

## Sausages, Salads and Sauces: An alternative story of garlic at the Australian table prior to 1947

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There is a commonly held view that garlic only became part of the multiculinary Australian table post-World War 2 when migrants and refugees from war affected countries in Europe brought their cuisines and garlic to Australia from 1947 on. The view is wrong. I want to correct it by looking at the culinary uses of garlic through recipes published in newspapers between 1861 – the first published recipe - and 1947.

Garlic was imported into the colony by at least 1832 when it appears along with other culinary goods being sold by the chemist W. Eldridge, such as Cardamom Seeds, Ginger, Pearl Barley and Rhubarb.<sup>1</sup>

It also was being grown at home by at least 1835:

MB. J. W. DAVIS begs to inform the Public, that he has for Sale an extensive assortment of the following Seeds, all of which will be found pure ... Garden Seeds: Garlic, Sweet pea.<sup>2</sup>

By 1838 it was being sold by the bunch at market:

Vegetables. — Potatoes, 16s. to 18per cwt.; Cabbages 1d. to 6d. ; Carrots 4d. bunch ; Turnips 4d. do. ; Garlic 6d. do. ; Rhubarb 6d. do. ; Lettuces 2d. each ; Cucumbers 1d. to 3d. each ...<sup>3</sup>

But it must have been available prior to these dates. The first mention of garlic I came across was for its purported medicinal uses. In 1823 it was put forward as a cure for rheumatism.<sup>4</sup> It would later be promoted as a cure for ear-ache<sup>5</sup> and asthma.<sup>6</sup>

The first recorded culinary mention of it in 1825 was not positive:

A few fresh walnuts, or raw leaves of parsley, eaten immediately after dinner, will speedily remove, that disagreeable taint which always, infects the breath, after partaking of onions garlic or shallots.<sup>7</sup>

In 1829 the *Hobart-Town Courier* published a more positive culinary use.

A serious disappointment occurred to a small, but select party, on Sunday last. Mr. Hemmings, who excels in the art of Cookery, being desirous to entertain certain young ladies of his acquaintance, had made free (see Criminal Court report) with two fat geese belonging to Mr. Houshold, and with much dexterity was plucking, trussing, and cooking them, with seasoning of all kinds, when Constables Byron and Clark unexpectedly paid him a visit at his residence, in St. Giles's. One of the portly fowls was laid out ready for the spit, and the other

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<sup>1</sup> G. W. Eldridge, Chemist, *The Tasmanian* 17 August 1832 p.8

<sup>2</sup> Seed Warehouse, *Colonial Times* 4 July 1835 p.3

<sup>3</sup> Vegetables, Sydney Market, *Commercial Journal and Advertiser* 13 January 1838 p.2

<sup>4</sup> Cure for Rheumatism, *Hobart Town Gazette and Van Dieman's Land Advertiser* 20 September 1823 p.2

<sup>5</sup> Cure for the Ear – Ache, *The Colonist* 13 July 1837 p.2

<sup>6</sup> Garlic Asthma Cure Advocate 25 January 1941 p.4

<sup>7</sup> *The Australian* 14 July 1825 p.2

was cut up according to the maxims of la nouvelle cuisiniere bourgeoise, for the pot, with onions, garlic and other approved ingredients.<sup>8</sup>

The earliest published recipe I found for using garlic was this one for Tomato (sic) Sauce in 1861.

To every six pounds of tomatos add one pound of onions, and half an ounce of garlic. Boil them until quite soft, and strain through a cullender until you have the skins clear of the tomatos. Then add a pint of vinegar, half an ounce of ginger, two teaspoonfuls of cayenne pepper, quarter-pound of salt, and a few cloves. Boil them until sufficiently thick, and be sure to keep it well stirred. If it is to be preserved put it into small jars, and keep well corked.<sup>9</sup>

In 1863 there is a recipe using garlic in preserving olives.

'One farmer told me 'his wife pricked the olives with a pin, placed them in water, added salt, pepper, garlic, orange flower-water, and olive oil, leaving them a time to soak in this mixture.<sup>10</sup>

This from 1894 is not a recipe but too good a culinary note to leave out.

An enduring gastronomic reputation has attached itself to the chef who chewed a small clove of garlic, and then breathed lightly over the plate he wished to flavor.<sup>11</sup>

In 1899 a recipe for Tomato Salad is an early instance of garlic being not in the dish but rubbed around the inside the bowl, a practice a practice that continued well into the late 1900s.

Tomato Salad. — Rub a salad bowl with garlic. Take four tomatoes not over-ripe, slice them, and get rid of the pips and watery substance; chop the slices coarsely, and put them in the bowl with four tablespoonfuls of tomato sauce out of a bottle, one of tarragon vinegar, and two of oil, pepper and salt to taste ; slice in half -inch lengths the middle rib of a dozen leaves of cos lettuce, turn over the whole in the bowl till the salad is well mixed. Have some pulled bread pounded and passed through a colander, strew the top of the salad plentifully with this, and, after letting it rest ten minutes, serve.<sup>12</sup>

Garlic was often used in chutneys like this one from 1900 which uses large amounts of both garlic and chillies.

#### Mango Chutney

Ingredients: Twelve pounds of peeled mangoes, one pound and a-half of fine salt, quarter of a pound of green garlic, three pounds of raisins, three pounds of sugar, two pounds of green ginger, two pounds of chillies, seven bottles of vinegar.

Mode : The mangoes must be just turning yellow, but not soft; take out the stone.

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<sup>8</sup> *The Hobart -Town Courier* 18 April 1829 p.3

<sup>9</sup> Tomato Sauce, *The Victorian Farmers Journal and Gardeners Chronicle* 23 March 1861 p.22

<sup>10</sup> *The Olive, South Australian Register* 24 November 1863 p.3

<sup>11</sup> *Garlic, Darling Downs Gazette* 3 November 1894 p.11

<sup>12</sup> Tomatoes, *Weekly Times* 2 February 1889 p.10

These quantities are weighed, when everything is peeled, and all put through, the sausage machine ; all the ingredients must be put on at the same time. Boil the chutney until a nice golden brown, which will take nearly four or five hours.<sup>13</sup>

Being a fan of both garlic and offal this 1910 recipe is very appealing as is the instruction to use a 'suspicion of garlic'.

Ox Palate Croquettes. — Required: 2 ox palates some good stock a bay leaf, cloves, a blade of mace, veal forcemeat frying butter, frying fat, a little garlic. Boil the ox palates. gently, cut lengthwise, arrange them in a stewpan, and cover with good stock, adding a suspicion of garlic: a bay leaf, some cloves and a blade of mace. After simmering for an hour, take out the meat, drain, and let it get cold. Have ready some highly seasoned forcemeat, and put some of it in each piece of palate. Dip into frying butter, and cook in deep fat till a delicate brown colour. Drain on thick paper. Scatter dried salt over and serve.<sup>14</sup>

In 1920 garlic sausages were among the 'Delicacies of Dungog' on sale among other smallgoods from C.L. Newman.<sup>15</sup> In 1921 C. W.B. asked for a recipe for making them at home.

Garlic Sausage.

C.W.B. asks: Could you please give me a recipe to make garlic sausage? Which should I use the most of, beef or pork?

Answer.—Take equal quantities of beef, pork, and beef suet; put it through a sausage machine, season' with salt, pepper, dried garlic and sage rubbed fine, and mix well. Get a well-washed intestine, fill, and prick it, boil gently for an hour, and lay on straw to dry. They may be smoked the same as hams.<sup>16</sup>

This 1930 recipe does lamb an injustice - it is described as bland meat.

Getting back to the griller again, here's a recipe for thick lamb chops with a flavor you seldom encounter when this bland meat is served.

To begin with, you need garlic vinegar. This is easy to make. Remove the "shells" from a cluster of garlic and cut each clove in half. Then bring a half-pint of cider or wine vinegar to the boiling point. Toss in the garlic and let cool. Then pour it into a jar or bottle for use later. Now mix one level teaspoonful dry mustard, one-half teaspoonful salt and one-quarter teaspoonful paprika with one tablespoonful of garlic vinegar. Add five tablespoonfuls olive, vegetable or salad oil. Stir or blend well and pour over six thick rib hops or mutton chops placed close together on a platter.

Do this an hour before grilling.

Turn the chops three or four times, so that the oil mixture permeates both surfaces of the meat. Then grill the chops in the standard way.

Don't rush the grilling, and turn frequently. About 12 to 15 minutes for inch and a half chops. Remove to a hot platter, and if you have any of your oil dressing left—a tablespoonful or two — pour it over the sizzling chops.

We'll leave you to bring in the verdict. What garlic vinegar does to lamb chops can only be known by those who eat them.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Mango Chutney, Cookery *The Queenslander* February 1900 p.222

<sup>14</sup> Ox Palate Croquettes, *The Kitchen Darling Downs Gazette* 22 January 1910 p.7

<sup>15</sup> Delicacies of Dungog, *The Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser* 16 January 1920

<sup>16</sup> Garlic Sausage. *The Land* 22 July 1921 p.16

<sup>17</sup> Try This Recipe For savoury Lamb *The Sun-News Pictorial* 23 January 1930 p.33

The last recipe example is in 1947 for a soup that has been 'Prepared and tested by experts of the Sydney County Council's Home Management Section.'

#### French Bean Soup

One and half pounds of French beans, 1 chopped onion, 1 quart stock, 2 tablespoons flour, 1 teaspoon garlic or onion, 1 oz. butter, salt, pepper, spice.

1. Melt the butter, brown the chopped onion, the sliced garlic and the flour.
2. String and slice the beans, rinse and add them.
3. Add a quart vegetable stock or water, season with salt, pepper and half a teaspoonful spice. Simmer for an hour.
4. Pass through a sieve, reheat and serve.<sup>18</sup>

I set out to counter the often put view that the Anglo - Australian table prior 1947 lacked garlic. I found ample evidence from newspapers to the contrary. Garlic was at the multicultural Anglo-Australian table from as early as the 1820s. This is not to deny that the arrival of refugee migrants first from war torn middle European and then from southern Italy accelerated culinary change. Arguably for that change to happen it needed a base on which to build. What I have shown is a base on which would be built the adoption of 'new' elements for a cuisine, in this case garlic.

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<sup>18</sup> French Bean Soup, *Catholic Weekly* 9 January 1947 p.19