

# BEDFORDSHIRE & LUTON ARCHIVES & RECORDS SERVICE

*presents*

## Apples in the Archives

Apples have been part of English life since Roman times so it is not surprising to find reference to them in the records held by Bedfordshire & Luton Archives Service. These records tell us about cultivation, cookery and crime and through this most familiar of fruit we can look back into the world of our ancestors.



**LAXTON Bros. BEDFORD Ltd**

Offices & Showrooms: **63 HIGH STREET** Telephone (2 lines):

1957 Laxton nurseries close in Bedford after 78 years

1932 Start of COPO at Cockayne Hatley by pyramid selling scheme

**COX'S ORANGE PIPPIN ORCHARDS**  
C.O.P.O.

Encourage Apple Growing in England.

**£2000** can be **Earned**

the Queen, her Crown and Dignity; And we the said Justices aforesaid, adjudge the said *Albert Cox and Samuel Albone* for his their said Offence to (a) *be severally imprisoned for the space of one day and to be once privately whipped six strokes*

1877 Boys from Arlesey prosecuted and whipped for stealing apples

1859 Reward offered for prosecution for theft of apples

from a Garden at **EATON SOCON**, in the occupation of **Mrs. Hobson**.

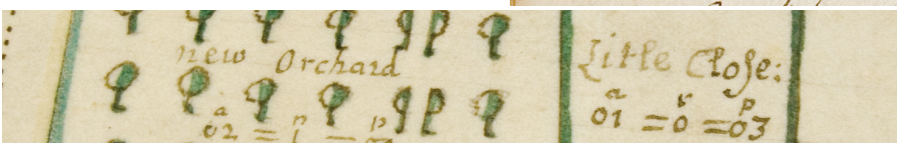
**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,**  
That a Reward of **ONE GUINEA** will be paid to any Person

1822 Andrew Chambers prosecuted for damaging apple trees

*And one thousand eight hundred and twenty two Andrew Chambers is convicted by and Before me Charles Short Esquire Mayor one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said Town of Bedford for that the said Andrew Chambers on the twelfth day of June aforesaid at the Parish of Saint Paul in the said Town of Bedford did wilfully and maliciously do and commit damage injury and spoil to and*

1731 Vicar of Bletsoe plants 33 apple trees at his vicarage garden

*Nov-1. To Gardiner Laying out Garden — 0  
33 Apple Trees — 0*



1728 New orchard shown on map of John Reynal's estate at Eggington

1693 The gardeners at Wrest Park are kept busy grafting fruit trees.

*Graft six Quince stocks with the John Apple.  
Graft six Quince stocks with y<sup>e</sup> Greenfield Pear.*

Cooks have always collected and exchanged recipes. It was one of the duties of the mistress of the house to keep useful recipes not only for meals but also for medicines. In this letter Caroline Talbot advises Baroness Grantham that peach dumplings are better than apple dumplings.

we have just discovered Peach Dumplings to be the best sort of Apple Dumplings by far. Indeed by mistake we had a Peach Pudding, but we are told that the best of all are Peaches put single, whole do not even pared, each into a separate Crust like so many single Apple Dumplings. Pray how does your Fruit succeed this year at West? In general it has greatly failed: of some sorts we have had scarce any.

BLARS ref: L30/13/25/1 -1767

In Tudor and Stuart times highly coloured food was popular. Verdigris was used to produce green. This may have been partly accidental as it could be produced by cooking acidic foods in copper pans. Unfortunately verdigris is poisonous. Luckily this recipe uses a red food dye, cochineal (Scutcheonell), which was first imported from Mexico in the late 16th century.

(73) To colour Apples Scarlet -  
pare quarter & coar 8 large Codlins or pippins put ym into faire water to keep there colour then braise 2 pennyworth of Scutcheonell with as much Alom ye bigness of nutmeg contains tie it up in a fine rag put ye apples into a skillet with ye scutcheonell half a pound of fine sugar ye peeles of a lemon finely miced and a quarter of a pint of faire water yn set ym over ye fire & as they stew squeeze ye scutcheonell with ye back of a spoon so let ym stew till they are tender yn mash ym with the spoon so will they look like marmalett this made into open tarts puffs are proper to garnish your dishes of tarts in the winter season

BLARS ref: PM2600 – c. 1714

### To colour Apples Scarlet

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NB if you wish to try this recipe you are advised to omit the Alum. Although often used in old recipes to keep food crisp when pickling and possibly here used as a mordant to fix the colour, it is mildly poisonous and no longer recommended for culinary use. Vegetarians should choose another food colouring as Cochineal is made from female beetles!

Before the Georgian period it was usual to use dried fruit in cooking but from the 18th century onwards fresh fruit was more commonly used. These 18th century recipes are easily recognisable today.

### To make a Charlotte Pudding

Take one dozen of large apples, cut & slice them in a pan with a cup of water, with a bit of Lemon peel, & mace – a quarter of a pound of butter, stew them all together till they are all pulp – sweeten them to your palate – if your Apples are not sharp squeeze a little Lemon into it – then cut slices of french Roll or bread & lay them into the pan you bake it in, & be very sure you cover the bottom & sides that none of the Sirrup may get out – then lay a layer of Apples & a layer of bread till you have put them all in – cover it with bread, & bake it two hours, shake it once or twice while it is baking – turn it out when you serve it up – ~~at the end of the~~

*P.S. we baked it in a pint bason, & did not use above eight apples, & thought ye above receipt much too greasy, therefore reduced the butter above half the quantity*

### To make a Charlotte Pudding

Take one dozen of large apples, cut & slice them in a pan with a cup of water, with a bit of lemon peel, & mace – a quarter of a pound of butter, stew them altogether till they are all pulp – sweeten them to your palate – if your apples are not sharp squeeze a little lemon into it – then cut slices of French Roll or bread and lay them into the pan you bake it in, & be very sure you cover the bottom & sides that none of the sirrup may get out – then lay a layer of apples & a layer of bread till you have put them all in – cover it with bread, & bake it two hours. Shake it once or twice while it is baking – turn it out when you serve it up.

NB we baked it in a pint bason, & did not use above eight apples, & thought ye above receipt much too greasy, therefore reduced the butter above half the quantity.

BLARS ref: L31/209 c.1730

Both these recipes use lemons. Lemons had been imported into England in large quantities since the Tudor period but until the Georgian period flavouring with spices and oranges and quinces had been more popular.

### Apple Pudding

Three quarters of a pound of sharp apples, either scald or Roast them, and pulp them, eight eggs leaving out four of the Whites, the juice of two limons and the Rinds grated a quarter of a pound of single refined sugar, six ozs of Butter carefully melted without Water or Flour, mix very well all these ingredients together, lay a thin sheet of puff paste at the Bottom of the dish, bake it in a slow oven.

No. 7. Apple Pudding Hazell.

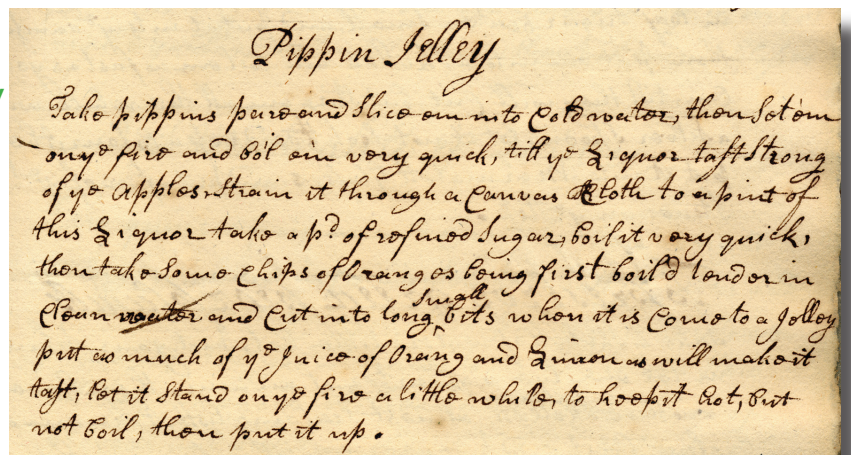
Three quarters of a pound of sharp Apples, either scald or Roast them, and pulp them, eight Eggs leaving out four of the Whites, the juice of two Lemons and the Rinds grated a quarter of a pound of single refined sugar, six ozs of Butter carefully Melted without Water or Flour, mix very well all these ingredients together, lay a thin sheet of puff paste at the Bottom of the dish, bake it in a slow oven.

BLARS ref: X171/59 c1770-1830

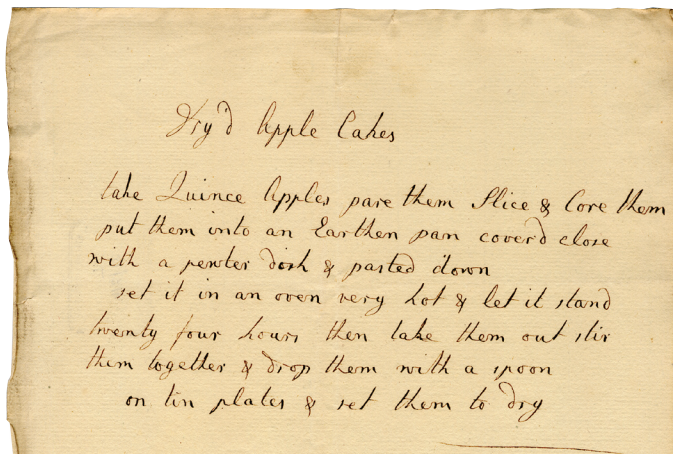
While some apples will store well, recipes for windfalls and poor keepers have always been useful.

### Pippin Jelly

Take pippins pare and slice em into cold water, then set em on ye fire and boil em very quick, till ye liquor tast strong of ye apples. Strain it through a canvas cloth to a pint of this liquor take a pd of refined sugar, boil it very quick, then take some chips of oranges being first boild tendor in clean water and cut into long small bits when it is come to a jelley put as much of ye juice of orang and limon as will make it tast, Let it stand on ye fire a little while, to keep it hot, but not boil, then put it up.



BLARS ref: L31/202 - c1730



### Dry'd Apple Cakes

Take Quince apples pare them slice & core them  
put them into an Earthen pan cover'd close  
with a pewter dish & parted down  
set it in an oven very hot & let it stand  
twenty four hours then take them out stir  
them together & drop them with spoon  
on tin plates & set them to dry.

BLARS ref: L31/215 - c1730

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