



Recipes

A People of Spirit, Courage and Resourcefulness

PREFACE

With them the seed of wisdom did I sow
And with mine own hand laboured it to grow
And this was all the harvest that I reaped
“I came like Water, and like Wind I go.”

- *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*

What do the people of northern Newfoundland have in common with a poet by the name of Omar Khayyam? At first glance, nothing, except that this obscure piece of Persian poetry captures the essence of what this year-long Community History Project has taught me.

In the past year I ventured into sixteen communities: telephoning, knocking on doors, and sitting at kitchen tables drinking endless cups of tea, trying to learn customs, traditions, and wisdom from the older people in northern Newfoundland so that the stories could be set down in writing and preserved for future generations. *With them the seed of wisdom did I sow...*

Back at the office, after each interview, I would review the outcome of each story and try to write in a format that would satisfy not only the person interviewed, but the people who would read the stories at some future date. *And with my own hand laboured it to grow...*

By year's end there were stacks of photographs, pages of typewritten interviews, maps criss-crossed with names and dates, and hand-drawn pictures submitted by enthusiastic contributors. In people's homes there were interviews where we laughed, cried, walked over hills to the back of land, walked along winding pathways to graveyards, ventured out on the high seas in boats enjoying boil-ups with scalding tea, fisherman's brewis, beans and bread, and still more stories.

In these interviews, I was often perplexed by words and expressions totally unfamiliar to me and, without

the assistance of my husband, Len Tucker, I suspect the dialect would have defeated me utterly. Yet it is the words and expressions of northern Newfoundland that are, and were, the lifeblood of communication in a time when modern technology was unheard of. I learned that, while there are official names on Newfoundland maps, local fishermen have their own names for islands, bays and coves. I learned that the people who settled this wonderful, terrible place have an intimate relationship with the sea and the land that no tourist or outsider can truly fathom or appreciate. And at the end of the year, I knew that I had only managed to collect a few small pieces of the puzzle that make up a larger picture of hardships endured, joys celebrated, and lives lived to the fullest. *And this was all the harvest that I reaped...*

I came like water and like wind I go...

This precious generation of people you will read about in these pages were born, lived, and will, one day, pass on. In writing their stories I have attempted to grasp the 'wind and water' of their lives – as well as their customs and traditions – which are fast slipping away into obscurity.

This is not so much a historical document as it is an opportunity for these people – in their own time and in their own way – to tell the stories that were nearest and dearest to their hearts. Whether you are a student, a come from away, or a Newfoundlander, you may find in these pages the heart and soul of the people of Newfoundland.

Recipes from My Grandma's Collection- Big Brook

SHARON BAILEY

Sharon Bailey was born and raised in Big Brook and, when Big Brook was resettled she moved to St. Anthony, where she lives with her father, William. She says she has many



Figure 1 L-R Yvonne, Grandma Sara Bailey holding Trevor, Sharon, Jill and Corinne

memories of Big Brook, but what she misses most is waking up every morning to the sound of the ocean. Sharon has a sister, Yvonne, who married Kirby Way, and they live in Pasadena. She also has a brother Trevor, who married Joanne, and they reside in St. Anthony. All three children in Sharon's family attended a one-room school at Big Brook.

GRANDMA WAS A REALLY GOOD COOK

Born Sara McLean from Green Island Cove, my grandmother married Albert Bailey from Bonne Bay. They moved to Big Brook when my dad, William, was five years old. He is 79 years old now. Dad has a sister Olive and she is 2-1/2 years older than he.

I remember my grandma, and Aunt Olive, as being really good cooks; Grandma made excellent baked beans and homemade white bread.

The recipes are quite simple. They come from a time when outport people lived mostly off the land: fished, hunted, grew their own vegetables and had their own little farms with chickens and cows. People made do with what they had.

Note: These recipes are transcribed from Grandmother's Recipe Collection; therefore they will reflect Imperial weights and measures used in Newfoundland at that time. Metric measures are in brackets.

BAKED BEANS

2 cups (500 ml) dry white navy beans
 3/4 cup (190 ml) molasses
 1 onion
 1/2 tsp salt
 salt pork

Soak beans overnight; cover with water and simmer until almost cooked. Put all ingredients in a casserole dish with slices of salt pork on top and bake at 350 F. for three hours.

HOMEMADE WHITE BREAD

About 7lb (3.2 kg) flour (my grandma's flour came in a 100 lb bag)
 2 pkg yeast
 1 small handful sugar
 1 small handful salt
 1 egg
 1/2 lb (225 g) butter
 warm water

Make according to a traditional bread recipe.

FISH CAKES

3 cups (750 ml) cooked salt fish
 8-10 cooked potatoes (mashed)
 2 large onions
 pepper
 1/4 cup (60 ml) flour
 Salt pork

Mix all above ingredients together.

Make into patties.

Fry in pork fat until golden brown.

BOILED FRESH FISH

Boil fresh cod and potatoes in saltwater from the ocean.

Fry cubes of pork, add onions, and cook till done.

Serve on pork and onions on top of fish and potatoes.

MOLASSES BLACKBERRY PUDDING

2 cups (500 ml) flour
 3/4 cup (190 ml) molasses
 2 tsp (10 ml) baking powder
 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) baking soda
 1/2 cup (125 ml) butter
 1/2 tsp (3 ml) salt
 cinnamon
 1 cup (250 ml) blackberries (Newfoundland blackberries picked off the marsh)

Mix with a little water and put in a pudding bag. Steam for one and a half hours with your jiggs dinner.

CABBAGE PICKLES

5 pounds (2.25 kg)
two large cabbages
5 pounds (2.25 kg) onion
1 quart (1 L) mustard
1 quart (1 L) vinegar
1 pint (500 ml) water
5 pounds (2.25 kg) sugar
1 tbs (15 ml) salt
1 tbs (15 ml) turmeric
1 cup (250 ml) flour
water (mix flour and water
together to make a thickener)

Chop cabbage and onion finely. Boil together cabbage, onion, vinegar, water, and salt for 20 minutes.

Mix in mustard, sugar and turmeric and boil for another ten minutes. Thicken with flour and water mixture. Bottle while hot.

A CUP OF TEA AND MOLASSES BREAD BY WINSTON COLBOURNE

May Decker used to serve molasses on fresh homemade bread, or

shake sugar all around the slice of bread and pour cold tea over it until it was soggy. Oh, delicious!

I had many a cooked meal at home, and would sit down and end up with a cup of tea and molasses bread.

We also ate toutons, a kind of cake made with bread dough, but we called them flitters. If Eliza had a bit of bread dough left, she'd put it in the frying pan and fry it up for me, and we'd eat that with butter and molasses. There were two types of molasses: fancy and blackstrap, and molasses used to come in puncheons or in a tierce.

Most every time, when the last loaf of bread comes out of the oven, Eliza will lodge it on the counter and I'll get the knife. She'll say, "Where are you going?" And then she'll say, "Oh, no you're not!" She's said that a thousand times since we've been married, but I never, ever listened. I always got me slice; always. I always say, why keep it there when I might not be here tomorrow to eat it?



Bread, hot from the oven

Glossary Dictionary of Newfoundland English

1. Toutons: toutin, also toutan, touten, touton. Dough cake, flapjack or a kind of cake made with bread dough. A piece of bread dough fried in fat; DAMPER DOG.
2. Tierce: an old measure of capacity, also a cask. In the fish-trade, a wooden container of designated size for the export of fish. BARREL, CASK, PUNCHEON.

Roasting Salt Cod in the Woodstove

CARL TUCKER

You'd take a piece of salt cod, rounders mostly, wrap it in brown paper and you'd put it down inside the woodstove to roast; there was always plenty of brown paper around. You wouldn't put it directly into the fire, the tail would be sticking out of the damper. When it was cooked, the fish would be black and you'd scrape all the black off and underneath would be the white flesh.

Padarah

HARVEY & LIZZIE COMPTON

When we cooked padarah out in boat, we'd take an iron pot, fry pork, add onions and fish, then pieces of fresh bread. We'd keep the wet in it till we put the bread in. We didn't soak the bread; we put it in just before we ate it. Padarah was made with ordinary bread, and we didn't add potatoes, not out in boat.

FISH AND BREWIS

To cook fish and brewis, we let the fish cook, then we'd have the brewis—hard bread—then we'd fry out the onions. We used to have what you call 'stretch fat'. My mom made stretch fat by frying pork and onions together. It was called stretch fat because it was stretched to make it go farther. When the pork and onions were fried out, she'd put a drop of water in, then I'd see her take the flour in her hand, stir it in and make a gravy. That was stretch fat.

Padarah

NELLIE HEDDERSON

"The first place ever I heard tell of a meal of padarah was when I came here; I was only young and my father-in-law said, "Maid, cook a bit of padarah."

I said to Uncle George, "Sure, I don't know what that is."

He said, "We cooks it out in boat."

Nellie speaks of how they cooked out in the boat. "And when they were out in boat, they put the bread in their Cape Ann! They'd soak it in the water and squeeze it out, but they used homemade bread, not the stuff you buys in the stores."

Nellie cooked many a meal of padarah after that, and shares her own recipe:

"You cook your pork and your onions in a pot, then you cook your fish on top of that—and fresh fish always means cod. When the fish is partially cooked, you take the bones out, and when the fish is fully

cooked, you put your homemade bread in."

She recalls cooking one time when she was on a program down in Quirpon. "We had a bun of bread with us, and put the bun of bread in salt water, then squeezed it out and put it in with the fish. And when the fish was mostly cooked, we took out the bone, stirred up the fish and pork, and added the bread. Some good, eh?"

Padarah

SELBY AND DELILAH TUCKER



Figure 1 Selby and Delilah Tucker

Delilah Tucker

COOKING PADARAH AT HOME

You fry up your pork, and whatever grease is rendered out, leave it in the pan along with the scrunchions. Dice an onion and cook it in the pork fat. Some people put the onion in when they put the fish in, but I put the fish in after the onion is cooked. The fish will already have been skinned. Cut the fish up in chunks, bone-in, and put it in the pan. When the fish is almost cooked, falling off the bone, pick out the bones. You don't have to mash up the fish, it'll fall apart

when you pick out the bones. Then, if it's not wet enough to your liking – if you're going to put gravy into it – put a little drop of water into it, probably about half a cup, and then you break up your bread and put that in, and stir a little. But you don't mang it all up.

Selby

COOKING PADARAH OUT IN BOAT

I take the fish, take the gut out, heave the guts away, keep the liver. Put the liver on the fire and cook it. Take the head, the tail and the fins off. Cut the fish in sections.

Now you got the fish ready, you cut up the pork, put it in the pot, perhaps half a cupful, cubed. When the pork is good and brown, dice an onion and cook it a little before you put the fish in. Make sure you got a little bit of liquor in the pot, and when it steams, the fish will fall apart from the bone. Take the bone out. When the fish is cooked enough, you put one or two slices of bread in, stir it a little, and it's ready to eat.

Glossary

Dictionary of Newfoundland English

1. Scrunchions: bits of animal fat, especially after its oil has been rendered out.
2. Liquor: broth
3. Mang: to mix together, especially food; to mangle or crush.