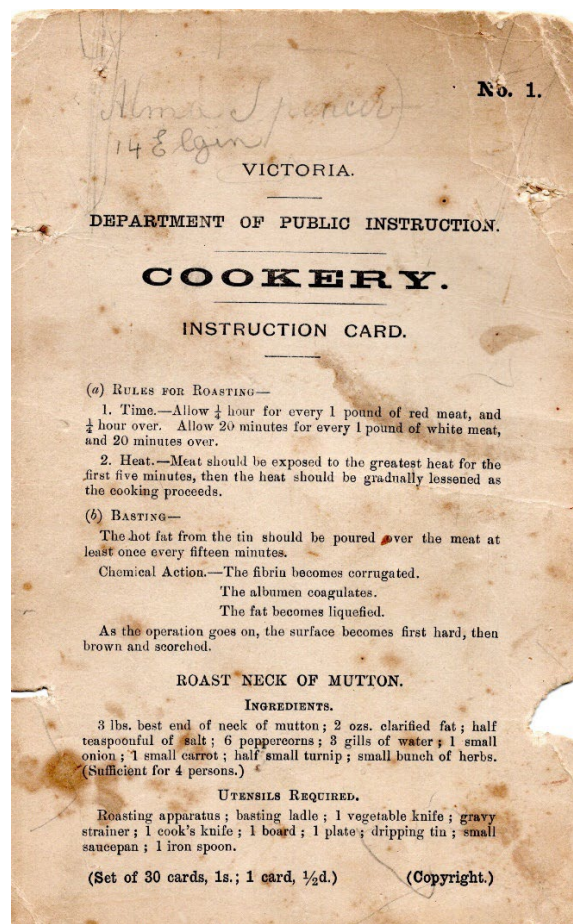


## Caramel, Potatoes, and Liver and Bacon. Victoria Department of Public Instruction Cookery Instruction Cards 1930

Sometime between 1887 – 1906 the Victorian Department of Public Instruction published a set of 30 Cookery Instruction Cards.<sup>1</sup> A set cost 1 shilling and individual cards could be bought for ½ penny. I have no information as to how they were sold or who was the intended target. I bought mine from a cookery bookseller.

Each card has one or more recipes, Ingredients for the dish(es), Utensils Required to make the dish(es), and the Method. The list of cards and recipes is Appendix 1. There are 46 recipes on the cards I have. My set is missing card 12.



The name of the former owner of my set is written in pencil at the top left-hand corner of Card No.1 – Alma Spencer. Some cards have pencilled recipes on the back. These are Appendix 2. She has also pencil corrected quantities in Urney Pudding. Along the left and right sides of the cards are two holes which suggest that the set was bound in some way though why the holes are on both sides I don't see.

I now discuss the set in the context of a selection of Australian cookery books published between 1887 – 1906. The list of these is Appendix 3.

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<sup>1</sup> Functional Object, Department of Public Instruction, Cookery Instruction Cards, not dated but c.1887 – 1906, Victorian Collection, Museums of Victoria

## Commentary

In the absence of any overall rationale for the set the selection of recipes appears idiosyncratic. Some examples:

- Why is the recipe for Roasting - Card No.1 - for Neck of Mutton and not for more common roast cuts like loin, shoulder or ribs
- Why there is a recipe for 'Clarified Fat' is not at all clear, particularly as it is placed on the same card as 'Caramel' – Card No.2.
- 'Maigre Soup' – Card No. 8 - is a Lenten dish made without meat, in this case soup. Three of the cookery books have recipes for it. The others don't, but they have a wider range of soups at the same time.
- In Classes of Soup - Card No.7 the second listed is 'Stock Soups, as Sago, Macaroni'. There are recipes for neither.
- Card 17 has a recipe for Rice for Curry, but there is no recipe for curry in the set. It may be on one of the cards which I don't have. All the cookery books have at least one recipe for curry.

Also not evident is why some of the Cards have recipes on both sides of the Card others only on the front.

All the dishes are firmly within Anglo-Australian cuisine, derived from Anglo-Celtic cuisine. The cookery books had at least one dish which was attributed to another cuisine, often French or Italian. All also had a recipe for Mulligatawny which I ascribe to Anglo-Indian cuisine, the set did not.

There are no recipes for fowl/chicken/duck. All the cookery books had recipes for these.

There are no recipes for jams, jellies, chutneys, or pickles. This strikes me as a particularly strange omission given the numbers of them in the cookery books. Cakes also are poorly done by.

There are no desserts, puddings, or sweet pastries, again curious when compared to the cookery books.

There are no recipes for native plants or animals other than fish. Some of the cookery books have recipes for kangaroo, wallaby, and pigeon

Other than nutmeg in the recipe for Currant Pudding, mace in the recipe for Stock and the occasional use of pepper, the set of recipes is a spiceless zone.

On the plus side there are recipes for offal: Steak and Kidney Pie, Liver and Bacon, Stewed Tripe and Onion and two recipes for rabbit - Ragout and Stewed. All the cookery books have at least one recipe for rabbit and offal.

Also, on the plus side, other than 'roasting apparatus' no special utensils are called for. The instructions for Roasting, Basting, and General Rules for Cooking Vegetables are simple.

If the argument is made that there were a limited number of recipes which could be included, I'd argue that recipes for Tea and Coffee – Card No.28, Dry Toast and Buttered Toast – Card No. 29, and one of the two recipes for neck of mutton (Roasted and Boiled) could have been dropped in favour of some omissions.

## **Appendix 1. List of Recipes**

Card No.1: Rules For Roasting, Basting, Roast Neck of Mutton

Card No.2: Caramel, Clarified Fat

Card No.3: Yorkshire Pudding

Card No.4: General Rules for Cooking Vegetables, Method of Dressing, Potatoes, Sauces

Card No.5: Carrots, Turnips, Parsnips and Onions

Card No.6: Cabbage, Peas

Card No.7: Classes of Soup, Soups Made From Cooked or Uncooked Bones, And Other Household Scraps

Card No.8: Soup Maigre

Card No.9: Cottage Broth

Card No.10: Pea Soup

Card No.11: Steak and Kidney Pie, Jam Turnovers

Card No.13: Liver and Bacon

Card No.14: Pancakes, Fritters

Card No.15: Rissoles of Cold Meat. Grilled Chop or Steak

Card No.16: Rules for Boiling, Rolled Neck of Mutton, Parsley Sauce, Ragout of Rabbit

Card No.17: Stewed Tripe and Onions, Scotch Collop, Rice for Curry

Card No.18: Irish Stew, Stewed Rabbit

Card No.19: Stewed Fish, Salt Fish

Card No.20: Boiled Bream, Baked Fish

Card No.21: Fried Mullet

Card No.22: Steak and Kidney Pudding, Apple Pudding

Card No.23: Currant Pudding, Urney Pudding, Rice Pudding

Card No.24: A Small Loaf, Scones (1), Scones (2)

Card No.25: Sultana Cake, Plain Cake, Sponge Cake

Card No.26: Mutton Broth, Beef Tea, Gruel, Quickly Made Beef Tea

Card No.27 Barley Water, Arrowroot, Toast and Water

Card No.28 Tea, Coffee

Card No.29 Porridge, Dry Toast, Buttered Toast

Card No.30 Plain Boiled Eggs, Buttered Eggs, Eggs On A Plate, Poached Eggs

## **Appendix 2. Handwritten recipes**

Card No.1 Coffee Cake

Card No.2: Pound Cake, Almond Cheese Cakes, Queen Cakes

Card No.3: Orange Cake

Card No.19: Urney Pudding (different to Urney Pudding above)

## **Appendix 3. List of Cookery Books**

Abbott, Edward, *The English and Australian Cookery Book. Cookery for the Many As Well the "Upper Ten Thousand"*, Sampson, Low, Son & Marston London 1864

*Cookery book of good and tried receipts compiled for the Women's Missionary Association sale and exhibition, Sydney, September 1895*

Forster Rutledge, Mrs., Compiler, *The Goulburn Cookery Book*, 1899

*Home cookery for Australia*, compiled and issued by the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union of Victoria. 2nd. enlarged edition, 1906

Maclurcan, Hannah, *Mrs Maclurcan's Cookery Book. A collection of practical recipes specially suited for Australia*, George Robertson and Co, Melbourne, 1898

Muskett, Philip E. *The Art of Living in Australia*, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London. 1893  
NSW Public School Cookery Teachers' Association, *The Commonsense Cookery Book*, 1904

Presbyterian Church of N.S.W. Women's Missionary Association, *Cookery Book of Good and Tried Recipes*, James Steadman 20<sup>th</sup> edition 20 1931 (First edition 1896)

Rawson, Mrs, Lance (Mina), *Australian Enquiry Book of Household and General Information*, 1894  
accessed at Index: Australian enquiry book of household and general information.djvu - Wikisource, the free online library

Rawson, Mrs. Lance (Mina) *The Queensland Cookery and Poultry Book*, William Hopkins, Rockhampton, 1890 (Facsimile edition 2023)

Wicken, H.F. *The Kingswood Cookery Book*, George Robertson and Company, Melbourne and Sydney, 1888.