques, including period cooking utensils, a Mennonite wood stove, and professional GE Monogram propane range. Liz Driver is making fruit pies!

Potluck details: Cynthia is supplying the main chicken dish, lemonade, sparkling water, and some local white wine. Compliment the menu with: appetizers, salad, side dish, bread, relishes, or preserves, dessert, fruit or your preferred beverage. Feel free to print your recipe to share it.

RSVP to Cynthia by July 16th indicating number attending.

Cynthia Peters: Owner
618 Burr road, Prince Edward County
North of Bloomfield, west of hwy #62
613-922-9194, 416-712-7763
for directions visit: <http://fromthefarm.ca/find-us>



Bring your wit or a poem, but definitely your favourite recipe!



Interesting dishes and company make for a special afternoon picnic of laughter and tastes.

Ethnic Food Fears and the Spread of the Chinese Restaurant Syndrome in Canada, 1968-80

Ian Mosby

Ian is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Guelph studying Canadian food history.

The 'Chinese restaurant syndrome' is now a largely forgotten public health panic but, for two decades following its 1968 'discovery,' it was the bane of Chinese restaurateurs throughout the Western world. Largely unknown in Asia, the Chinese restaurant syndrome saw Chinese food become the primary focus of public fears over the common food additive monosodium glutamate (MSG), despite the additive's widespread use by the Canadian food industry. Up to the present day, the "No MSG" signs emblazoned on the windows and menus of Chinese restaurants – but not on bags of potato chips or cans of soup – are a testament to its lingering effects. And as the history of this unique medical condition suggests, it was a disease whose spread owed as much to persisting prejudices about Chinese culinary practices and culture as it did to fears of the effects of MSG and other food additives.

The 'discovery' of the Chinese restaurant syndrome is generally attributed to an April 1968 letter from Dr. Robert Ho Man Kwok to the *New England Journal of Medicine* (NEJM). Kwok, who was himself a Chinese immigrant living in the U.S., described a syndrome whose symptoms typically started 20 minutes after eating at American Chinese restaurants serving "northern Chinese food." They included "numbness at the back of the neck, gradually radiating to both arms and the back, general weakness and palpitation." In the letter, Kwok offered a number of theories about the cause of the syndrome, including Chinese cooking wine, the common use of MSG by Chinese cooks, or the high sodium content some dishes.¹

The *NEJM* was quickly inundated with letters from readers describing their own unpleasant experiences after eating Chinese food and, within a few weeks, discussion of the 'Chinese restaurant syndrome' began to spread into Canada. *Toronto Star* reporter Sidney Katz identified a number of local sufferers, including his son who complained of "a tingling sensation at his temples" after eating Chinese food; a 36-year-old nurse who experienced "a constriction and mild paralysis on her throat area"; a 17-year-old high school student who reported getting "lightheaded and dizzy as though I've been drinking"; and a housewife complaining of "heart

palpitations and tightness in the jaw muscles." When interviewed about the syndrome, a prominent local Chinese restaurateur wondered whether "the afflicted diners probably had too many martinis or daiquiris with their won ton or shrimp with lobster sauce" while another "hinted darkly that it's all a plot hatched by rival restaurant owners."²

Unfortunately for these and other Chinese restaurateurs, the syndrome would prove to be more than passing health scare. By 1972, a number of studies published in prominent scientific and medical journals posited a direct link between consumption of the common food additive MSG and what was increasingly being referred to in the clinical literature as 'Chinese restaurant syndrome' or 'CRS.' While a number of other studies published during the period contradicted these findings and questioned the link between MSG and the symptoms described by Kwok, the fact that the condition had been made the focus of serious scientific study at all went a long way towards providing a real sense of medical legitimacy to the name 'Chinese restaurant syndrome' and the popular perception that Chinese food, in particular, really was making people sick.³

The problem with much of the popular and scientific discourse around the Chinese restaurant syndrome was that it often overlooked the fact that MSG was by no means unique to Chinese food. By 1968, MSG had been part of the Canadian diet for at least two decades. Initially patented in 1909 by a Japanese biochemist following investigations into the chemical components his wife's *dashi* broth, MSG is essentially the sodium salt of glutamate – a naturally occurring amino acid and one of the basic building blocks of protein. What Ikeda discovered was that, when added to certain foods, glutamate often enhanced their inherent savoury qualities. This was, in essence, the culinary function typically performed by foods naturally high in glutamate such as sharp cheese, tomatoes, mushrooms, or seaweed. Ikeda's main innovation was his discovery that, by stabilizing glutamate using ordinary salt,

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the resulting product was an inexpensive additive that had the capacity to dramatically improve the flavor of both fresh and processed foods.⁴

Immediately popular in Asia, it was primarily after the Second World War that MSG became widely used in North America. But by the end of the 1960s, it had become one of the most popular additives in the food industry's arsenal and could be found in everything from canned soup to baby food to frozen vegetables. It also found a welcome place in many Canadians' kitchens through products like the popular seasoning, Accent, which was regularly called for in recipes published by home economists and popular food writers. But the popularity of MSG during the 1960s highlighted one of the main problems with the discourse around Chinese restaurant syndrome: if MSG really was causing widespread adverse reactions, why were such reactions being linked specifically to Chinese foods and why hadn't anyone noticed it before? Recipes containing MSG often included such unambiguously 'Canadian' dishes as *Toronto Star* reader Herta Gerlach's 1970 recipe for "Mississauga fried chicken" or *Star* food writer Bonnie Cornell's 1970 recipe for "Hockey short ribs." In Pierre and Janet Berton's 1966 *Centennial Food Guide: A Century of Good Eating*, MSG is frequently portrayed as being nearly as indispensable as salt and pepper. According to Pierre at least, MSG had been responsible for "a minor revolution in flavor" and was one of the key factors making modern foods "infinitely more tasty" than their historical predecessors.⁵

While the Bertons were some of the more enthusiastic proponents of MSG, its place in their decidedly 'Canadian' cookbook was nonetheless indicative of the reality that most Canadians had long been exposed to the additive outside of their favourite Chinese restaurant. According to one industry estimate in the 1980s, food processors were using between 85 and 90 percent of Canada's MSG supply. Even assuming that the remaining 10 to 15 percent was being exclusively used by Chinese restaurants, it was nonetheless clear that the vast majority of MSG being consumed by Canadians was in familiar processed foods and not in their Egg Foo Young or Sweet and Sour Pork. This was just as true in 1968 as it was in 1980, yet the name Chinese restaurant

syndrome and the associated idea that you were more likely to suffer an adverse reaction to MSG after eating Chinese food persisted.⁶

At the heart of the popular association between Chinese food and adverse reactions to MSG was the assumption that, while MSG was a common food additive, it was more likely to be misused by Chinese cooks. Both the press and many of the scientists investigating MSG regularly repeated claims that "large," "liberal" or "lavish" amounts of MSG were being used in Chinese restaurants. This was despite the fact that almost no studies bothered to test the comparative MSG content of Chinese and non-Chinese foods or, for that matter, that a number of studies showed that less than 2 grams of MSG was sufficient to produce a reaction in susceptible individuals. Yet, in order to explain why the syndrome was largely limited to Chinese restaurants, one 1972 study even suggested that MSG was unlikely to produce reactions in "appropriate culinary quantities" but that "the exhibition of quantities that might properly be regarded as bizarre in the culinary setting increases the possibility of symptom occurrence."⁷ The problem with this was, in the absence of evidence of the comparative MSG content of foods, it was unclear what constituted 'bizarre' and 'appropriate.' Was the MSG use in Chinese restaurants really more liberal than the Bertons' recipe for "Pierre's Scrambled Eggs," which included 2 tsp. of MSG? Did Pierre's eggs or a can of mushroom soup pose any less of a health hazard than an order of pork fried rice? Throughout the 1970s, scientists seemed unable to produce the necessary evidence needed to answer these questions.

Arguably, the idea that Chinese chefs were using "bizarre" quantities of MSG built upon long-held suspicions that Chinese culture and practices were somehow unclear, excessive, or inscrutable. From the late nineteenth century on, rumour and fear-mongering about supposed Chinese drug use, sexual mores, living conditions, and 'deviant' practices like serving unsuspecting patrons meat from dogs and cats were frequently invoked to justify everything from limiting Chinese immigration, preventing restaurateurs from employing white women, to limiting Chinese businesses to Chinatowns and other designated areas. While this kind of racial discourse tended to move from the level of official government policy to rumour and popular culture in the post-WWII era,

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the rapid spread of the Chinese restaurant syndrome – along with similar scares over the safety of barbecued meats in Vancouver's Chinatown, despite no proven incidence of illness – suggests that such ideas likely continued to inform popular understandings of Chinese culture and practices.⁸

These fears also partly explain the Chinese restaurant syndrome's transformation from a specific set of symptoms into a disease that encompassed nearly any adverse reactions following the consumption of Chinese food. While most of the initial studies stuck closely to Kwok's original symptom complex of burning, numbness, and pressure, the definition shifted significantly over time. In 1978, for instance, sufferer Helen Egleston told the *Globe and Mail* that MSG consumption led to severe stomach cramps and "diarrhea so violent you'd swear I had a double dose of castor oil." Later that same year the *Toronto Star* published an alarming story in which American psychologist Dr. Arthur Coleman claimed that his wife "became profoundly depressed, with drawn facial expression, motor slowing, doubt-ridden, gloomy fantasies and occasional unprecipitated outbursts of rage" for nearly two weeks after eating at in a Chinese restaurant. After later administering a "test dose" of wonton soup to his wife, only to produce a similar depressive ordeal, Coleman decided to put his family on an MSG-free diet. This supposedly both cured his wife's depression and 9-year-old son's "hyperactivity." Even scientific studies followed this trend, with one 1977 study including everything from "depression," "detachment" and "a sense of fullness after a limited amount of food" as probable symptoms of what it called "CRS."⁹

This is not to say, of course, that individuals did not experience adverse reactions to MSG. To this day, studies continue to be inconclusive regarding the additive's health effects, with passionate debate on either side of the issue. By the late 1980s, moreover, it became much more common for activists to point to the larger health implications of MSG use in the industrial food chain. But throughout the 1970s the assumption that adverse reactions to MSG were mostly limited to Chinese restaurants tended to hinder this research as well as to contribute to the broader uncertainty about the additive's real impact. The

unquestioned assumption that Canadians were more likely to get sick at a Chinese restaurant, however, spoke to something else altogether. The story of the 'discovery' and 'spread' of the Chinese restaurant syndrome – and its central idea that you were more likely to suffer an adverse reaction to MSG after eating Chinese food – therefore provides an instructive example of the ways in which ideas about supposedly 'foreign' food and food cultures can often bring to the surface a range of prejudices and assumptions grounded in ideas about race and ethnicity that, even in supposedly pluralistic and multicultural societies like Canada, continue to inform perceptions of the culinary 'other'.

¹ R.H.M. Kwok, "Chinese-Restaurant Syndrome" *NEJM* 278 (April 4, 1968), 796.

² Sidney Katz, "Do Chinese foods make you dizzy?" *Toronto Star*, 22 July 1968, 47.

³ See, for instance, H.H. Schaumburg et. al. "Monosodium L-Glutamate: Its Pharmacology and Role in the Chinese Restaurant Syndrome," *Science* 163, 3869 (21 February 1969), 826-828 or R.A. Kenney, C.S. Tidball, "Human susceptibility to oral monosodium l-glutamate", *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 25 (February 1972), 140-146. For more on the scientific debate and context, see my more detailed study, Ian Mosby, "'That Won Ton Soup Headache': The Chinese Restaurant Syndrome, MSG and the Making of American Food, 1968-1980" *Social History of Medicine* 22, 1 (April 2009), 133-151.

⁴ For background, see Jordan Sand, 'A Short History of SMG: Good Science, Bad Science, and Taste Cultures', *Gastronomica* 5, 4 (2005), 38-4

⁵ Anne Wanstall, "Fried chicken is a family favorite," *Toronto Star*, 28 February 1970, 52; Bonnie Cornell, "Hockey stars watch diet," *Toronto Star*, 12 September 1970, 87; Pierre and Janet Berton, *The Centennial Food Guide: A Century of Good Eating* (Toronto: Canadian Centennial Library, 1966), 79.

⁶ Madeleine Grey, "Experts agree that MSG is not hazard to most people" *Toronto Star*, 7 December 1988, E3.

⁷ Kenney and Tidball, "Human susceptibility," 146. Also see Schaumburg et al. "Monosodium L-Glutamate."

⁸ For an excellent account of Canadian attitudes and the BBQ meat scare, see K.J. Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queens UP, 1991).

⁹ L. Reif-Lehrer, 'A questionnaire study of prevalence of Chinese restaurant syndrome', *Federation Proceedings* 36, 5 (1977) 1617-1623; Ellen Roseman, "Finding UFOs in your food is bad enough, but the ones you can't see are worse," *Globe and Mail*, 16 January 1978, 26; "Chinese food can depress you, doctor says" *Toronto Star*, 1 November 1978, B19.

The Order of Canada

Established in 1967 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Order of Canada is the centrepiece of Canada's honours system and recognizes a lifetime of outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation. The Order recognizes people in all sectors of Canadian society. Their contributions are varied, yet they have all enriched the lives of others and made a difference to this country.

The Order of Canada's motto is
DESIDERANTES MELIOREM PATRIAM :
They desire a better country.

The CHC is pleased to acknowledge Anita Stewart being appointed as a Member of the Order of Canada.



March 17, 2012

Dear Anita,

The Board of Directors of the Culinary Historians of Canada would like to congratulate you on being appointed to the Order of Canada. It is a richly deserved honour!

"For her contributions as a journalist, author and culinary activist and for her promotion of the food industry in Canada."

We heartily endorse this appointment and the citation that summarizes it. By travelling across and up and down our country, from coast to coast to coast; by inspiring chefs, gardeners, food writers, culinary historians, restaurant owners, politicians, professors and teachers, and so many others in the Canadian food world; by speaking and writing with articulate passion about Canadian ingredients and agriculture, cooks and cooking, contemporary cuisine and past foodways; by founding culinary organizations and fostering culinary activism, both locally and nationally, you were able to command the rapt attention of so many of us.

With our best wishes for continued successes and activism,

Fiona Lucas

Past President

On behalf of Board of Directors: Bob Wildfong, President; Liz Driver, Vice President; Nancy Gyokeres, Secretary; Betsy Aziz, Treasurer; Janet Kronick, Newsletter Editor; Amy Scott, Membership Chair; Maggie Newell, Outreach and Education Chair; Bridget Wranich, Dean Tudor, and Mary Williamson, Advisors.

The Shirriff Saga: The story of a Toronto marmalade dynasty

Sarah B. Hood

*A condensed version of Sarah B. Hood's presentation at
the 5th annual "Mad for Marmalade, Crazy for Citrus", Saturday, February 25, 2012*

If you remember Canada of the 1960s – and especially if you were a child then – the name of Shirriff will conjure some vivid memories. For some, it's lemon meringue pie. For others, it's instant potato flakes. For many, it would be those alluring plastic coins with their compelling ridged edges and a cardboard disc printed with the face of an iconic Original Six hockey player embedded into the surface. Among its other accomplishments, Shirriff has been the maker of what may have been Canada's best known marmalade brand over the past hundred years: Shirriff's Good Morning Marmalade, a three-fruit mixture of lemon, orange and grapefruit.

The Shirriff family originated in Scotland. Francis Walker Shirriff, born in 1811, graduated from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh in 1831.¹ He emigrated to Huntingdon, Quebec the following year,² and practised there as a physician for 60 years. His son Francis Adam Shirriff, the founder of the Shirriff food company, moved to Toronto in 1872, at age 24. By that time, he had already fought to resist the Fenian Raids³ and worked in Ottawa for the Minister of Finance.⁴

In 1874, he started a business called the Niagara Falls Wine Company with wine manufacturer Thomas G. Bright. In 1883, he also founded his own business, the Imperial Extract Company, which dealt in essential oils and flavour extracts like vanilla and almond.⁵

A report from the Chemical Section at the Industrial Exhibition of 1885 stated that "[o]ne of the handsomest exhibits ... was that of the Imperial Extract Co. represented by the manager, Mr F. Shirreff [sic]. This firm have made a specialty of fruit and flavoring [sic] extracts, and are also giving considerable attention to perfumery, of both which they made a handsome display."⁶ In 1887, the same source commented that, in the extracts market, "under the management of Mr. F. Sherriff [sic], a large amount of the trade of the province has been secured."⁷

Bright and Shirriff moved to Niagara Falls to concentrate on the wine business,⁸ but Imperial Extract continued its operations in Toronto. By 1900, Francis A. Shirriff's two elder sons, William and Francis, were working there, as an assistant and a shipper respectively. The third son, Colin, studied engineering and joined the business as a chemist.⁹ The three brothers would eventually take over the business.

In April of 1905, Imperial Extract took a booth at the Pure Food Show at Massey Hall. It is possible that this show marked the launch of Shirriff's marmalade line. The *Toronto Daily Star*¹⁰ commented that "One of the most daintily dressed booths in the hall is that of Shirriff's marmalades and flavoring [sic] essence. The public is invited to sample the delicious shredded orange marmalade served with reception wafers. Numbers of people took advantage of the invitation yesterday afternoon and expressions of approval were frequent. It is absolutely pure, containing nothing but the finest fruit and granulated sugar."

In 1909, the architect Charles Herbert Acton Bond of Bond & Smith erected a building for the Imperial Extract Co. which still stands on Matilda Street at Carroll Street, just north of Queen on the eastern slope of the Don Valley.¹¹ Valued at \$20,000, the building initially housed not only Imperial Extract but the wine business.¹² In 1911, the Shirriffs sold out all their shares in the wine company. Thomas Bright also sold out in 1933, but "Brights Wines" eventually expanded to become Vincor International, which in 2006 was sold for \$1.27 billion to Constellation Brands Inc., the world's biggest wine seller.¹³

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Around the time of the First World War the well known naturalist, Charles Sauriol, worked at the Shirriff factory after school and during the summers. In an unpublished memoir,¹⁴ he writes:

At Shirriffs I learned several things about Seville oranges, also how jelly powders were made. ... We ate a lot of jelly at home in those days. Each Friday the employees were given an opportunity to buy five pound damaged tins of marmalade for bargain prices under a dollar, and many the can I brought home. The Shirriffs were very kind to me and Will the senior partner would often stop to chat with me.

In the 1920s, Imperial Extract created a fairly extensive national newspaper advertising campaign that was clearly an attempt to rebrand their upstart Canadian marmalade as something traditional, artisanal, and above all genuinely Scottish. The *Ottawa Citizen* of October 15, 1929,¹⁵ was among the newspapers that carried the following ad:

"On a trip to Scotland many years ago, Francis A. Shirriff stopped at an old Scottish hostel famed for its good food. A remarkably delicious marmalade was served. Inquiring from the inn-keeper, he found it was made by a master marmalade maker whose name was known throughout all Scotland. His rare old recipe was sought by many, but its secrets were known only to himself. It was a heritage passed on from father to son. "Surely this is a treat for Canadians to enjoy" – thought Mr. Shirriff, and with that in mind he offered to purchase the recipe. A price was eventually agreed upon and the recipe became his. That is how it came to Canada. This is why you can now enjoy luscious, full-flavoured marmalade, the same as was made in that quaint old Scottish shop many years ago – from that "Rare Old Scotch Recipe".

The ad highlighted several different Shirriff marmalades: Seville Orange, Shredded Orange and Pineapple. These were sold in various sizes ranging from a dainty 12-ounce jar for 25¢ to the economical four-pound tin for 55¢.

By the time Francis Shirriff, Sr. died in 1944 at the age of 97, a third Shirriff generation was becoming involved in the business, in the person of William's son David. In his youth he worked in the company, doing modest jobs that even included staffing the Shirriff booth at the CNE. He fought in Italy during WWII and, in 1947, entered the family business in a managerial capacity.

By 1953, the company's 70th year, David Shirriff had risen in the business to take charge of the jam division. "His father had died and his uncles were elderly and tired of the business demands so the time seemed right to sell. The new owner, J. William Horsey, president of Dominion Stores, asked him to stay on and manage Shirriff's."¹⁶

The new company, known as Shirriff-Horsey, merged with Salada Tea in June 1957. At the time, one news report noted that in the 74 years since Shirriff had been founded, it had "grown into an international food organization manufacturing and processing a variety of products in six cities in three countries," including a plant in Jamaica.¹⁷

In 1965 David Shirriff left the company, ending the family's 82-year connection to the business.¹⁸ Kellogg, the cereal company, scooped it up in 1969.¹⁹ In 1988, Kellogg Salada sold Good Morning Marmalade to the American J.M. Smucker company, along with the other Shirriff marmalades and the ice cream toppings.²⁰ Finally, in 1992, Kellogg sold the last remaining Shirriff brands – the pie fillings and instant potatoes – to the Germany-based Oetker Ltd. of Mississauga Ontario.²¹

The descendants of Francis Adam Shirriff have moved on to their own stories, but their name continues to turn up on breakfast tables across the country almost 70 years after his death. In fact, to judge from the longevity of the world's other famous marmalade brands, Shirriff's marmalades are likely to be around for a good long time to come.

Notes from Shirriff's article - previous page.

Notes:

¹ *Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*, Volume 36 (Edinburgh, 1831). 231.

http://books.google.ca/books?id=y4IBAAAYAAJ&pg=PA231&lpg=PA231&dq=edinburgh+doctor+francis+shirriff&source=bl&ots=A-aiLib8yE&sig=kdw16rLGGESsttVrFhYiqzKLT61g&hl=en&ei=ab-DTV7MMcrk0QHvMGVAQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false

² Robert Sellar, *The history of the county of Huntingdon [Quebec]: and of the seigniories of Chateauguay and Beauharnois*, (Huntington: The Canadian Gleaner, 1888).

³ http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~qchuntin/fenian/q_s.htm

⁴ "Dies at Age 97" (obituary) from unidentified newspaper, May 29, 1944, Niagara Falls Public Library digital collections, <http://www.nfplibrary.ca/nfplindex/show.asp?id=328585&b=1>

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⁷ Canadian Pharmaceutical Association, Ontario College of Pharmacy, *Canadian Pharmaceutical Journal*, Vol 21, ed. E.B. Shuttleworth, 1887-1888, 30. <http://books.google.ca/books?id=WGMCAAAAYAAJ&>

⁸ Brock University Digital Repository,

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¹² Information from Toronto City Directories.

¹³ Lori McLeod, "Niagara wine comes of age: Vincor sale to Constellation turns spotlight on industry," *National Post*, FP (Financial Post) 1, accessed via Factiva.

¹⁴ Charles Sauriol, *Boyhood Memories* [1980-?], Toronto Archives, Charles Sauriol Fonds, Box 123286-4, Series 107, File 26, Chapter 6, 2.

¹⁵ "Famed far and wide was this... Master Marmalade Maker and his RARE OLD SCOTCH RECIPE" (advertisement, Ottawa Citizen, October 15, 1929, p. 9 and Toronto Daily Star, March 30, 1930, 4

¹⁶ Gay Abbate, *ibid*.

¹⁷ "Shirriff-Horsey, Salada Tea Merger Creates Huge Company," *Lakeland Ledger*, Sunday, June 30, 1957, 2D, news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1346&dat=19570630&id=c1pYAAAAIBAJ&sjid=HPoDAAAAIBAJ&pg=7100,6231152

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¹⁹ junketdesserts.com/history.aspx

²⁰ Sandra Coulson, "Kellogg Salada is selling product brand to U.S. firm," *The Globe and Mail*, January 6, 1988, accessed via Lexis-Nexis.

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Photo of authors at their book signing at Mad for Marmalade Crazy for Citrus February 2012
 Each presenting their fabulous preserving cookbooks
 Left to Right: Yvonne Tremblay-Marmalade Competition Judge,
 Pat Crocker - Marmalade Competition Organiser
 Sarah B. Hood – Afternoon Speaker



One workshop at Mad for Marmalade, Crazy for Citrus this year was "A Florentine of Oranges", led by Mya Sangster, a Volunteer Historic Cook at Fort York. These photos show the unbaked, baked, and sliced florentine (or florentine), which means an elaborately decorated tart of meat or fruit, in this case oranges and apples. It was baked in the fort's reproduction brick oven.

Photos courtesy of Mark D'Aguilar.

Marmalade Contest 2012

Pat Crocker : Competition Organizer

Writer, photographer, radio host, author of nine cookbooks and the New Herb Series of Handbooks, and she loves her work as a culinary herbalist. She is past president of the Ontario Herbalists' Association and participates in The Herb Society of America, the International Herb Association, The International Association of Culinary Professionals, Cuisine Canada, the Culinary Historians of Canada, The Women's Culinary Network (Toronto) Pat shares a studio/art gallery in Neustadt Ontario with her husband.

Congratulations to all of the nineteen entries for the 2012 marmalade competition during the Mad For Marmalade, Crazy for Citrus Event. Every participant was a winner in my estimation. Goals for the competition were:

- To educate contest participants, event attendees and the general public on the qualities of award-winning marmalade.
- To foster an exciting importance to the homemade marmalade competition during the M4M event.
- To encourage people who have never made marmalade to start this pleasurable activity this year, and to enter in next year's competition.

Thanks go to the judges, all culinary professionals : Charmian Christie, Emily Richards, Marilyn Rootham, Marilyn Smith, Yvonne Tremblay, Sandra Watson and Vanessa Yeung, who tasted, made notes and presented the winning entries in their category. Nancy Gyokeres did a fabulous job of helping to register entrants and assist with the judging procedures.

The following awarded first and second place marmalades:

Category	Standing	Name
Marmalades:		
Pure Seville	1	Sarah Hood
	2	Eva MacDonald
Citrus	1	Julian Sleath
	2	Alexandra Howard
Mock	1	Julian Sleath
	2	Mary Williamson

The following were judged to be the first and second place baked products:

Baked Goods	1	Sarah Hood
	2	Julian Sleath
Best In Show		Sarah Hood for her pure Seville marmalade

I'm looking forward to a great competition next year. I encourage new and long-time marmalade makers to toss your jars into the ring. For a copy of the judging criteria for each category, please contact Pat Crocker at: pcrocker@riversongherbals.com

Book Review

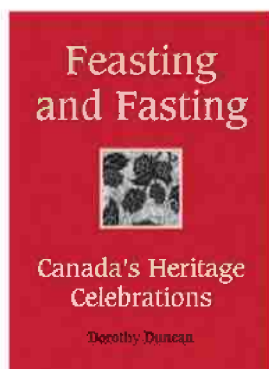
Janet Kronick

Janet is Newsletter Editor for Culinary Historians of Canada, and is a proud member of their Board of Directors.

Balances her love for food and food history with her passion for singing as an alto

in the Bach Elgar Choir and A Cappella Vocal Group - Vine Tuned.

She lives with her husband in Hamilton where she works as the Historic Kitchen Coordinator at Dundurn Castle



Feasting and Fasting: Canada's Heritage Celebrations

By Dorothy Duncan

October 2010

ISBN 978-1-55488-757-6

There are many criticisms made of our present Canadian food culture. The growing cookbook publishing industry can dictate to popular palates. Current food industry literature abounds with experts who impart their ideas of kitchen expertise to the reader. Award winning author Dorothy Duncan is one of the few champions of our Canadian food heritage and her recent book, *Feasting and Fasting: Canada's Heritage Celebrations*, demonstrates how she established her reputation as a fine source for this country's culinary history. Her understanding and respect for food does not pander to the trendy, nor does she simply list a collection of historical recipes. At age 84, she sees our epicurean mindfulness returning in an increasing regard for the value of a local food supply. It is in this vein that she conveys the relevance of the past to our daily lives. Just as initial settlers arrived in Canada were greeted by the hospitality of the First Nations, each new cultural group grows accustomed to this land, establishing themselves within the context of building communities through faith, work and celebrations. Despite dissimilar backgrounds our culinary memories and traditions often adopted local ingredients and customs. In *Feasting and Fasting*, her third book on Canada's culinary history since retiring as Executive Director of the Ontario Historical Society Duncan highlights this unique sociological history.

This book is no tome. There's nothing huge nor overwhelming about it. The petite bundle is a significant compilation of what was on our tables during meaningful events in our collective history. What it lacks in size it makes up in depth. Beginning with a solid nod to the First Nations' generosity of spirit in reaching out to new settlers, Duncan provides a tasty sampling of the diverse fare found in the developing colony of Canada. Spread against the backdrop of immigrants facing difficult climates and terrains, Duncan deftly highlights various religious and folk practices brought from homelands as well as their approach to adaptations.

34 brief chapters gradually unfold details of our rituals from New Year to New Year, from our ancient ancestors to the 1950s. It is simple in design and easy to follow. She reveals the common elements of our customs or beliefs, with such strong connections between religious holidays often stemming from the seasons.

Continued on page 15

In chapter 2 Duncan identifies the traditions of New Year feasts of the Quebecois with dried apples, the Acadians with Poutine Rapées, and the Greek Manitoban's Basilpeta (in honour of St. Basil). In chapter 7 she examines the incredible Chinese contributions to Canadian life and their symbolic foods at New Years that symbolize prosperity, such as tangerines as gold ingots and fish served whole for long life or plenty.

In chapter 23 the Jewish New Year equally uses symbolism in food with apples or bread dipped in honey for a sweet year, and fish (Gelfilte Lake Winnipeg Fish no less) for plenty. In the final chapter we complete the circle with Scottish Hogmanay. Haggis aside, in Cape Breton you'll have ginger wine, Atholl Brose and Rich Biscuits in the hope for prosperity and good fortune. The information spread throughout the book sometimes left me longing for these fabulous commonalities to be combined in a different structure, but the quality index provides this cohesion.

I relished how Champlain's *Order of Good Cheer* served up moose and turtledove pastry. (Proposed in the winter of 1606-07, the Order of Good Cheer provided good food and good times for the men to improve their health and morale during the long winter). In *Sap's Running* I savoured the reading of the Native traditions of being thankful for the energy giving medicine of maple sugar, as well as the sugaring off festivals of the Quebecois with maple on snow.

The cultural cross-over is apparent as we read of the Jewish Passover customs, Easter Traditions and Mother Earth celebrations of Spring. Early greens symbolized fruits of the earth, eggs as birth and fertility, and almost every group had their favourite braided and spiced egg-bread recipe.

Pleasure parties were had for all sorts of occasions as breakfasts, picnics (especially those of a political nature) and dining in cultured gardens. Duncan leaves no stone unturned as she navigates through the rest of the year. There's an excellent description of the fur traders of the North West Company's affinity for beaver meat and tails. The company's summer feasts of the *Rendezvous*, a culmination and celebration of the year's trade, exemplified the intriguing English, Scottish, French-Canadian and Metis partnerships.

Clearly this book is far more an exploration of feasting than fasting, and as a culinary historian I approve more content about the eating of food! *Feasting and Fasting* will appeal to historians, cooks and trivia buffs alike. It is well referenced with a strong bibliography. One would expect no less from Ms. Duncan. An entertaining and interesting read indeed. In the end, it felt complete while still urging us to engage in further research on the material found in any one of these chapters. This is a perfect sampler of our socio-cultural culinary history. Canadian perspectives on cooking and feasting can lack reflection of our food heritage, however, Duncan encourages us to connect to our not so distant foodways. The potential impact of such a connection on our culinary landscape is immeasurable. It could even inspire us to cook!

Dorothy Duncan has lectured internationally on Canada's heritage foods and customs. She was the Toronto Women's Culinary Network's Woman of the Year in 2004 and in 2006 was chosen by the Ontario Hospitality Institute to receive the Gold Award for Media and Publishing. In 2007 her book Canadians at Table: Food, Fellowship, and Folklore, A Culinary History won the Cuisine Canada won Gold in the Canadian Food Culture category.

A Burns Night Scotch Tasting

Janet Kronick

On Wednesday January 25th a lucky 30 people celebrated the birthday of Robbie Burns at Campbell House Museum, Toronto. Liz Driver and Janet Kronick planned this special event.

Photos courtesy of Janet Kronick

The Burns Night Scotch Tasting, "From Sweet to Peat" was a perfect master class hosted by Bill Nesbitt. Five whiskeys were sampled over the course of a tasty and cultural event. Guests gathered in the historic kitchen for Cock a Leekie soup and to get acquainted, then moved to tables in the Robitaille Room for the pouring of the whiskey.

Whiskey enthusiasts and beginners were easily warmed and charmed by Bill's wit and candor as he expertly introduced the whiskeys. They increased in taste strength over the succession of the evening's events. A Capella vocal group Vine Tuned sang a number of Scottish melodies: Scots Wa Hae, Skye Boat Song, Annie Lawrie, Willie Brewed a Peck O' Malt, Aye Fond Kiss and Loch Lomond. Tempting nibbles were served back in the restored kitchen including cheeses and smoked salmon. Anne Harrison performed a fabulous Address to the Haggis, "trenching the gushing entrails right!" (I still laugh). Other Scottish snacks included Haggis, Tatties and Neeps (potatoes and turnips) and my best short bread. (Don't ask how much butter is in it). Thanks so much to Bill Nesbitt for his fine guidance through the buttery, vanilla, tobacco and iodine filled aromas and tastes. Slainte!



www.culinaryhistorians.ca

On our website you will find a bibliography of Canadian food history, back issues of *Culinary Chronicles*, and links to culinary sites and to cookbook collections. Also posted are CHC's Constitution, reviews of recent CHC events, notices of upcoming events, a membership form for downloading, and much more. Our home page features changing illustrations, courtesy of Mary F. Williamson.

ABOUT CULINARY CHRONICLES

Submissions: We welcome items for the newsletter; however, their acceptance depends on appropriateness of subject matter, quality of writing, and space. All submissions should reflect current research on Canadian themes. The Acquisitions Editor reserves the right to accept or reject submissions and to edit them. The Acquisitions Editor's contact information is 416-781-8153 or fiona@culinaryhistorians.ca.

Upcoming themes:

Number 70 Asian Foodways in Canada

Number 72 – Kitchen Collectibles in Canada

Number 72 - Foodways of Old British Columbia

Please contact the Acquisitions Editor if you wish to write on an upcoming theme, or to propose another.

Newsletter Committee: Janet Kronick (Editor), Fiona Lucas (Acquisitions Editor), For contributing to this issue, the Newsletter Committee thanks Ian Mosby, Jo Sharma, Dan Bender, Sarah B. Hood, Pat Crocker

Mission Statement

The Culinary Historians of Canada is an organization that researches, interprets, preserves and celebrates Canada's and Ontario's culinary heritage, which has been shaped by the food traditions of the First Nations peoples and generations of immigrants from all parts of the world. Through programs, events and publications, CHC educates its members and the public about the foods and beverages of Canada's past. Founded in Ontario in 1994, CHC welcomes new members wherever they live.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Members enjoy the quarterly newsletter, *Culinary Chronicles*, may attend CHC events at special member's rates, and receive information on food-history happenings. Members join a network of people dedicated to Canada's culinary history.

Membership fees:

\$30 Cdn for One-Year Individual, Household and Institution

\$55 Cdn for Two-Year Individual, Household and Institution

American and international members may pay in American dollars.

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Committees: Program Chair: Liz Driver; Newsletter Chair: Janet Kronick; Membership Chair: Amy Scott; Outreach and Education Chair: Maggie Newell, Electronic Resources: Vacant