

BROKEN CHAINS

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SOMETHING WITHIN US

Michelle Carr Clawson



"You are what you eat," is an expression that I often took for granted. Shoot, at one time, I could sit down to a plate of Virginia ham, fried chicken, corn pudding, candied yams, collard greens with bacon flavoring, deviled eggs, and hot buttered rolls. Oh, don't forget the sweet potato pie or bread pudding on the side for dessert. Now how's that for some good eating?

Ooh wee, WHAT IS THAT SMELL? That strong, pungent odor must be the chitt'lins or cabbage

cooking in the kitchen. I see your mouth watering, with hot sauce and vinegar waiting in hand. But have you ever wondered where did we get these fancy cuisine and culinary practices?

Through this publication, we would like to whet your appetite by examining the eating habits of our ancestors in the eighteenth century, see how Africans influenced the American diet, and challenge you to learn something to mend the links in the chain.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

Robert C. Watson

A HISTORICAL NOTE



The extent to which African culture was transplanted, preserved and survived is not a new question. As a matter of fact, it is an old discussion. Scholars such as Lorenzo Greene, Melville Herskovits, W. E. B. DuBois and Carter G. Woodson, argued that African cultural heritage is seen in art, attire, religion, music, foodways, and language. Historian, John Hope Franklin states, "the survival of varying degrees of African culture in America does not suggest that there has been only a limited adjustment of Africans to the New World situation. On the contrary, it merely points up the fact that they came out of an experience that was sufficiently entrenched to make possible the persistence of some customs and traditions. There is a certain amount of validity to the view that in the conflict of cultures only those practices will survive whose value and superiority give them the strength and tenacity to do so.

African survivals in America also suggest a pronounced resiliency in the African institutions. There had been sufficient intertribal and interstate intercourse to give Africans the important experience of adopting many of the practices of those with whom they came in contact while at the same time retaining much of their earlier way of life."

The major focus of the scholarship on the retention of Africanisms in the Americas has been music, language, art, etc., and very little attention has been given to the native diet of West Africans prior to contact with Europeans in the fifteenth century. There are many unanswered questions about what the native diet of Africans were prior to the development of the Atlantic slave trade. For example, what kinds of crops were produced in West Africa? What were the major cereal crops? What was the most important legume crop? What were the many species of root crops? What variety of fruits and vegetables were produced by West Africans? What African food and foodways were transplanted and retained by Africans in the Americas. These questions would require a great deal more research and attention than can be presented in this essay. However, I would like to

focus on the importance of peanuts or "goobers." Peanuts or goobers or groundnuts were by far the most important legume crop of West Africa. They are used in many ways as a source of food, oil and fat. Peanuts have been a major source of protein throughout the history of West Africa, particularly the Guinea Coast region (Thomas S. Githens and Carroll E. Wood, Jr.) Moreover, the peanut or groundnut still is the most universally cultivated legume crop in Africa. The peanut is grown in great quantities in all of West Africa with the exception of Liberia and Sierra Leone. Githens and Wood relates that "peanuts are the chief native foods in Senegal and Gambia: they may be planted with the earlier or late rains and harvested in three to five months. In the Ashanti region of Ghana, they are planted in May as a single crop, or with a cereal grain such as guinea corn and are harvested from August to November. In some parts of Northern Nigeria peanuts are often planted as a last crop before the ground is allowed to revert to forest. Peanuts do not exhaust the soil and unlike some legumes can be planted repeatedly on the same plot of land without substantial loss of yield."

Because of its many qualities, the peanut remains a major ingredient of West African foodways. Traditional dishes using peanuts are very common in the African diaspora, such as, groundnut soup and peanut chicken. For additional information on the significance of peanuts in the dietary habits of West Africans as well as other Africanisms of the African diaspora, please see the suggested reading list below:

- Azevedo, Mario and Gwendolyn Prater.
Africa and Its People.
Franklin, John Hope. *From Slavery to Freedom.*
Githens, Thomas S. and Carroll E. Wood, Jr.
The Food Resources of Africa.
Holloway, Joseph E.
Africanisms in American Culture.
Sobel, Mechal. *The World They Made Together.*

Suggestions, comments, questions, articles are welcomed.

Send to Franklin Street Annex, Room 106.

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IF WALLS COULD TALK

On-Site Report By Michelle Carr Clawson

Ah-choo! Awugh! Excuse me. Oh hi, you're back? Boy, this flu thang is a rough one. I've been sick so long, as Fannie Lou Hamer would say, "I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired!" Ah-choo! Ouch--my throat is killing me. I know it's been awhile since we last chatted--Ah-choo! Excuse me--so I'll fill you in quickly so you won't catch (Ah-choo) my germs, and I can get some rest.

Happy birthday wishes to **SYLVIA LEE** and **ADRIANE SHIVERS**. May you have (ah-choo) many more!

Speaking of wishes, best wishes to **GORDON BULLOCK** and **KELLY MANSFIELD** as you two spread your wings in new positions.

THE BOOKSHELF

Soul Vegetarian Cookbook

From the Kitchens of Soul Vegetarian

Soul food is down-home African-American cooking: flavorful, rich and nourishing to the spirit. But because of its heavy reliance on meat and animal fats, traditional soul food isn't always so nourishing for the body—unless it's the food served up at Soul Vegetarian restaurants in Chicago and Atlanta. The food at these establishments, run by the African Hebrew Israelite Community of Jerusalem, looks and tastes very much like what's served at other soul-food restaurants, but without meat, salt, dairy products and eggs. Until now, you'd have to travel to Chicago or Atlanta to check out this cuisine. But with the publication of the *Soul Vegetarian Cookbook*, you can cook it up at home.

The recipes in the *Soul Vegetarian Cookbook* are quite simple, as is the book itself. Yet the book is well-designed for the serious cook. Its plastic spine opens flat, so you can get down to business. The recipe instructions are easy to follow. No trendiness here: The dishes are called by their real names (for example, Potato Soup and Homemade Biscuits). You won't find yourself running out for unusual ingredients. For those drawn to the spark of the "soul" heritage—a life of simplicity—the book rings true.

After a brief introduction to the group's philosophy, the book launches into the recipes. The Sunflower Seed Spread has a wonderful flavor and texture, Orange Cranberry Relish is a delicious condiment; Nicamah's Creamy Butter Dressing is a rich topping for baked potatoes or steamed vegetables.

When you see **EMILY JAMES**, please give her a big hug and words of encouragement as she copes with the loss of her daughter. We are here for you **EMILY!**

Get well wishes are extended to **BRIDGETTE JACKSON** as she recovers from surgery. (Ah-choo) Hope you are feeling better soon.

And congratulations goes out to **MICHELLE CARR CLAWSON**. Who?? Oh, that's me! I's married now! I've found my long-lost sweetheart after nine years, I married him. He's so nice, sweet, cute, and AHHH-CHOOO! Oops, excuse me. I think that's my cue. I've gotta go. Look out Tylenol, here I come.

Oh, did I tell you about **MARCEL RIDDICK?** I didn't? Well, I guess I'll have to tell you next time.



Soup, traditional in soul cooking, is plentiful and hearty in the Soul Vegetarian kitchens. These recipes are very quick to make, in part because they make use of shortcut ingredients such as soup mixes and garlic powder, but they're tasty. The Brown Lentil Soup is flavorful and quick (about twenty minutes). The Broccoli Soup gets a nutty flavor and rich texture from nutritional yeast. The Cream of Celery soup, made with soymilk and a margarine-and-flour roux, is a hearty, warming dish.

I was particularly intrigued by the section on raw foods, which includes soups, salads, marinated vegetables and fruit dishes. Each dish in this section can be prepared in about ten minutes, and the results are quite delicious. Strawberry Heaven—a blend of bananas, strawberries, soymilk and honey topped with coconut—has become a favorite quick breakfast.

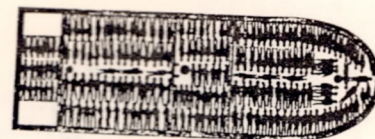
The main dish section includes several recipes based on flavored wheat gluten, which mimics meat. Down South Bar-B-Que Twists served with the Soul Vegetarian Bar-B-Que Sauce are hearty and delicious. This section has a nice range of cultural dishes: Jollof Riche from Ghana, Millet Patties from Northeast Africa, and Negev Bulgar Patties from the Middle East. There's also plenty of good old American food, including Picnic Potato Salad, Kermona's Pot Pie and Vegetable Chili Ole.

The recipes in the *Soul Vegetarian Cookbook* aren't especially low in fat, but it wouldn't be hard to cut back on the margarine and oil in many recipes. In return for your effort, you'll get a taste of a cuisine that isn't usually accessible to vegetarians. And when you buy the book, you'll be helping Soul Vegetarian spread its message of simple, healthful living. Proceeds from the sale of the cookbook will help fund schools in Africa and Israel.

(Source: *Vegetarian Times*, September 1993, Laura Leininger)

ECHOES FROM THE PAST . . .

Important Dates in Black History



- September 2, 1945** Japanese surrendered on V-J Day, ending World War II. A total of 1,154,720 blacks were inducted or drafted into the armed services.
- September 8, 1965** Actress Dorothy Dandridge (41) died in Hollywood.
- September 9, 1915** Association for the Study of Negro Life and History organized at Chicago meeting. The name of the organization, the major organizing center for the dissemination of information on black history, was changed in the 60s to the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History.
- September 9, 1968** Arthur Ashe became the first winner of the U. S. Open Tennis championship, defeating Tom Okker of the Netherlands.
- September 13, 1663** First serious slave conspiracy in colonial America. Plot of white servants and slaves in Gloucester County, Virginia, was betrayed by an indentured servant.
- September 15, 1963** Four black girls killed in bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama.
- September 17, 1983** Vanessa Williams, a twenty-year-old Syracuse University student from Millwood, New York, became the first black Miss America.
- September 18, 1895** Booker T. Washington delivered "Atlanta Compromise" address at Cotton States Exposition in Atlanta.
- September 19-22, 1956** First international conference of black writers and artists met at the Sorbonne in Paris.
- September 20, 1664** Maryland enacted first anti-amalgamation law to prevent widespread intermarriage of English women and black men. Virginia passed similar law in 1691.
- September 20, 1958** Martin Luther King, Jr. stabbed in chest by a deranged black woman while he was autographing books in a Harlem department store.
- September 23, 1961** President Kennedy named Thurgood Marshall to U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.
- September 23, 1979** Lou Brock stole a record 935th base and became the all-time major league record holder.
- September 24, 1957** President Eisenhower ordered federal troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, to prevent interference with school integration at Central High School.
- September 25, 1957** Soldiers of 101st Airborne Division escorted nine black students to Central High School.
- September 26, 1937** Singer Bessie Smith died of injuries sustained in an automobile accident near Clarksdale, Mississippi.
- September 27, 1912** First published blues composition, W. C. Handy's *Memphis Blues*, went on sale in Memphis.
- September 27, 1950** Ezzard Charles defeated Joe Louis in heavyweight championship fight in New York City.



Important Dates in Black History

- October 2, 1800 Nat Turner, leader of major slave rebellion, born in Southampton County, Virginia.
- October 2-4, 1935 Italy invaded Ethiopia. American blacks held mass meetings of protest and raised funds for the Ethiopian defenders.
- October 3, 1904 Mary McLeod Bethune opened Daytona Normal and Industrial School in Daytona Beach, Florida. In 1923, the school merged with Cookman Institute and became Bethune-Cookman College.
- October 3, 1949 WERD, first black-owned radio station, opened in Atlanta.
- October 4, 1864 *New Orleans Tribune*, first black daily newspaper founded by Dr. Louis C. Roudanez. The newspaper, published in both English and French, started as a tri-weekly but soon became an influential daily.
- October 6, 1871 Fisk Jubilee Singers began first national tour.
- October 9, 1806 Death of mathematician Benjamin Banneker (74), in Ellicott's Mills, Maryland.
- October 10, 1984 Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu was awarded the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize for his opposition to South African apartheid policy.
- October 13, 1970 Angela Davis arrested in New York City and charged with unlawful flight to avoid persecution for her alleged role in California courthouse shootout.
- October 15, 1883 U. S. Supreme Court declared Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional.
- October 16, 1901 Booker T. Washington dined at the White House with President Roosevelt and was criticized in the South.
- October 16, 1940 Benjamin Oliver Davis, Sr. named the first black general in the regular Army.
- October 16, 1968 John Carlos and Tommie Smith staged Black Power demonstration on victory stand after winning 200 meter event at Olympics in Mexico City. Carlos and Smith said they were protesting racism in America.
- October 16-17, 1859 John Brown attacked Harper's Ferry, Virginia, with thirteen white men and five blacks. Two of the five blacks were killed, two were captured and one escaped.
- October 17, 1888 Capital Savings Bank of Washington, D.C., the first black bank, opened in Washington, D.C. The Savings Bank of the Order of True Reformers (Richmond, VA) was chartered on March 2, 1888.
- October 24, 1923 Department of Labor said some 500,000 blacks had left the South in the preceding twelve months.
- October 27, 1954 B. O. Davis, Jr. became the first black general in the U.S. Air Force.
- October 29, 1929 Collapse of stock market and the beginning of the Great Depression. By 1937, 26 per cent of black males were unemployed.

AFRICAN PROVERB: (Ashanti) "Rain beats a leopard's skin, but it does not wash out the spots."

DEDICATION . . .

This issue of Broken Chains is in memory of Rosemary Brandau, Foodways Specialist.

Rosemary Brandau, Historic Foodways Expert Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Historic foodways expert Rosemary Brandau lost a courageous two-year battle against cancer August 15 and died at her home. Her friends, fellow workers, and admirers gathered the following night in Bruton Parish Church to celebrate her memory.

A popular ten-year Foundation employee, Miss Brandau was a well-respected member of Colonial Williamsburg's presentations team. Manager of Historic Area food presentations, she oversaw program development of the Governor's Palace and Wythe House kitchens and helped tavern chefs with menu development.

Steve Elliott, vice-president for education, said, "She pursued research herself and provided excellent leadership for the research of others. She worked to translate that research into a more comprehensive and



authentic presentation of food procurement, preparation, presentation, and dining in our Historic Area buildings and programs, and she worked effectively with other departments and divisions to see this happen; with chefs in our operating taverns, trades people, curators, researchers, and interpreters."

Miss Brandau helped organize the Foodways Research Planning Conference in 1987, and in 1988 the American Association of State and Local History bestowed on her its Award of Merit. A charter member of the Culinary Historians of Virginia and the Association for Living History Farming Agricultural Museum, she developed 18th-century food samplers and desserts for Colonial Williamsburg taverns. (*Colonial Williamsburg Journal, Autumn 1993*)

Miss Brandau will be missed by all.

THE BUTCHERING AND PROCESSING OF PORK IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY WILLIAMSBURG

Rosemary Brandau, December 1983

Cattle and swine were the two most important domestic animals in eighteenth century America. Pork, in particular, was popular with Virginians. It was not only significant in the Virginian's diet, but was also a valuable export item.

Pigs in Williamsburg, like cattle, "traditionally, ran wild in the woods, eating roots and nuts, or milled about in village streets consuming garbage." An ad in the *Virginia Gazette* indicates that there was a problem with hogs running loose in Williamsburg in 1752.

September 15, 1752 - Williamsburg

"Whereas several Hogs, have for some Time been suffer'd to go loose about this City, contrary to Law, which have done Mischief to the Inhabitants: We are therefore desired to give the Owners Notice, That if they do not immediately confine them, the Law against them will be put in Execution."

The law stated that hogs had to be penned to prevent their escaping from the small farms. No hogs have been found listed in inventories of persons definitely identified as Williamsburg residents.

There were various animals listed on the Palace inventory of Governor Botetourt, most of them probably kept on the Palace Farm (which extended across today's Lafayette Street and the Visitors' Center.) As well as horses, there were 4 cows, 1 bull, 5 steers, 3 calves, 37 heads of sheep, 20 turkeys, 18 geese, 9 ducks, and "2 Barrow pigs, and 1 Boar at the Attorneys." The attorney was John Randolph who lived at Tazewell Hall.

Henry Wetherburn has various animals listed on his inventory — "17 sheep" in the yard and stable and "27 Head Cattle 9 (torn)" at Mill Swamp. No hogs are listed. Wetherburn had a farm on College Landing Road (today's South Henry Street.)

Other sources discuss the diet of the hogs in Virginia, indicating that they were kept near woody areas and rounded up on the nearby farms or plantations for slaughter.

Pigs were available for sale at the markets and fairs in Williamsburg. A fair was held in Williamsburg twice a year.

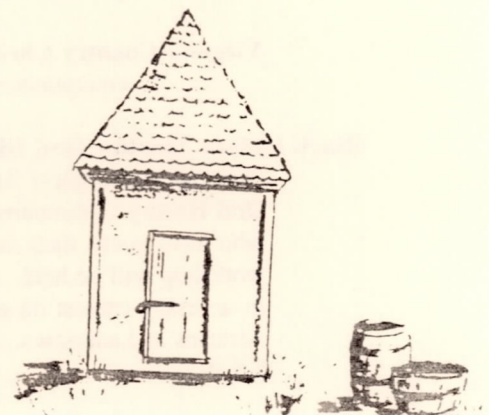
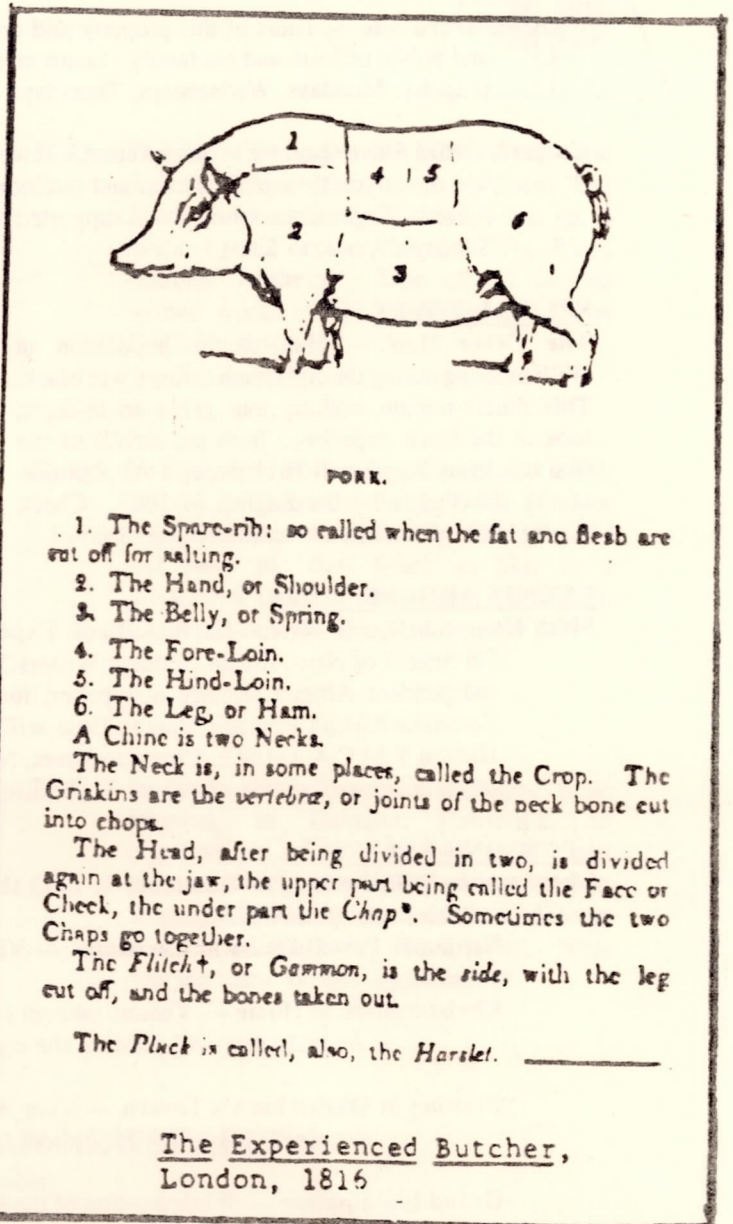
The Williamsburg City Charter in 1722 required that two market days be held weekly on Wednesday and Saturday. Evidence after 1757 indicates that the Williamsburg market was held daily. Meat, poultry, fish, and produce could be purchased from the farmers, slaves, and indentured servants at these busy markets.

The hogs for sale were penned up. The buying and selling of live animals at these markets and fairs was generally between farmers. If an in-town resident bought a live hog, he probably took it to a butcher to be slaughtered and cut up.

How much slaughtering and butchering was done by the individual household in Williamsburg? Hogs were generally killed where they were kept. Important factors governing the location include access to water, a place to hang the hogs, and space for the messy process itself. The farms where hogs were kept would likely have such facilities. Traditionally people would get together at one "set-up" area and kill their hogs, their own and the farmer's at whose place they gathered.

The butchering, according to Hurry's study in St. Mary's County, Maryland, was done preferable the day after slaughter. Most people in Hurry's sample reported that the hog should be allowed to cool, preferable overnight in the meat house, before cutting up. Chilled meat cuts more easily. Therefore butchering would not necessarily take place where the slaughtering was done. The hogs, slaughtered and cleaned, could be carried to another location for further processing.

Fresh pork was seldom eaten in Virginia in the summer because the heat made it virtually impossible to keep it from spoiling. If slaughtering was done in warm weather, the meat was consumed immediately by dividing it among neighbors, or it was given as payment. Thus the Virginian's summer diet consisted largely of that meat salted the previous winter and of small animals, fowl, poultry, and fish.



CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

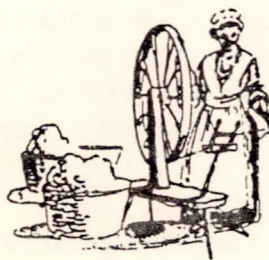
SITES AND BUILDINGS that interpret or exhibit the black experience.

Brush-Everard Site — Tours of this property and original house feature the lives of Thomas Everard, immigrant and public official, and his family. Learn more about the African-Americans who lived and worked on the property. Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays 10, 11 A.M., 1, 2, 3, and 4 P.M.

Carter's Grove Slave Quarter — Interpreters will welcome you to the slave quarter, rebuilt on its original location, and direct you through buildings and outdoor spaces that reveal much about the lives of the Africans and African-Virginians whose labors supported the eighteenth-century plantation. Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

SPECIAL TOURS

The Other Half — Half of the population in Williamsburg during the eighteenth century was black. This ninety-minute walking tour gives an in-depth look at the black experience from the arrival of the first blacks in Virginia in 1619 through the abolition of the slave trade by the English in 1807. Check *Visitor's Companion* for a current listing of times.



EVENTS AROUND TOWN

Sixth Hampton Roads African Heritage Book Expo — November 27, 1993, 10 A.M. to 6 P.M.

"In Search of New African Heritage Writers," is the theme of this workshop. The works of who's who in independent African heritage newspaper, magazine, and book publishing will be highlighted. A Pre-Kwanzaa African Heritage Market Place will be a special feature. Admission is free to the public at the Hunton Y.M.C.A. (1139 E. Charlotte Street, Norfolk). Over ten workshop/lectures to be offered. For more information, contact Dr. Mwalimu Mwadilifu, (804) 547-5542.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Christmas in Williamsburg — December 1, 1993 through January 1, 1994

— Check *Visitors' Companion* for times.

Benjamin Powell House at Christmas — Visit with the Powell family as they enjoy the holiday season.

Christmastide at Home — Visitors take an evening stroll to the homes of several Williamsburg families. At each, they will glimpse the eighteenth-century residents as they celebrate the season.

Evening at Wetherburn's Tavern — Visit Wetherburn's Tavern and enjoy the diversions that have been prepared for your entertainment.

Grand Illumination — While lighting of the Historic Area with fireworks, music, and entertainment marks the beginning of Colonial Williamsburg's Christmas season. Entertainment will also precede the event.

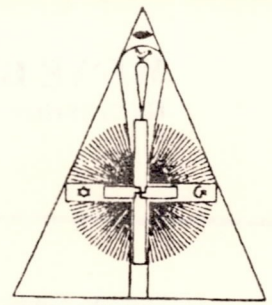
Holiday Plantation Dinner — Entertainment, a special reception, and a dinner of Christmas favorites provide a delightful evening at the Cascades.

Virginia Country Christmas Dinner — A traditional southern country menu and fun-filled evening of entertainment in the spirit of the Virginia countryside.

Black History Month - Oral History Community Night: February 19, 1994

"Lineage and Legacy: The Footstep Still Echoes," is the subject of Colonial Williamsburg's seventh-annual Oral History Community Night Program. The two panels will focus on 10-12 black families nationwide who have traced their ancestry back to the 19th-century. An exhibition on genealogy and a genealogical workshop will be held. The Williamsburg-James City County public school systems also will participate in an essay contest on genealogy. The program honors the 375th anniversary of the arrival of the first Africans at Jamestown. The program is free and open to the public. The programs will be held at 6 and 8 P.M.

EACH ONE, TEACH ONE



THE THINK TANK

1. Q: Name the famous agricultural-chemist whose crop research at the Tuskegee Institute led to better and more productive farming in the South. He also discovered a multitude of products and uses for the soybean, peanut, and sweet potato.
2. Q: What Pennsylvania-based religious group was the first to sign an anti-slavery resolution in 1688, which became the first formed protest against slavery in the Western Hemisphere?
3. Q: What is the name of the Florida Indian nation that offered refuge to fugitive slaves, intermarried with them and fought along with them against the U. S. government in a series of wars in the mid 1800s?
4. Q: In 1954, this unanimous landmark Supreme Court decision overturned the "separate but equal" doctrine that since 1896 legitimized segregation in the schools and other public facilities. Name this landmark case.
5. Q: This novelist, poet, NAACP official and diplomat is most famous for his poem "Lift Every Voice and Sing," which, when set to music by his brother, became "The Black National Anthem." One of his famous written works is *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*.
6. Q: In 1919, Fritz Pollard became the first Black to play professional football for a major team, the Akron Indians. In 1916, Pollard had been the first Black to play in a prestigious college bowl game for Brown University. What Bowl did he play in?
7. Q: In 1966, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale founded, in Oakland, California, an organization which proposed a 10-point program which included reparations for past abuses of Blacks, release of Black prisoners and trial of Blacks by Black juries. What was the name of this organization?

AFRICAN-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS

(Unscramble)

1. MORICAFNAER
2. ELDAINUUGODNJA
3. EEEDDFRN
4. SYEEEAHRWPRKL
5. LANRUOJSMODEERF

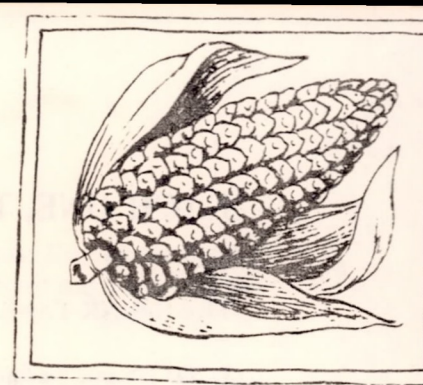
AFRICAN PROVERB: (Senegal) "Nobody tells all he knows."

WE'VE GOT A VISITOR

Guest Writer

RE-CREATING HOMINY: THE ONE-POT BREAKFAST FOOD OF THE GENTRY AND STAPLE OF BLACKS AND POOR WHITES IN THE EARLY CHESAPEAKE

Patricia Gibbs, Research Historian
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation



[Indian corn] is the chiefest Diets they have in the cuntry espeshally where there are great ffamilies of Negroos for they Beat itt in a Mortar and gett the husks from itt and then Boyle itt with a Peice of Beefe or salted Porke with some Kidney Beanes which is much like to Pork and Pease at sea but they Call itt hommony.

Descriptions like this one penned by an anonymous visitor to Maryland in 1705-1706 and other references show how essential hominy (a porridge made with Indian Corn) was to the other references show how essential hominy (a porridge made with Indian Corn) was to the diet of early residents of the Chesapeake and imply that the end product could vary considerable when other ingredients were added to the pot. The nearly universal appeal of hominy is indicated by sources which show that a variation called milk hominy was a common breakfast food for the gentry during the winter months.

Cooking experiments performed several years ago by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation sought to recreate the method of preparing hominy that was common in the Chesapeake from the 17th through to the early 19th centuries.

We began this project by searching surviving documentary evidence for answers to these questions: What equipment was needed to make hominy? What were the steps in preparing this food? How did the English settlers adapt this native American food to suit their taste? How did these adaptations affect the preparation? How did making hominy fit into the daily routine of ordinary 17th century settlers who owned few cooking implements besides an iron pot and spent most of their daylight hours working in the fields?

RESULTS OF THE DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

The equipment needed to make hominy is minimal—a cooking pot, pot hooks, a container for soaking the corn, a container for water, a mortar and pestle, a sifter, a container for the sifted meal and a stirrer for the pot. Few of these are specialized items. In fact, all but the iron cooking pot could be produced locally. Variations of plain hominy required little additional equipment. Bean hominy only needs one additional item, a container for soaking beans. When salt pork or other meat is added to the pot the only extra piece of equipment needed is a knife or some other cutting implement.

Documents described the following basic procedures, but provided few details for making hominy:

- ▶ shell dried corn is soaked in water for about six or more hours;
- ▶ the soaked kernels are pounded in a mortar until the corn is ground into a coarse meal;
- ▶ the meal is sifted to remove the chaff; and
- ▶ the corn (and milk, molasses, beans, fish, or meat or a combination of these) is boiled over a slow fire overnight or for about five or more hours until the meal softens and the hominy becomes palatable.

RESULTS OF THE COOKING EXPERIMENTS

After acquiring the necessary equipment, several colleagues and I began preliminary experiments first at my house where we took shortcuts and made use of modern cooking implements and measuring devices and later in one of Colonial Williamsburg's restored 18th century kitchens. We conducted the final experiment at the reconstructed Freedman's Cottage at the outdoor museum at Historic St. Mary's City, the site of the first capital of Maryland. There we could experiment in a 17th century space using objects appropriate to the period.

The findings summarized here represent the results of our combined experiments.

- ▶ Because several references mentioned that the Indians soaked the shelled, dried kernels in hot water, we poured boiling water over one cup of corn and soaked a control cup of corn in cold water. The four cups of boiling water poured over three cups of corn caused the corn to swell to five cups overnight. The four cups of cold water poured over three cups of corn caused the control batch to swell to four and three quarter cups. We felt this difference was significant enough to pour boiling water over all of the corn we soaked in later experiments.

- ▶ Using the mortar and pestle, we discovered after several attempts that one cups was the optimum quantity of corn that worked most efficiently with our mortar. It took about twenty minutes to pound each cup of soaked corn into coarse meal.

I have queried a number of historians and curators, but so far have found no one who knows what hominy sifters that appear occasionally in 17th and 18th century Chesapeake inventories looked like. My guess is that these were locally made items, either baskets or perhaps gourds punched with holes.

- ▶ After sifting, one cup of pounded corn yielded one-half cup of coarse meal.

- ▶ We also experimented with pounding dry corn into meal. While there appeared to be no difference in the way the resulting coarse meal looked, we found it took far more effort to pound the dry kernels into coarse meal. As was the case with pounding the softened kernels, one cup of corn yielded one-half cup of coarse meal. Since the corn that had been soaked swelled considerably, the yield from using soaked corn was forty percent greater than from using dried corn.

- ▶ Too few detailed references to hominy survive to determine how much of the hominy eaten in the early Chesapeake was plain and how much was extended by the addition of beans, meat, milk, or other ingredients. But having discovered how much effort was involved to get one-half cup of coarse meal, we reasoned that those persons who had access to beans would have made bean hominy. We also know that beans and corn were often planted together so the corn stalks could support the bean vines. Based on admittedly subjective reasoning, we decided to make a pot of bean hominy flavored with salt pork that would feed six hungry adults for the two meals (breakfast and dinner) generally consumed in middling households in the Chesapeake in the mid-17th century.

- ▶ After experimenting with quantities, we found that the following re-created recipe for bean hominy makes enough servings to satisfy six hungry adults eating twice a day:

4 cups of dry, shelled kernels of Indian corn

2 cups of dry beans

[We used cranberry beans.]

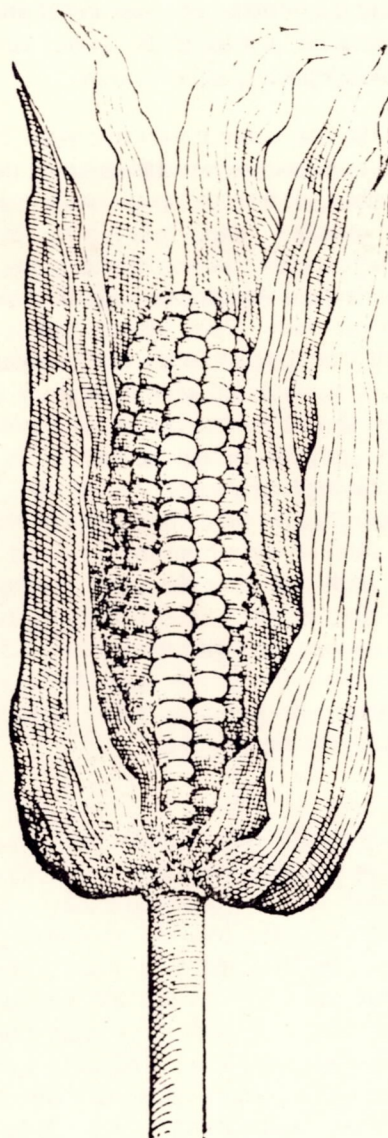
Three-quarters of a pound of salted pork

4 quarts of water to start

[more may be added later].

Pour six or seven cups of boiling water over the Indian corn and soak it for six or more hours. Soak the beans in four or more cups of cold water. Drain the corn and beans. Beat the corn, one cup at a time, in a mortar. Spread the pounded corn in a bowl and set it in the sun or by the fire for about half an hour. Sift the pounded corn. Add the coarse meal to a pot filled with four quarts of water. Suspend the pot above a slow fire. Add the beans and salt pork and stir the pot intermittently for the next five or more hours. Add more water as needed to maintain a porridge-like consistency.

When sufficiently cooked, the bean hominy will be sludge colored and lumpy, but will adequately satisfy tired and hungry eaters.



SAVORING AFRICA IN THE NEW WORLD

Robert L. Hall

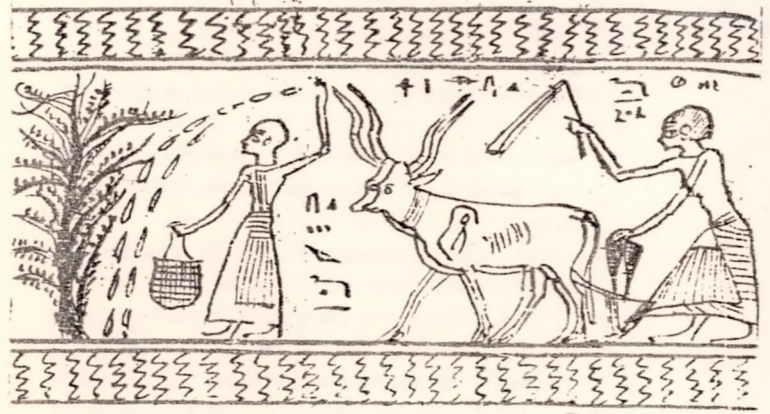
Like religion, oral traditions, music, dance, and material culture, cuisine and culinary practices not only survived Africans' capture, the middle passage, and hard servitude but also enriched the cultures of the Americas. Fried chicken, among other southern dishes, reflects this African influence; even the seasoning of southern dishes, often far heavier than in northern recipes, constitutes another African influence. When Americans of any hue sit down to a meal of gumbo, spicy chicken garnished with peanuts (goobers), black-eyed peas or pigeon peas and rice, cola, and dessert of banana pudding or yam pie sweetened with sorghum molasses, we are savoring a taste of Africa. The vitality of these culinary traditions in the Americas is a testament to the richness of African cultures and to those Africans who shared that richness with their host societies. Of all the plants it would be possible to mention, this essay discusses the links between the Atlantic slave trade and the dispersal of yams, millet and sorghum, rice, bananas, citrus fruits, corn, cassava, and melegueta pepper.

FOODS OF THE MIDDLE PASSAGE

Slave traders, interested in ensuring that as much as possible of their lucrative cargo survived the middle passage, may have been inadvertently responsible for the transportation of yams, as well as other indigenous African crops, to the Americas. By at least the early 1700s, slavers had learned that, although some English foods were acceptable, slaves fared better when fed their customary food. An Englishman who made a number of slaving voyages as ship's surgeon during the late 1770s and early 1780s, Alexander Falconbridge, attested, "Yams are the favourite food of the Eboe, or Bight Negroes, and rice or corn, of those from the Gold and Windward Coasts; each preferring the produce of their native soil." Falconbridge also noted that at least once a day slaves were fed their own foods. In 1705 the Royal African Company's factors at Ouidah recommended corn, yams, melegueta pepper, and palm oil as items suitable for the slaves' diet.

YAMS

Whether of Asian or the indigenous African varieties, yams were frequently put on slave ships as provisions for slaves, particularly when the involuntary African passengers came from yam-eating societies. In 1678 the British slave ship *Arthur*, which had put on a considerable load of yams as provisions, faced the problem of their rotting before they could be consumed. The large quantities of yams the slavers provisioned are demonstrated by John Barbot's assertion that "a ship that takes in five hundred slaves, must provide above a hundred



thousand yams," or about two hundred yams per person. The accounts of the *Othello* (1768-69) reveal that hundreds of baskets of yams were taken on board as provisions along with lesser quantities of "gobgobs" (goobers or peanuts), plantains, limes, pepper, and palm oil.

Once in the Americas, one variety of yam, *Dioscorea alata* (the water yam), became a central item in the diet of Haitian slaves and eventually spread throughout the tropical New World where it became standard fare for black peasants.

Not only did the yam cross the Atlantic, but even the word we use to refer to the yam is derived indirectly from African languages. This derivation reflects the probable path of the vegetable's diffusion. Likely sources of the English word *yam* are the Portuguese *inhame* or the Spanish (*i*)*name*. These words in turn probably derived from one or more West African languages. They are akin to the Wolof terms *nyam* or *nyami*, the latter a verb meaning "to eat." In Mende, *yambi* refers to the wild yam.

MILLET AND SORGHUM

Although it now seems that yam cultivation predates millet and sorghum domestication, the millets remain among the oldest cereal crops grown in sub-Saharan Africa. Millets and sorghums were dominant staple crops in Africa at least one thousand years ago. There is some confusion of names, as "millet" and "sorghum" are sometimes used synonymously. One translation of early Arabic sources of West African history arbitrarily renders the Arabic *dukhn* as millet and *dhura* as sorghum.

It seems that not only did a significant percentage of the African slaves originate in millet-raising societies, but an equally significant percentage may have been involved in millet farming immediately before embarking. For instance, among the slaves the British traded to Spanish America between 1700 and

1739, African agricultural cycles determined the availability of captives for export. "African traders were least likely to sell their slaves during planting and harvesting periods. The captives were evidently being employed in agrarian tasks and were only parted with when their labor was no longer required." The same circumstances pertained at Gajaaga, Senegambia, "where slave owners used their slaves to plant millet prior to selling them to the French."

RICE

Like millet domestication, rice cultivation in Africa dates to at least the first millennium of the Christian era. Wet rice was first domesticated on the middle Niger about 1500 B.C. with a secondary cradle, between the Sine-Saloum and the Casamance rivers. It was cultivated by A.D. 50 at Jenne-Jeno, the oldest known Iron Age city in sub-Saharan Africa. The bones, grain fragments, and utensils unearthed at the site reveal a mixed diet that included rice as well as fish and beef.

Both in Africa and in Carolina, slave buyers preferred captives from those African groups that had millennia of rice-farming experience. A notice in the 11 July 1785 *Evening Gazette* (Charleston) announced the arrival of a Danish ship bearing "a choice cargo of Windward and Gold Coast Negroes, who have been accustomed to the planting of rice." As Peter H. Wood has pointed out, "literally hundreds of black immigrants were more familiar with the planting, hoeing, processing, and cooking of rice than were the European settlers who purchased them." Although the type of rice that became a staple crop in colonial South Carolina was probably the Asian variety rather than the African domesticate, the know-how was contributed by the Africans, many of whom had probably cultivated both species of rice before their arrival in North America.

PLANTAINS AND BANANAS

Several plants of Asian origin, among them plantains and bananas, were established in Africa well before the Portuguese landed there in the fifteenth century.

The Portuguese found bananas in West Africa when they began their voyages of exploration in the fifteenth century and took this fruit to the Canary Islands. The introduction of bananas from the Canary Islands to Haiti in 1516 was their entry into the Western Hemisphere.

MELEGUETA PEPPER

The red pepper that flavors our spicy chicken with peanuts reminds us that a significant part of African culinary practice consists of the condiments and seasonings used to prepare foods. Many African traditional dishes achieve their hot taste with either red pepper (cayenne) or melegueta pepper. The Windward coast of Africa between Cape Mount and

Assini (roughly present-day Liberia and Ivory Coast) was particularly noteworthy for its melegueta pepper, derived from the small, spicy berry of the wild tree called by many names including African pepper, British pepper, Jamaican pepper, paradise grain, and guinea pepper. It was used to prepare both food and beverages and was thought to prevent dysentery and stomach disorders, the major scourges of the middle passage.

AFRICAN CULINARY SURVIVAL AND ACCULTURATION

One inescapable implication of the Columbian Quincentenary for African-derived New World populations is that all of the food products we have discussed, as well as some we have not treated, were inextricably linked to slavery. These foods either served to increase the African population and thus support the overseas slave trade, or were used cosmetically to make slaves look young and sleek for sale (rubbing palm oil), or were fed to slaves as provisions during the middle passage (yams, peanuts, corn, and rice), or were provided to keep slaves healthy during that voyage (citrus fruits and melegueta pepper), or became plantation products that required or utilized slave labor in the New World (rice and sugarcane).

Our hypothetical dinner does not merely reflect centuries of hardship and endurance. The extent to which that dinner is stereotypically American, the frequency with which it appears in advertising, fiction, and films as the quintessence of the American family meal, is an indicator of the extent to which African cuisine has been assimilated into and enriched American culture. Indeed, Sidney Mintz has observed, "How 'African' all Americans are is conventionally hidden by the assumption that, under conditions of oppression, acculturation is a one-way street." To the extent that it reflects mutual acculturation, the African and American culinary exchange is representative of the cultural amalgamation that typifies the Columbian exchange. (Source: *Seeds of Change*, Herman Viola and Carolyn Margolis)



EMPLOYEES' CORNER

Behind The Scenes

Spotlight

Rosemarie McAphee-Byrd is a lead interpreter with African-American Interpretation and Presentations. She has been employed with Colonial Williamsburg since 1985.

Ms. McAphee-Byrd began her career with the Foundation as a first-person character interpreter at the Benjamin Powell House. Her duties with the Department of African-American Interpretation and Presentations include daily interpretation, training, program development, as well as, service on a number of committees in the Educational Division.



Rosemarie is a 1979 graduate of Hampton University (formerly Hampton Institute). She resides in Denbigh with her eleven year old daughter, Janee Marie.

(Spotlight is a brief profile of a member of the Department of African-American Interpretation and Presentations.)

AFRICAN PROVERB: (Mauretania) "Before eating, open thy mouth."

SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES:

EACH ONE, TEACH ONE

1. George Washington Carver
2. Quakers
3. Seminoles
4. Brown vs. Board of Education
5. James Weldon Johnson
6. Rose Bowl
7. Black Panther Party

AFRICAN-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS

1. Afro-American (Baltimore)
2. Journal and Guide (Norfolk)
3. Defender (Chicago)
4. Harper's Weekley
5. Freedom's Journal



OOPS! DID WE SAY THAT?

Correction to *Broken Chains*' July, 1993 issue.

Did You Know? column stated:

"Patrick Henry, another signer of that document, [Declaration of Independence] had a Negro son named Melancthon."

Patrick Henry **did not** sign the Declaration of Independence.

Thanks you, Mark Couvillon and Robert C. Watson, for checking the fine print.

— *Broken Chains*

WE'VE CHANGED

Broken Chains has become a bi-monthly publication throughout the end of 1993. In 1994, look for us quarterly! Thank you all for your patience and support.



RECIPE FOR A HAPPY LIFE

4 cups *Love*
2 cups *Loyalty*
4 quarts *Faith*
2 spoons *Tenderness*
2 spoons *Kindness*

2 spoons *Understanding*
1 cup *Friendship*
5 spoons *Hope*
1 barrel *Laughter*

Take 4 cups of *love*, 2 cups of *loyalty*, blend it thoroughly with 4 quarts of *faith*. Blend in 2 spoons of *tenderness*, *kindness*, and *understanding*. Add 1 cup of *friendship*, 5 spoons of *hope*. Sprinkle abundantly with 1 barrel of *laughter*. Bake with *sunshine* and *forgiveness*. Serve generous helpings daily.

Serves entire family.

(Author unknown)

ON MYNE OWN TYME

The Department of African-American Interpretation and Presentations offers the following programs at various times. All programs are meant to provide unique glimpses into the lives of eighteenth-century African Americans.

Brush-Everard Site — Tours of this property and original house feature the lives of Thomas Everard, immigrant and public official, and his family. Learn more about the African-Americans who lived and worked on the property. Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays 10, 11 A.M., 1, 2, 3, and 4 P.M.



Carter's Grove Slave Quarter — Interpreters will welcome you to the slave quarter, rebuilt on its original location, and direct you through buildings and outdoor spaces that reveal much about the lives of the Africans and African-Virginians whose labors supported the eighteenth-century plantation. Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

For further information about programs and cost, please telephone 1-800-HISTORY.

AFRICAN PROVERB: (Tanganyika) "Even flies have ears."

The
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