

# On the Frontier

Newsletter of the Frontier Living History Group

Date – Aug 2009

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## Important information

Victorian Police's –

Re-enactors Guide Booklet

[http://www.police.vic.gov.au/retrievemedia.asp?media\\_id=36984&status=active](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/retrievemedia.asp?media_id=36984&status=active)

## UP COMING EVENTS



In 2009

### September

**Southern Cross Free Trappers  
Camp at Beaver Creek**

19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> thru to 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> Sept

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### Daily Schedule for a Cook in a Gentry Household *by Pat Gibbs*

Cooks worked long hours beginning before sunrise and extending into early evening, and their work was physically demanding. Lifting heavy iron pots and huge brass kettles was tiring, as was carrying wood into the kitchen (30 large pieces a day by conservative estimates), hauling countless buckets of water (wooden buckets used in the Historic Area weigh about 20 pounds when full), and bending over fires year-round (cooking experiments recorded temperatures over 170 degrees Fahrenheit on the hearth).

Although the drudgery continued through the day, there were slack periods, such as after dinner, when cooks could slow their pace. However, watchful mistresses made certain their slaves, unless they were sick, were never idle.

The cook's work, although often mundane and repetitive, had certain advantages. Cooks tasted foods being prepared and had first call on leftovers returned to the kitchen from the mistress's table. They often slept in a room adjoining or above the kitchen. Because of their close relationship with their mistresses, cooks frequently received hand-me-down clothing and household effects. They usually accompanied their mistresses to market, which gave them opportunities to leave the property. The mistresses' desire to try out new recipes occasionally gave cooks a break in their routine.

**As you read through the schedule,** assume that part of the time the cook was assisted by another slave woman and slave children who—although requiring varying attention depending on their ages—could stir a pot, watch the fire, turn the spit, or haul wood

**About 5:30 a.m.**, over an hour before most members of the household rise, the cook rekindles the fire, draws water, and puts the water kettle on to heat for family and general kitchen use. She feeds any chickens kept in the fattening pen and milks the cow if the family has one.

**About 6:30-7:30 a.m.** she kneads dough for the hot bread eaten by the family for breakfast and stirs the hominy pot that has slowly cooked overnight and will provide breakfast food for the other house slaves and their children. She also preheats the Dutch oven. During cold weather the family often breakfasts on milk hominy, prepared the previous evening and cooked slowly through the night.

**About 7:30 a.m.** she bakes the family's bread in the Dutch oven, makes coffee or tea, sets out milk and butter, and slices ham to be taken into the house for the family's breakfast.

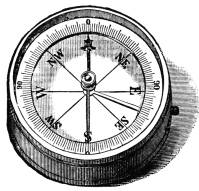
**About 8:00 a.m.** she sends breakfast in to the family who generally eat in the dining room. Domestic slaves, except those serving breakfast, eat in the kitchen.

**About 8:30 a.m.** she cleans up the kitchen, puts away breakfast food, and washes pots and pans and dishes used by the slaves.

**About 9 a.m.** her mistress comes to the kitchen, gives orders for dinner, measures out ingredients, recites recipes if the cook is uncertain how to cook something, and instructs the cook on special orders for the day.

**On Wednesdays and Saturdays** Williamsburg mistresses and their cooks go to the market for fresh produce and meat.

**About 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.** the cook begins dinner preparations, attends to or supervises dairying chores, and possibly does some gardening. During slack periods she may spin or knit, draw more water, and split kindling.



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## Daily Schedule for a Cook in a Gentry Household - cont.

Older slave children on the property assist with some of the chores.

Occasional duties include preserving food, making soap and starch (unless purchased), roasting coffee beans, making small beer, and helping with the laundering, sewing, and mending.

**About 2 p.m.** she has dinner prepared and ready to be taken into the dining room. The other domestic slaves eat in the kitchen.

**About 2:30 - 7:30 p.m.** she cleans up the kitchen, prepares dough or pastry, spends time working in the garden, spins, cards cotton or wool, knits, splits kindling, and completes activities begun in the morning.

**About 7:30 p.m.** she prepares supper.

**About 8 p.m.** she sends supper into the dining room for the family.

**About 8:30 p.m.** she cleans up the kitchen, mixes yeast dough for the next day's breakfast bread for the family, and prepares a pot of hominy for the slaves to eat for breakfast. Later she banks the kitchen fire.

Only when her work is completed, does the cook have free time to spend with her family and friends. As a much needed member of the household staff, she rarely gets a regular day off each week. When she does, she often prepares some food ahead of time for others to serve.

**Ref: Colonial Williamsburg**

[http://research.history.org/Historical\\_Research/Research\\_Themes/ThemeFamily/Cook.cfm](http://research.history.org/Historical_Research/Research_Themes/ThemeFamily/Cook.cfm)



## Recipes from, *Lady's Complete Guide; or Cookery In All Its Branches*,

by Mary Cole, 1788

### To stew a Rump of Beef

Half roast your beef, then put it in a large sauce-pan or cauldron, with two quarts of water, and one of red wine, two or three blades of mace, a shallot, one spoonful of lemon pickle, two of walnut catchup, the same of browning. Chyan pepper and salt to your taste ; let it stew over a gentle fire, close covered, for two hours, then take up your beef, and lay it in a deep dish, skim off the fat, and strain the gravy, and put in one ounce of morels, and half a pint of mushrooms ; thicken your gravy, and pour it over your beef; lay round it force-meat balls. Garnish with horse-radish, and serve it up. *Raffald*, 114.

### Another way.

Garnish the bottom of your pot with slices of bacon, sliced onions, and roots ; then put the beef upon it well tied ; soak it some time, then add broth, pepper, and salt, a faggot of parsley, green onions, two cloves of garlick, two laurel leaves, thyme, basil, and six cloves ; braise on a slow fire.

When half done, put to it small favoys, prepared in this manner:—boil a whole favoy about half an hour, then squeeze the water from it ; have a good force-meat made with fillet of veal, beef suet, two or three eggs, chopped parsley and shallots, pepper and salt, and crumbs of bread soaked in cream ; take the cabbage-leaves one by one, and put some of this force-meat upon them ; then put them together in form of a cabbage ; make as many as you think proper ; tie them well all round, and put them in the braise with the beef. When done, take them out, and wipe them free from fat ; you serve them in the same dish with the beef, and a sauce made with cullis and minced anchovies ;

if you have no cul-lis, lift some of the braise, and a little butter rolled in flour ; add fine chopped parsley, and juice of lemon or vinegar.

*Clermont*, 69. *Dalrymple*, 67.



## You are cordially invited to An Independence Tea Party.

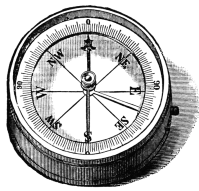
On October 25, 1774, fifty-one ladies of Edenton, North Carolina, were called together by Penelope Barker and met in the home of Elizabeth King to express their indignation over the newly imposed British tax on tea. The ladies vowed (while sipping tea made from raspberry leaves) that: "We, the ladies of Edenton, do hereby solemnly engage not to conform to the Pernicious Custom of Drinking Tea."

Invitation quoted from *The Military Wives' Cookbook*, Carolyn Quick Tillery. Cumberland House Publishing, Nashville, TN, 2008, p. 5.

### To pickle Cucumbers in slices.

SLICE your cucumbers pretty thick, and to a dozen of cucumbers cut in two or three good onions, strew on them a large [sic] handful of salt, and let them lie in their liquor twenty-four hours; then drain them, and put them between two coarse cloths; then boil the best white wine vinegar, with some cloves, made and Jamaica pepper in it, and pour it scalding hot over them, as much as will cover them all over; when they are cold, cover them up with leather, and keep them for use.

Source: E. Smith, *The Compleat Housewife*:...15th ed. (London: Printed for R. Ware...1753; facsimile reprint by Literary Services and Production Limited, London, 1968), p. 105.



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## Pumpkin Bread

**To make Bread that will keep moist and good very long.-**

Slice a pumpkin, and boil it in fair water, till the water grows clammy or somewhat thick; then drain it through a fine cloth or sieve, and with this make your bread, well kneading the dough, and it will not only increase the quantity, but will keep it moist and sweet a month longer then bread wetted with water only.

William Ellis, *The Country Housewife's Family Companion*, 1750  
same recipe in *London Family Magazine*-1741

### For two 2lb loaves using 18th Century Technique- recipes by Boulanger

1/2 Cup Leavain (Sourdough starter)

4 Cup Whole wheat flour

2 Cup Water

Let rise several hours until it has heaved

#### Mix with:

1 Cup pumpkin pulp

Scant Tablespoon of Salt

3 Cup Fine bolted flour (white)

2 Cup Whole wheat flour

Knead well, let rise until proofed, bake in brisk oven for about an hour

**To get pumpkin pulp** - slice in half one small "pie" pumpkin, scrape out seeds and place the two halves in boiling water. After a half an hour the pumpkin skin will fall off. Strain the water and collect the pulp to add to the bread when at room temperature.

### For 21st Century Technique

Use 1 packet of dry yeast to replace the starter, and add to the initial flour and water. Let rise for an hour then add pumpkin and additional flour.

**Or use** 2 packets of dry yeast and mix all ingredients at once and proceed as with any bread.

## Banbury Tarts

### Bann Berries

One cup of sugar, 1 cup seeded raisins chopped, 1 egg, juice of 1 lemon. Put all in a double boiler and cook two minutes. Make pastry of 2 cups of flour, 1/2 cup lard, 1/2 teaspoon baking powder, a little salt. Roll out and cut thin.

Put a teaspoon of raisin mixture in each puff, and bake.

[Miss E. Agnes Stewart. From *The Stonington Cookbook, Reprint of the Cookbook of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor of the Second Congregational Church* (Stonington, CT,) ca. 1900, p. 45.]

You can make your pastry yourself, or if you wish, use prepared puff pastry, re-rolled so it will not puff quite so dramatically.

#### Filling:

1 cup sugar

1 cup raisins

1 egg

juice of one lemon (and zest, if you wish)

#### Pastry:

2 cups flour

1/2 cup lard (or vegetable shortening)

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

6-8 tablespoons ice water

Preheat the oven to 425.

Chop the raisins coarsely by rocking a knife through them. Mix the filling ingredients well then cook, stirring constantly until it is slightly thickened.

Cool completely. Mix the pastry ingredients and chill. When you are ready to make the tarts, roll out and cut two rounds for each tart. Put filling on the bottom round, moisten the edges, then place top round over, pressing the edges together with a floured fork. Bake for 15-20 minutes.

Yield will vary depending on how large a cutter you use.

## Vidalia Onion Pie

A sweet onion pie with chopped ham, cheese, and cream. Can be used with turkey and/or chicken before and it's great! Makes a great appetizer if you use mini quiche shells. Exclude the meat and use as a side dish.

#### Ingredients:

3 to 4 medium Vidalia onions

3 to 4 tablespoons butter

pinch of salt (I rarely use it)

freshly ground black pepper (you can

use 18thC Kitchen Pepper)

chilled unbaked pie shell for 2-crust pie

1/4 to 1/2 cup chopped ham

1/4 to 1/2 cup shredded cheese (my

favorite is extra sharp cheddar)

3 egg yolks plus 1 whole egg

1/2 cup heavy cream

dash of nutmeg (nutmeg is a period spice in savory foods)

#### Preparation:

Halve the onions and slice thinly. Sauté in butter until tender. Add ham, then salt and pepper to taste; spread in chilled pie crust. Sprinkle the onion mixture with shredded cheese. Whisk together the egg yolk, whole egg, and cream then pour over the onion mixture. Sprinkle with nutmeg then roll out the remaining chilled pastry and fit it over the filling as a top crust. Cut a 1/2-inch hole in the center of the pastry. Bake the pie at 450° for 10 minutes, then reduce the heat to 350° and continue baking until the custard is set and the crust is browned, about 30 minutes. Serve warm or cool.

**Ref:** From The Frontiers forum

### A notice in the New-York Gazette and General Advertiser, November 4th

**1801 - Bakers**, Every family must now become their own Bread Makers - the Bakers are displeased with the late regulations of the common council, and almost to a man, have determined to Bake no more under the present regulation