

Early American Opinions on Chinese Food

By Andrew Coe

THE history of Chinese food in North America begins in 1848 with the arrival of thousands of migrants from Guangdong province eager to find their fortunes in the California gold fields. Americans, however, already had a notion of what the Chinese ate from European travelers' accounts and from the tales written by the handful of Americans who had visited China. Books on China by French Jesuits and English traders had been circulating in cities like New York and Philadelphia since at least the 1770s. From these, Americans learned that the Chinese

ate with chopsticks, favored rice, and chopped their food into little bits before bringing it to the table. Many accounts dwelled on the wonders of Chinese markets, and particularly on the live dogs, cats, snakes, and rats being sold for human consumption. According to the anonymous author of the *Chinese Traveller* (1772), the Chinese "made no scruple of eating any sort of meat, and have as good an appetite for that which died in a ditch, as that which was killed by a butcher."

The first Americans arrived in China in 1784, seeking to trade ginseng root collected in the mountains of Appalachia and Spanish silver dol-

lars for the tea and porcelain of China. They only saw a tiny portion of that vast country. Like the Europeans already involved in the China trade, Americans were allowed to set foot in only two places, Macau and a 12-acre compound just outside the city wall of Guangzhou (then known as Canton), the capital of Guangdong province. By 1800, American trading firms had their own Guangzhou "factory," a combination office, warehouse, and living quarters, and spent the rest of the year either at sea or in the Portuguese settlement at Macau. Many of these Americans were canny New England businessmen, with little

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The Roots of American Vegetarianism

By Rynn Berry

THE writings of the German mystic Jakob Böhme were instrumental in converting a young English rustic with a literary bent to a Pythagorean diet. (Before the coining of the terms "vegetarian" and "vegan" in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, respectively, Americans and Europeans who ate a fleshless diet were widely known as Pythagoreans.) His name was Thomas Tryon. In numerous works Tryon advocated a Pythagorean diet on practical and moral grounds. One of his books, *Wisdom's Dictates* (1691), which was a digest of Tryon's voluminous *The Way to Health, Long Life, and Happi-*

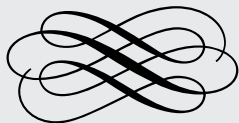
ness (1683), found its way into the hands of the young Benjamin Franklin in the 1720s. For three years, during his late adolescence, the young printer's apprentice embraced the Pythagorean system. In his Autobiography (1791), Franklin acknowledges his debt to Tryon and, in the same passage, makes it plain that his reasons for adopting a

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Courtesy of Orchard House/L.M. Alcott Memorial Assn, Concord, MA.

Teacher, writer, and vegetarian Bronson Alcott.



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FROM THE CHAIR

CULINARY HISTORIANS OF NEW YORK has again achieved several milestones of which we can all be proud.

First, CHNY has awarded its second annual Amelia Scholar's Grant of \$1,000 to Elizabeth Simms for her innovative project *Tuskegee Experiment Stations Bulletins as Early Cookbooks for the Black Farming Community*. Simms will use the grant to travel to Tuskegee University to examine George Washington Carver's papers and bulletins to investigate Carver's choices of recipes for inclusion in the bulletins to shed light on the foodways of the farming communities in rural Alabama in the first half of the twentieth century. Simms was one of seven outstanding applicants for the Amelia Scholar's Grant, and I would like to thank the CHNY members who gave generously of their time in reviewing the impressive applications. CHNY congratulates Simms on the award, and we will look forward to hearing the fruits of her research during the 2007-08 program year.

Second, CHNY is honoring Barbara Ketcham Wheaton with its second Amelia Award, commemorating significant achievement in culinary history. Wheaton's many accomplishments include several books, most importantly *Savoring the Past: The French Table from 1300-1789* (1983) and, with Patricia Kelly, *Bibliography of Culinary History: Food Resources in Eastern Massachusetts* (1987). Her "Reading Cookbooks" seminars are famous nationwide, in which Wheaton acts as a culinary Virgil, guiding younger historians through the wealth of social history hidden within the quotidian kitchen

manual. Wheaton is also the Honorary Curator of the 15,000 volume culinary collection at Radcliffe's Schlesinger Library, and she has done extensive work with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab "Counter Intelligence" project studying ways of making tomorrow's kitchen both technologically and socially the heart of the home. Wheaton is that rare scholar who uses her expert knowledge of the past to improve the future. Details of the awards ceremony will be forthcoming.

Finally, after more than three years of tireless service as the Chairperson of the Program Committee, Linda Pelaccio has stepped down as chair (although she has graciously agreed to remain on the Program Committee). Filling her shoes is no small task, but Linda Lawry, Diana Pittet, and Carolyn Vaughn have agreed to act as co-chairs to continue to maintain the high level of programming that Linda brought to CHNY. On behalf of all CHNY members, my heartfelt thanks to Linda for her extraordinary service. For those who have reaped the benefits of CHNY programming and are in a position to volunteer some time, I'd like to invite you to contact our programming committee co-chairs or me to participate directly in the programming or management of CHNY. We need your help to continue to pioneer programs, scholarships, and awards in the field of culinary history.

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Feeding Desire: Design and the Tools of the Table

Exhibition Review

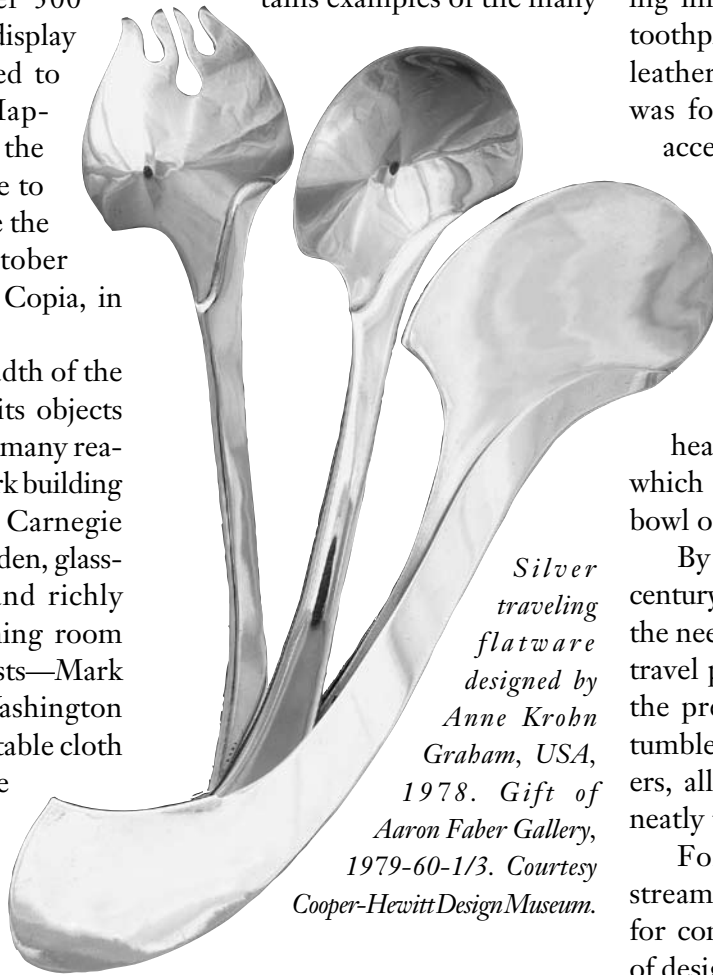
By Ellen J. Fried

THE press release for “Feeding Desire: Design and the Tools of the Table, 1500-2005” at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum heralds the collection as “a rich, contextual journey through the evolution of dining.” This marvelous exhibit, with over 300 pieces of dinnerware on display in myriad settings, opened to wide acclaim in May. Happily, the reality lives up to the reviews. There is still time to visit, or even re-visit, since the exhibit runs through October 29th when it departs for Copia, in Napa, California.

Indeed, the sheer breadth of the exhibit and ingenuity of its objects warrant multiple visits for many reasons, including the landmark building where it is housed. The Carnegie Mansion boasts a large garden, glass-enclosed conservatory, and richly carved wood-paneled dining room where famous dinner guests—Mark Twain and Booker T. Washington among them—signed the table cloth and the signatures were later made permanent by embroidery.

“Feeding Desire” begins in this storied room. After viewing the exhibits showcasing the knife in all its menacing glory—from hunting tool to meat spear to rounded edge utensil, visitors move on to guest-ready tables laid with magnificent dinnerware. One table sparkles with a gold-plated blue-toned Gilded Age set which was a gift to Andrew Carnegie

from railroad executives; another displays a silver service—with a seemingly endless array of knives, forks, and spoons that demands a well-dressed diner sit up straight and never slurp the soup (the German word for spoon, *loffel*, is derived from the word for slurping). To add to its opulence, this setting also contains examples of the many



Silver traveling flatware designed by Anne Krohn Graham, USA, 1978. Gift of Aaron Faber Gallery, 1979-60-1/3. Courtesy Cooper-Hewitt Design Museum.

whimsical pieces that permeate the collection, whether they be carved ivory wood-nymphs cavorting on cutlery or a table-top bell in the shape of Queen Elizabeth II.

The modern era collection provides a truly clever example of playfulness at the table; an oversized place setting fashioned from metal

road signs. According to one of the exhibition’s security guards with an appetite for history, the signs were believed to have been created for a department of transportation gala.

Well before hospitality dictated that utensils be offered to guests, those who wished to keep their fingers clean carried their own eating implements. At first, a type of toothpick or a knife was stored in a leather container. Later the spoon was followed by the fork—whose acceptance was delayed because

of its tarring as effete and effeminate—eventually completing the trio. Sophisticated “bring your own knife and fork sets” included folding utensils or handles with interchangeable heads, that is, one handle onto which either the tongs of a fork or bowl of a spoon could be attached.

By the close of the seventeenth century, although hospitality negated the need to bring your own utensils, travel pieces continued to evolve to the present where utensils, plates, tumblers, and salt and pepper shakers, all molded from plastic, nestle neatly together, ready for a picnic.

For me nothing matched the streamlined first-class airline trays for combining elegance and utility of design with safety and grace. The displays of inflight dining service for Lufthansa featured porcelain plates of various sizes and shapes. Salt and pepper shakers, water and wine glasses, flatware, including a dessert spoon, all perfectly proportioned to fit comfortably on a serving tray sized for seat backs.

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Feeding Desire

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Sadly, even at 30,000 feet, the decline of elegant dining is discernable as the hefty metals and porcelains of the Concorde or the in-flight service of Lufthansa have devolved to Delta Song's lightweight plastic service. And on the ground, in our constant effort to eat while trying to get somewhere on time, co-curator of the exhibit Sarah Coffin laments that we have returned to eating with our hands.

While sterling silver, silver plate, stainless steel, and now plastic, may be the most familiar table materials in the exhibition, a cornucopia of different media employed by artisans is also on display. There are ivory, horn, snakeskin, coral, and glass beads that have been carved and molded into

decorative and intricate shapes. The bright colors and playful designs of Lucite, CorningWare and Bakelite are made into table pieces to delight children.

Wood is the one material, however, that transcends time and fashion. The ornamental painted and gilded wooden Christening spoons bear little resemblance to today's flat wooden spoons ubiquitous in summertime for scraping lemon ices from paper cups. Proudly advertised as sanitary, these disposable specimens have morphed into the "spork," a hybrid touted as serving two flatware purposes but which is truly suitable for neither.

The exhibit website is delightful; an *amuse bouche* that includes a "timeline of the table" and separate biographies for the fork, knife, and spoon. The "Design du Jour" website

quiz uses exhibit images to playfully test visitors' knowledge of unusual serving pieces, including "sucket" forks used for eating sweetmeats. The lavishly illustrated catalogue is replete with thoughtful and informative essays by historians, including Darra Goldstein, who in her chapter "Implements of Eating" sums up the exhibition by saying, "With appetite comes desire. But what is the object of that desire? A hearty board or an elegant repast?"

Ellen J. Fried, secretary of CHNY, is a lawyer with a master's degree from NYU's Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Health where she is currently an adjunct professor. Previously she was a Research Associate at Yale's Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. She is currently speaking at legal and nutrition conferences around the country.

Program Summaries

FISH ON FRIDAY

Presented by Brian Fagan

March 13, 2006

In a talk given in the Melville Gallery at the South Street Seaport Museum, Brian Fagan, Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and author of over 40 books, told the historians how fish-eating had changed the course of the world. His talk drew on what he had learned researching his recently published book, *Fish on Friday: Feasting, Fasting and the Discovery of North America*.

The European Church's tradition of not eating meat on holy days created a vast market for fish that led to better boats, new preservation

techniques, and styles of cookery. In the ninth century, to meet the demand for fish new seas were researched, and monks created fish farms by flooding fields in areas far from the sea.

Mr. Fagan outlined the progress of fishing in ocean waters as the demand for fish grew. Herring was caught in drift nets just offshore and preserved in brine. Eels were smoked.

As new boat-building methods created bigger ships, fish began being processed at sea. Cod was salted or air-dried. This dried cod was light and easy to transport and could feed fisherman on longer and longer journeys.

Mr. Fagan, while pacing the

room, captivating his audience with his dramatic delivery and English accent, said that there are many records from 1480 of boats leaving England heavily loaded with salt. Fagan reasoned that they were going to Newfoundland to harvest and salt cod, and that these British sailors were the first to discover and settle in America. Settlements, he believes, were established on the Atlantic coast to process and store fish until it could be shipped back to Europe. When queried about his research on this point, Fagan acknowledged that his theory differs from that of Mark Kurlansky, who suggests in his book *Cod* that Basque fisherman were the first to reach America.

—John Jenkins

SPICES AND THE MEDIEVAL CULINARY AESTHETIC

Presented by Paul Freedman
April 3, 2006

IN the days before refrigeration, medieval cooks used spices lavishly to disguise the taste of rotting meat, right? Wrong!

In a talk at the National Arts Club, Paul Freedman, Chairman of the Yale History Department, suggested to the group that the assumption by many historians that expensive and exotic spices were used during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries of the Medieval period to cover up off flavors is incorrect. There were innumerable ways available to them to preserve food—salting, smoking, drying, as examples. Rather, he argued, the spices were used more often to display wealth and their love of food—often to the point of vulgarity.

Food was colored with gold foil, saffron, or sandalwood oil, textures were changed with aspics. Elaborate tromp l'oeil designs were developed and extravagant food displays fabricated. As an example of his premise, Freedman showed a painting of a medieval roasted pig “ridden” by a chicken “knight” holding a shield and a spear and wearing a metal helmet. Another example was a picture of a boar’s head, painted green on one side and gilded on the other.

He added that the Medieval belief in humors further explains their interest in spices. For example, wet humors should be balanced by dry spices and cold humors by hot spices.

To sum up his talk, Freedman drew surprising parallels between Medieval and modern times citing the mutual interest in health, flavor, aroma (as in today’s aroma therapy), and conspicuous consumerism.

The program was accompanied by a delectable collation of sweet and savory pastries prepared according to fifteenth-century recipes.

—John Jenkins

THE WHISKEY REBELLION: GEORGE WASHINGTON, ALEXANDER HAMILTON, AND THE FRONTIER REBELS WHO CHALLENGED AMERICA’S NEW-FOUND SOVEREIGNTY.

Presented by William Hogeland
May 10, 2006

THE first tax imposed on an American product by the American government led to the first ever deployment of a federal army against American citizens. A whiskey tax was imposed in 1791 as requested by Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, to raise money to pay down the states’ debts stemming from the Revolutionary War. The tax hit heaviest on the settlers to the west of the Allegheny Mountains in Pennsylvania who distilled the rye they grew, turning their grain into a more readily transportable cash crop they could sell to the city dwellers in the east.

At that time, the land to the west of the Allegheny Mountains was “the wild west,” and the independent-minded settlers did not take kindly to the tax they saw as ruinous to them and beneficial to the fat cats in the east. They banded together and formed militias, threatening a civil war, and even secession from the newly formed county.

In 1794 President Washington led a force of 13,000 men, more men than he had led at the battle of Yorktown, over the mountains to quash the rebellion.

William Hogeland is also author of a book called *The Whiskey Rebellion*.

He followed his talk with a tasting of five rye whiskeys that, in varying degrees, approached the taste of the rye that Pennsylvania militiamen made in the late eighteenth century. Some were clear as water (unaged), some were full on amber (aged).

—John Jenkins



Call For Third Annual Amelia Scholar’s Grant Entries

CULINARY Historians of New York announces the call for entries for the third annual Amelia Scholar’s Grant of \$1,000 (see Chair letter, page 2). Named after Amelia Simmons, author of *American Cookery*, the first cookbook printed in America, the grant is designed to promote research and scholarship in the field of culinary history.

Applications shall include an essay (no more than 500 words) detailing the project for which the Amelia Scholar’s Grant is sought and one letter of recommendation. Further details and application requirements may be found on the website at www.culinaryhistoriansny.org. Complete applications must be postmarked no later than April 30, 2007. It is anticipated that the recipient will be announced in June 2007. The winner will be the featured speaker at a Culinary Historians of New York meeting during the 2008–09 season to share the fruits of the funded research.

China

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interest in anything but the business at hand. The first account we have showing that any American tasted the local cuisine doesn't come until 35 years after their countrymen first voyaged to China.

In 1819, Bryant Parrott Tilden was a young trader from Salem, Massachusetts, a center of the China trade. In Guangzhou, he was befriended by Paunkeiqua, a leading merchant who cultivated good relations with many American firms. Just before Tilden's ship was set to sail home, Paunkeiqua invited the departing American merchants to spend the day at his mansion. After showing Tilden the grounds, his host tells him: "Now my flinde Tillen, you must go long my for catchee chow chow tiffin." In other words, dinner was served in a spacious dining hall, where the guests were seated at a series of small tables.

"Soon after," writes Tilden, "a train of servants came in bringing a most splendid service of fancy colored, painted and gilt large tureens & bowls, containing soups, among them the celebrated *bird nest soup*, as also a variety of stewed messes, and plenty of boiled rice, & same style of smaller bowls, but alas! no plates and knives and forks." (By "messes," Tilden probably meant "prepared dishes" and not "unsavory jumbles.")

The Americans attempted to eat with chopsticks, with very poor results: "Monkies [sic] with knitting needles would not have looked more ludicrous than some of us did." Finally, their host put an end to their discomfort by ordering western-style plates, knives, forks, and spoons. Then the main portion of the meal began:



Diorama, View of Canton, circa 1750–1800.

"Twenty separate courses were placed on the table during three hours in as many different services of elegant china ware, the messes consisting of soups, gelatinous food, a variety of stewed hashes, made up of all sorts of chopped meats, small birds cock's-combs, a favorite dish, some fish & all sorts of vegetables, rice, and pickles, of which the Chinese are very fond. Ginger and pepper are used plentifully in most of their cookery. Not a joint of meat or a whole fowl or bird were placed on the table. Between the changing of the courses, we freely conversed and partook of Madeira & other European wines—and costly teas."

After fruits, pastries, and more wine, the dinner finally came to an end. Tilden and his friends left glowing with happiness (and alcohol) at the honor that Paunkeiqua had shown them with this lavish meal. Nowhere, however, does he tell us whether the Americans actually enjoyed these "messes" and "hashes."

For a fuller, but less enthusiastic, picture of Chinese food, we have to jump ahead to the 1830s, when the first American missionaries arrived in China. The United States was then

decades into a religious awakening that had spread from New England to the western frontier. A key tenet of this evangelical Christian movement was the solemn duty to spread the Protestant gospel to every corner of the nation and the globe. One of those who caught the fervor was a Massachusetts farmer's son named Elijah Coleman Bridgman, who was ordained as a "missionary to the heathen." When he learned that more heathens lived in China than any other nation on Earth, Bridgman located a berth on the next boat to Asia. Soon after he landed in Guangzhou, he took a tour of a Chinese temple and was invited by the priest to share some food. With the help of a translator, he quizzed the priest about his beliefs over Chinese tea and "sweetmeats," probably candied fruits. At the end of this repast, Bridgman "thanked and rewarded him for his hospitality, and left him as we found him, a miserable idolater."

Bridgman concluded that China was the most morally debased land on Earth: "Idolatry, superstition, fraud, falsehood, cruelty, and oppression everywhere predominate, and iniquity, like a mighty flood, is extending far

and wide its desolation.” In 1832, he conveyed his vision to Edmund Roberts, an American diplomat whom he guided around Guangzhou. On his return, Roberts published a long account of his voyage that is filled with virulent xenophobia. Of the Chinese he writes: “In their habits they are most depraved and vicious; gambling is universal and is carried to a most ruinous and criminal extent; they use the most pernicious drugs as well as the most intoxicating liquors to produce intoxication; they are also gross gluttons; every thing that runs, walks, creeps, flies, or swims, in fact, every thing that will supply the place of food, whether of the sea, or the land, and articles most disgusting to other people, are by them greedily devoured.” His outrage about Chinese culinary habits may have been particularly spurred by the fact that his window in the American factory overlooked the afternoon dog and cat market next to the city walls.

Another missionary who landed in Guangzhou was Samuel Wells Williams, the son of a devout printer from Utica, New York. Williams considered becoming a botanist before his father secured him the job of running the missionary printing press in Guangzhou. Shortly after landing, he wrote back to his father: “I have been here a week, and in that short time have seen enough idolatries to call forth all the energies that I have.” Williams joined Elijah Coleman in writing and printing a monthly journal called the *Chinese Repository*. During its lifespan, the *Repository* became an encyclopedic compilation of western knowledge about China, including its culinary customs.

Four months after arriving in Guangzhou, Samuel Wells Williams was invited to his first Chinese meal—“it should be more properly termed a gratification of curiosity

than any pleasure”—the obligatory banquet at a merchant’s house:

“At 7 p.m. the dinner began with a soup of birds’ nests which we ate with chop sticks; these we used somewhat clownishly at first, as it required a little practice to eat a soup with two ivory sticks. Then followed dishes whose names and contents were unknown, but which tasted pretty much all alike. They were all in cups about the size of tea-cups, and when given to each guest always eaten with these same chop-sticks. In eating liquid dishes, as soups, the mouth is put down to the edge of the dish and the contents shoveled in. They will eat rice as fast again in this way as I could ever manage with a spoon. Some of the dishes we had were birds’ nests, lily roots, pigs’ tongues, fishes’ stomachs, sharks’ fins, biche-de-mer, fishes’ heads—and others to the number of fourteen. After this a European dinner was served, but rather inferior.”

The main difference between these American missionaries and the traders in Guangzhou was that Bridgman and his compatriots were actually interested in the lives of the Chinese. This curiosity was driven by their mission work, because they realized that couldn’t convert their audiences unless they knew something about their history, beliefs, and customs. Bridgman and Williams researched a wide variety of topics about Chinese life, from weights and measures to grammar to the practices of the imperial court, which they published in the *Chinese Repository*. Western merchants avidly read these articles, because they often contained information that could be used in business and were reprinted in many United States periodicals. In 1835, Williams wrote a lengthy essay for the *Repository* on the “Diet of the Chinese.” The author’s scientific background shows in the thoroughness

with which he investigates every aspect of the subject.

Williams admits that, due to the restrictions on foreign travel within China, his article gives only a fragmentary look at the cuisine: “In endeavoring to ascertain the sources from whence food for so great a population is derived, and the various modes which are employed to fit it for use, we shall resort to all means of information within our reach. Our inquiries, however, must be confined chiefly to those persons who have come more or less in contact with foreigners.” Using travelers’ accounts as well as his own observations in and around Guangzhou, Williams begins by giving a long description of the grains, vegetables, fruits, oil plants, fish, domesticated animals, birds, insects, beverages, and liquors consumed by the Chinese. He then turns to Chinese kitchens, cooking methods, meal customs, and mentions the huge numbers of “taverns, eating-houses, and cook-stalls” in the cities. Of the larger restaurants, he remarks that “...we should suppose that they were much patronized, but by what particular class, or whether by all classes, we do not know.” The edict forbidding foreign entry into the city still held, so no foreigner had ever dined in a Guangzhou restaurant. About halfway through this article, Williams lets slip his unvarnished opinion about Chinese food. Here, we finally learn what all those traders really thought about the weird dishes served at the banquets across the river at Honam:

“The cooking and mode of eating among the Chinese are peculiar... .The universal use of oil, not always the sweetest or purest, and of onions, in their dishes, together with the habitual neglect of their persons, causes an odor, almost insufferable

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China

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to a European, and which is well characterized by Ellis, as the ‘repose of putrefied garlic on a much used blanket.’ The dishes, when brought on the table, are almost destitute of seasoning, taste, flavor, or anything else by which one can be distinguished from another; all are alike insipid and greasy to the palate of the foreigner.”

Over the following decades, writers would return again and again to these same few ideas, describing both the Chinese food in China and in California: that the eating customs of the Chinese are strange; that their ingredients are weird and frequently disgusting; and that Chinese food, and the Chinese people themselves, are infused with a smell that’s both special and sickening. To overcome these prejudices, it would take a special event indeed: the discovery of chop suey in 1880s New York City.

Andrew Coe’s *history of chop suey will be appearing in an upcoming issue of American Heritage magazine. His articles on food and its history have appeared in Saveur and Gastronomica magazines and in The New York Times. With his wife Jane Ziegelman, he co-authored a history of foie gras in the book, Foie Gras, a Passion (1999). He is a contributor to the Oxford Encyclopedia of American Food and Drink (2004) and is currently working on a history of Chinese food in the United States.*

Member News

Susan Allport’s new book *The Queen of Fats: Why Omega-3s Were Removed from the Western Diet and What We Can Do to Replace Them* was recently published by the University of California Press. Susan will be giving a talk at the American Museum of Natural History on October 3. For more information about the book go to www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/10264.html.

On November 7, **Elizabeth Andoh**, author of *Washboku: Recipes from the Japanese Home Kitchen*, and Tadashi Ono, ceramist and chef at Matsuri restaurant in the Maritime Hotel, will discuss the relationship of food and vessel, nature and art, in Japan’s culinary culture in a program called “Feasting On Ceramics: A Celebration of Nature’s Bounty and Human Creativity” at the New York Japan Society. Elizabeth is Director of A Taste of Culture, a culinary arts program in Tokyo.

Jo-Ann Heslin, M.A., R.D., C.D.N. has been appointed the Food & Nutrition Columnist for www.HealthNewsDigest.com, an online magazine that publishes 40 news stories every Monday, along with breaking news daily.

Cathy Kaufman’s first cookbook, *Cooking in Ancient Civilizations*, was published by Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, in August. Part of Greenwood’s “Daily Life” series, the volume offers recipes and explanatory text to make the foodways, and thus the social history, of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome accessible to high school students.

She has also joined the board of trustees of the Culinary Trust, an arm of the International Association of Culinary Professionals. Among other things, the Culinary Trust raises funds for the restoration of cookery books and manuscripts.

In October Doubleday Books will publish **Robert Kaufelt’s** *The Murray’s Cheese Handbook*, a Zagat-style guide containing descriptions of over three hundred cheeses and what to drink with them. Initial printing is 50,000 copies with a cover price of \$12.95.

Tea sommelier **Elizabeth Knight** has launched tours and seminars based on her new book, *Tea in the City: New York*. The tours are a way to learn about multi-cultural tea traditions, shop one-of-a-kind stores for tea wares, and sample bubble tea, chai, and green tea ice cream, among other delights. Seminars offer an opportunity to sample tea, and learn about it in a relaxed setting in the St. Regis Hotel’s Astor Court. Check: www.teawithfriends.com.

Michelle Krell Kydd interviewed perfumer Maurice Roucel in the July edition of *Perfumer & Flavorist* magazine. The article provides interesting parallels between fragrance creation and flavor in the food world.

The May issue of *Food Arts* magazine published an article called “Stop & Smell Your Dinner” that reviewed “Scentuality,” an event co-produced by Kydd and Chef Bill Yosses, that links the arts of flavor and fragrance.

Former CHNY chair **Alexandra Leaf**, founder of Chocolate Tours of NYC, Inc., has traveled to Turin, Lyon, San Francisco, and Encinitas researching the “food of the gods.” Her programs teach understanding and appreciation of fine, artisan chocolate. She has had articles published in *Gastronomica*, *Country Living*, and *The Philadelphia Daily News*. Her second book, *Van Gogh’s Table at the Auberge Ravoux* (Artisan) will be out in paperback in October.

Jeanne Lesem’s prize-winning but long out-of-print cookbook, *Preserving in Today’s Kitchen*, will be back in print shortly. The latest edition is being re-issued by the Authors Guild’s backinprint.com program, which makes books available through traditional sources (bookstores, book departments, book wholesalers, etc.) as well as online.

Deanne Moskowitz contributed a study of loggers’ foods to the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*, published in March by the University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville. The 1,864-page volume contains 2,000 entries in 30 sections. The food section is an authoritative resource regarding the region’s culinary past and present. It includes ingredient and lifestyle entries ranging from African American foodways and apple butter to wine and woodstove cooking. In her entry, Moskowitz examines the culinary life of logging camps that flourished in the area from about 1880 to 1920, and explains the significance of food as a factor in attracting and retaining itinerant lumberjacks. A freelance food writer, Moskowitz writes a food-trend column for *Catering Magazine* and is a regular contributor to the weekly food section of the *Berkshire Eagle*.

Susan McLellan Plaisted, proprietress of Heart to Hearth Cookery is announcing a new format for workshops and classes. On the current class page of her website you can sign up for e-mail notification of the following classes: The Bake Oven Class, Chocolate Workshop, The First Thanksgiving, Dutch Hearth Cooking, 18th Century English Hearth Cooking, 18th Century Scottish Highlands Cooking, 18th Century Ice Cream, Pennsylvania German Hearth Cooking, Native American Foodways, and Shipboard Cooking.

When sufficient interest is generated, all interested parties will be notified of potential dates. Please visit the website at www.hearttohearthcookery.com.

Andrew F. Smith is teaching five classes in culinary history and food writing at The New School. Three books have recently been released: *Real American Food: Restaurants, Markets, and Shops Plus Favorite Hometown Recipes* (Rizzoli) co-authored with Burt Wolf; *The Encyclopedia of Junk Food and Fast Food* (Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut); and *The Turkey: An American Story* (University of Illinois Press, Chicago). The *Oxford Companion to Food and Drink in America*, edited by Andrew, is scheduled for release in 2007. He was recently named the chair of the Culinary Trust, the philanthropic partner of the International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP). The trust gives scholarships to students attending culinary schools, offers grants to food writers, and funds libraries to preserve culinary works, such as the recently restored Apicius manuscript *De re Culinaria* at the New York Academy of Medicine.

Liz Tarpy has created Teaberry Productions, a one-woman company providing culinary research for authors and help with recipes from development to final editing. You can contact her at (212) 920-4277 or lizatarp@hotmail.com.



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Vegetarianism

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fleshless diet were chiefly pecuniary. By not eating flesh, he found that he could cut his food expenses in half, enabling him to acquire more books for his library.

Pythagoreanism arrived in America as a fledgling social movement only in 1817. This was the year in which William Metcalfe and forty-one other members of the Bible Christian Church (a vegetarian church founded by the Reverend William Cowherd in 1807) set sail from England, bound for Philadelphia. On March 29, 1817, they set sail from Liverpool in the ship *Philadelphia Packet*, and eighty days later they arrived in Philadelphia. Not all of these vegetarian pilgrims survived the rigors of the voyage as vegetarians. Half, in fact, had succumbed to the lure of the meat rations. But Metcalfe and his wife, Susanna, came through the hardships unscathed and untainted to found the North American branch of the Bible Christian Church--the first vegetarian church to be planted on American soil. Despite its detractors, prophecies of a speedy demise, America's first vegetarian church survived into the early twentieth century.

Although his reception in Philadelphia by other denominations was decidedly chilly, the Reverend Metcalfe was undaunted. The first public vegetarian advocate in the United States, Metcalfe continued to preach vegetarianism from the pulpit and to write essays on moral dietetics in the newspapers. In 1821 Metcalfe penned a pamphlet called *On Abstinence from the Flesh of Animals* that won to the cause two converts who would play an indispensable role in launching the vegetarian movement in America.

An early convert, Dr. William A. Alcott became America's first vegetarian physician. William, in turn converted his cousin the Transcendentalist philosopher and teacher Bronson Alcott who went on to found the first ethical vegetarian commune in America. Called Fruitlands and located near Harvard, Massachusetts, it was financed by Ralph Waldo Emerson. The community lasted only ten years or so.

The Bronson Alcott family, including daughter Louisa May Alcott, then moved into Orchard House in Concord, Massachusetts, where Bronson could often be seen seated on a bench in front of his house using apples from his orchard to entice people into conversation. One can only surmise that vegetarianism and health were up most in the discussions. Oral tradition has it that neighbor Nathaniel Hawthorne, fearing a lengthy conversation, avoided passing by the proselytizer by taking a convoluted trail through dense woods to Concord.

Another illustrious Metcalfe convert was the Reverend Sylvester Graham. Although his nutritional theories, as set forth in his books *A Treatise on Bread and Bread-making* (1837) and *Lectures on the Science of Human Life* (1839), were derided by the medical establishment of his time, his theory that dietary fiber is a vital force in human health was to be vindicated by medical researchers in the twentieth century.

Sometime in the early 1840s in England, the term "vegetarian" was coined. No one knows exactly when or by whom. The story that it was first coined by a vegetarian classical scholar from the Latin word *vegetus* is apparently apocryphal. What is historically attested is that on September 29, 1847, at a hydropathic clinic in Ramsgate, the first Veg-

etarian Society was formed. The outmoded term "Pythagorean" was officially replaced by the neologism "vegetarian."

In 1850, three years after the vegetarian society in England had begun to call their diet "vegetarian," Graham, Metcalfe, William Alcott, and Dr. Russell Trall founded America's first secular vegetarian society, the American Vegetarian Society, at Clinton Hall in New York City. Now defunct, the society continued to hold meetings until 1922.

Cornflake Crusaders

Through Ellen White, founder of the Seventh-day Adventists, the early Adventists became acquainted with the latest in health-care procedures. Sister White, as she was affectionately dubbed by her followers, absorbed her immense health knowledge partly through divine revelation and partly through a close reading of the works of food reformers like Graham and James Caleb Jackson. She was an avid reader of Jackson's *Water-Cure Journal*. She also saw, in one of her visions, that God had fashioned the human body as his temple, so that any abuse of the body was a violation of God himself. Alcohol, tobacco, and meat were detrimental to the body, so she roundly denounced them and declared them to be proscribed foods. Eventually, through her prophecies and teachings, the Seventh-day Adventists became strong advocates of a vegetarian diet.

As sedulously as Ellen White had studied Jackson's methods, so did her protégé, Dr. John Harvey Kellogg. In the kitchen of his wife, Ella, Kellogg and his brother, Will, discovered the cereal-flaking process that yielded Granose Flakes, the precursor of cornflakes--those golden flakes that gave rise to the

modern breakfast cereal industry and the uniquely American practice of eating cold cereal for breakfast. Kellogg was a Promethean inventor of an array of other food products that helped many Americans effect a smooth transition to a vegetarian diet. Among these foods was America's first meat analogues. Kellogg, in fact, claimed to be the inventor of peanut butter. Whether or not he actually concocted this gooey paté is still a matter for conjecture, but there is no doubt that he was instrumental in its adoption as a vegetarian food all over the country.

Modern American Vegetarianism

Although Dr. Kellogg carried his vegetarian crusade into the 1940s, during the early decades of the twentieth century a triumvirate of self-appointed food authorities were helping to change the way Americans viewed the meat on their plates. The first of these was Upton Sinclair. A novelist and social reformer, Sinclair became a food reformer quite by accident. His novel *The Jungle* (1906) which he had intended to be a diatribe against capitalism, was so vivid in its portrayal of the horrors of the meatpacking industry that it gave the country a case of national dyspepsia. It was influential in the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act (1906), and one year after its publication, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration was formed (1907). Sinclair himself became a vegetarian, albeit for only three years; however, there is no doubt that many Americans were stirred by his book to swear off meat eating altogether.

The next was Horace Fletcher. A corpulent American businessman, Fletcher lost weight by devising a system of repetitive chewing. When Fletcher found that meat offered the greatest resistance to being lique-

fied through chewing, "The Great Masticator" stopped eating meat and recommended that earnest followers of his regimen (who were legion) do likewise.

The third reformer, Bernarr Macfadden, was a rags-to-riches physical culturist turned publishing magnate and a charismatic public health figure. As one of America's richest young tycoons, he could have indulged his appetite on a Lucullan scale, but he lived chiefly on raw vegetables and fruit. (Later in life, he became a bit of a backslider and included some meat in his diet, but in his heyday, he lived mainly on raw vegetarian food.) On rare occasions when he fell ill, he cured himself through fasting. In 1902 he opened one of New York's first vegetarian restaurants, Physical Culture (named after his fitness magazine), where for a nickel one could dine on an entree like "Hamburger Steak," which was made from nuts and vegetables. By 1911 twenty vegetarian Physical Culture restaurants had sprung up in Philadelphia, Chicago, and sundry other locations.

In 1927 America's longest continuously running vegetarian society was founded in Washington, D.C., by Milton Trenham, with strong Seventh-day Adventist backing—the Vegetarian Society of the District of Columbia.

On July 28, 1947 at the Commodore Hotel in New York—a vegetarian political party—the American Vegetarian Party was formed with the object of putting up a presidential candidate for the 1948 election. Their candidate was Dr. John Maxwell, a naturopathic doctor and restaurateur from Chicago. To oppose General Dwight D. Eisenhower in the 1952 election they nominated General Herbert C. Holdridge, a vegetarian West Point

alumnus of the class of 1917. In every subsequent quadrennial election until 1964 (by which time the party had faded away) a candidate ran for the presidency on the vegetarian ticket.

A Paradigm Shift

In freezer cases across America, one can find a vast array of vegetarian entrees, from the sophisticated to the ordinary. Supermarkets are stocking more and more vegetarian food products. Vegetarian restaurants in such cities as New York, Seattle, and San Francisco continue to proliferate. All of this suggests that the popular image of vegetarianism as an eccentric, cranky, fringe movement has undergone a paradigm shift. Among younger generations of Americans, it is very much in vogue to be vegetarian, if not vegan.

Rynn Berry is the historical advisor to the North American Vegetarian Society. In addition to being the author of a number of books and essays on vegetarianism, he is a contributor to the Oxford Encyclopedia of American Food and Drink (2004), and the upcoming Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink (from which this article is excerpted) and is the author of The Vegan Guide to New York City, where he lives.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Thursday, October 26
Our Guilty Pleasures: The History of Junk Food and Fast Food
with Andrew H. Smith

November TBA
America Eats Project Panel Discussion

Monday, December 12
Gingerbread Houses: Crumbs of History with Joanne Lamb Hayes

January TBA
The Absinth Abyss with Dr. David Weir

Monday, February 13
Cultural History of Chocolate on Valentine’s Day (including a tasting)
with Alexandra Leaf

March TBA — **Tea with Sebastian Beckwith**

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