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Receipts of Pastry & Cookery

THE IOWA
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CULINARY ARTS SERIES



Edited by David E. Schoonover



Receipts of Pastry & Cookery
For the Use of His Scholars

Edward Kidder

Edited by David E. Schoonover

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Frontispiece of Edward Kidder courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, University of Chicago Library

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Foreword

David E. Schoonover

Edward Kidder's primary importance in culinary history derives from his role as proprietor of the first known cookery schools in England. Evidence of his enterprise comes from title pages in copies of his quite rare *Receipts of Pastry and Cookery: For the Use of His Scholars*, which exists in both manuscript and printed texts, undated, but probably ranging from the 1720s to the 1740s. The manuscript versions are somewhat mysterious, perhaps transcribed by his students from dictation or from other copies and kept as textbooks or reference guides.

The basis for this facsimile edition is the manuscript copy with a printed title page located in the University of Iowa's Szathmáry Collection of Culinary Arts, but versions at Vassar College Library and the University of Chicago Library include two other distinctly different typeset title pages. The different printed title pages in Kidder's books place his schools in three locations, at St. Martin's Le Grand, in Queen Street near St. Thomas Apostles, and next to Furnival's Inn in Holborn. The title page in the University of Chicago's manuscript text lists yet another address, in Norris Street near St. James's Market. As an entrepreneur Kidder may have had these different title pages prepared in quantity, then had them bound with sufficient blank pages available for transcribing "receipts," as seems to have been done in the Szathmáry copy.

In *Old Cook Books: An Illustrated History*, Eric Quayle suggests that Kidder's taking the trouble and expense of producing a

pecially prepared handbook for his pupils points to

successful and well-attended classes, which may be seen as early examples of adult education. In addition, we know from the Vassar College and University of Chicago title pages that Kidder advertised "Ladies may be taught at their own Houses."

Kidder's contemporaries used the prefaces to their own cookery books to establish claims of experience, training, novelty, and artistry. Charles Carter, "Lately Cook to his Grace the Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Pontefract, the Lord Cornwallis, &c," author of *The Complete Practical Cook: Or, A New System of the Whole Art and Mystery of Cookery*, asserts that "Variety and Novelty are no small Parts of the Cook's Art, and that no Occupation in the World is more oblig'd to Invention." Carter presents his collection to the public as "the Genuine Performance of my Father and Self, all the Rules try'd and experienc'd, and which have had the good Luck to be applauded by our respective Principals." With pride he extolls "So noble a Market as Leadenhall, the finest in the World, as well as several other well-furnish'd Public Markets about this great and opulent Metropolis [that] afford such continual Supplies for the Table, that no Cook can be at a Loss for Elegancies of every Kind, while he is near the Town, to gratify the most extensive Wish, and to indulge the most profuse Spirit of Hospitality."

John Farley, principal cook at the London Tavern, in *The London Art of Cookery, and Housekeeper's Complete Assistant*, charges that the "Generality of Books of this Kind are so grouped together, without Method or Order, as to render them exceedingly intricate and bewildering; and the Receipts written with so much Carelessness and Inaccuracy, as not only to render them exceedingly perplexing, but frequently totally unintelligible. In this

Work, however, we hope, that Perspicuity and Regularity will be seen in every Step we have taken We shall only add, that neither Labour, Care, nor Expence, have been spared to make this Work worthy of the Patronage of the Public."

Edward Kidder's *Receipts of Pastry and Cookery: For the Use of His Scholars* is a working cook's manual, presupposing that its owner knows or will soon learn what amounts of ingredients are called for, what cooking times are necessary, and what now-exotic materials and methods were customary in the eighteenth century. Today's readers are encouraged to try these "receipts" with an experimental attitude. In the recipes following this foreword, original and updated versions are provided for the historically minded cook who may prefer more precise directions.

Acknowledgments

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