

# Culinary Ephemera Research Guide

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## Introduction

The Janice Blusetein Longone Culinary Archive (JBLCA) holds an extensive collection of advertising pamphlets, government publications, and the publications of farmers co-ops and food boards that promote various food products, household appliances, kitchen equipment, and food-related products. These materials are largely organized by product-type, such as [Beverages](#), [Gelatin and Tapioca](#), or [Cookware](#). For a complete list of topics, see the [Ephemera Finding Aids and Catalog](#) Records listed at the end of this document.

## Research Topics

These materials offer a wealth of opportunities for research in the history of the 19th and 20th century United States. While culinary history and changing foodways are documented in abundance, culinary ephemera also offer insight into broader themes in American cultural, social, and political history. The following topic overviews suggest just a few areas in which researchers might find a dive into culinary ephemera to be fruitful.

*This guide was revised by Juli Mcloone in June 2020, based on the original prepared by JJ Jacobson prior to 2015.*

## Childhood and Parenting

Several boxes of the collection contain items specifically related to the marketing of food to children and their parents. These items illustrate ways that adults and manufacturers socialized children into particular gender roles; how people thought about the relationship between children's growth, development, and food; and the marketing of specific food products to children and/or their parents.

### Example Items:

- **A Little Book for a Little Cook (1905)**, from [Culinary Ephemera : Children. Box 305](#)
- **My Biography (1910)** (baby book with an insert on the care and feeding of infants), from [Culinary Ephemera : Dairy. Series: General. Box 330](#)
- **The Children's Party Book (1924)**, from [Culinary Ephemera : Children. Box 305](#)
- **Important in Preparing Horlick's for Infants (1933)** from [Culinary Ephemera : Healthfood. Box 296](#)
- **Recipes for Toddlers (1948)**, from [Culinary Ephemera : Children. Box 305](#)

## Economic Change

Culinary ephemera documents ways that food consumption, cooking, housekeeping, and home technology have been affected by both periods of economic expansion and depression, as well as the ways in which these developments related to leisure, convenience, thrift, gender roles, and the history of technology.

### Example Items:

- **Left Overs or Economy in the Kitchen (1891)**, from [Culinary Ephemera : Patent Medicine. Box 122](#)
- **55 Ways to Save Eggs (1917)**, from [Culinary Ephemera : War. Box 340](#)
- **Meat Dishes at Low Cost (1934)**, from [Culinary Ephemera : Government Documents. Box 298](#)

## Gender Roles

Culinary ephemera often reflects contemporary gender roles in relation to food and housekeeping and shifting conceptions of the gendered self.

### Example Items:

- What Six Famous Cooks Say of Jell-O (1912). [Culinary Ephemera : Gelatin and Tapioca Box 267](#)
- Betty Crocker's \$25,000 Recipe Set Featuring Recipes From World Famous Chefs for Food that Enchant Men (1933), from [Culinary Ephemera : Flour Products. Box 10](#)
- Table Helps for Housewife and Hostess / by Janet McKenzie Hill. 62 p. circa 1900s. [Culinary Ephemera : Condiments. Box 77](#)

## Health and Wellnes

Items related to nutritional claims, early patent medicine, home remedies, and weight loss trends may be found throughout the collection. These documents help to illuminate how scientific advances in the understanding of nutrition changed people's eating habits, the history of weight loss and body image, particularly for women, and changing attitudes about health and wellness.

### Example Items:

- Drake's American Receipt Book (advertisement for P. H. Drake's plantation bitters) (1867), from [Culinary Ephemera : Patent Medicine. Box 121](#)
- Cheno Keep or Regain That Youthful Figure (1932), from [Culinary Ephemera : Beverages. Series: Non-alcoholic. Box 192](#)
- The Cook Book for Low Sodium Diet (1950), from [Culinary Ephemera : Health Food. Box 295](#)

## Housekeeping and Home Economics

While the culinary ephemera collection focuses primarily on edible products, a significant number of boxes deal with kitchen equipment, appliances, tableware, cookware, and general housekeeping, including cleaning, laundry, and sewing. These items are especially useful for studying the history of domestic economy, housekeeping, and the role of convenience in marketing domestic products. They also offer an opportunity to examine how improved household technology shaped women's lives and either contributed to or reflected shifting notions of gender roles.

### Example Items:

- **Woman and Her Slave (advertisement for vapor stoves) (1890), from [Culinary Ephemera : Stoves-Oil. Box 151](#)**
- **I'm a Miracle-Worker for Busy Housewives (Clorox advertisement) (1936), from [Culinary Ephemera : Cleaning, Heating, Sewing. Box 366.](#)**
- **Meals Go Modern Electrically (1940), from [Culinary Ephemera : Stoves - Electric. Box 156](#)**
- **Let an Eclipse Do the Work (vacuum cleaner advertisement) (undated), from [Culinary Ephemera : Cleaning, Heating, Sewing. Box 366](#)**

## Industrial Food Production

One of the most prominent themes of JBLCA's ephemera holdings is the rise of the industrial production of food products and subsequent marketing by large corporations. Issues of food purity came to the fore in the late 19th century, while the emergence of national advertising campaigns exploded in the early 20th century. Additionally, advertising ephemera provides insight into how mass production of food products, kitchen equipment, and the emergence of packaged, preserved, and processed foods changed Americans' diets and their relationship with food, cooking, and housekeeping. Many of these trends intersect with the histories of gender, leisure, modernity, and understandings of health and wellness.

**Example Items:**

- Calumet Cook Book: Reliable Recipes (1908), from [Culinary Ephemera : Flour Products, Leavening Agents, and Baked Goods. Series : Leavening Agents. Box 40](#)
- New Recipes for Pillsbury's Cake Flour (ca. 1930), from [Culinary Ephemera : Flour Products, Leavening Agents, and Baked Goods. Series : Flour Products. Box 12](#)
- 57 Ways to Use Heinz Condensed Soups (ca. 1930s), from [Culinary Ephemera : Companies and Corporations. Box 443a.](#)
- How to Have the Most Fun with Cake Mixes (Betty Crocker) (1956), from [Culinary Ephemera : Flour Products, Leavening Agents, and Baked Goods. Series : Flour Products. Box 10](#)

## Race and Ethnicity

Although not located in any one particular box of ephemera, representations of race and ethnicity appear throughout the ephemera collection. These items can be a fruitful place to explore how food marketing represented African Americans and numerous ethnic groups, how white Americans viewed people of various ethnicities, and what was considered “ethnic” food at various points in the 19th and 20th centuries. These portrayals are closely tied to the larger historical themes of American identity formation, race, and racism in everyday life.

**Example Items:**

- Creole Mammy Rice Recipes (undated), from [Culinary Ephemera : Pasta, Rice, Grains, and Legumes. Box 101](#)
- Gems from Mammy's southern kitchen (1919) from [Culinary Ephemera : Cereal Products. Box 92. Item 1](#)
- Mexican Cookery for American Homes (1923), from [Culinary Ephemera : Ethnic. Box 111](#)

## War

A small number of Culinary Ephemera items are organized not by food product but through their association with war-time, principally World War I and II: [Box 340](#), [Box 341](#), [Box 342](#), [Box 343](#), [Box 345](#), and [Box 346](#). These materials document how food conservation, rationing, government propaganda influenced food preparation and consumption on the home front.

### Example Items:

- [Recipes to Match Your Sugar Ration \(1917\)](#), from [Culinary Ephemera : War. Box 340](#)
- [War Gardening and Home Storage of Vegetables \(1919\)](#), from [Culinary Ephemera : War. Box 340](#).
- [Don't Let Butter Rationing Scare You! \(1942\)](#), from [Culinary Ephemera : War. Box 342](#)
- [Victory Meal Planner \(1942\)](#), from [Culinary Ephemera : War. Box 342](#)

## Ephemera Finding Aids and Catalog Records

Below is a complete list of ephemera finding aids and catalog records by topic. If you have questions about holdings or how to access materials, please contact [special.collections@umich.edu](mailto:special.collections@umich.edu)

- [Almanacs \(1871-2005\)](#). Various almanacs dating from 1871 to 2005. There is particularly strong representation of publications by the W.T. Rawleigh Company from the early- to mid-twentieth century.
- [Appliances \(Circa 1860s - Circa 1990s\)](#). Promotional material for kitchen and other household appliances. Series I: Major Appliances consists of publications promoting items such as washing machines, dishwashers, and televisions. The much larger [Series II: Small Appliances](#) consists of promotional material for items such as mixers,

blenders, food processors, pressure cookers, deep fryers, and waffle irons. There is particularly strong representation of publications promoting pressure-cookers.

- [Beverages \(circa 1880s-2004, and undated\)](#). Publications relating to both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, with particularly strong representation of wine and coffee. [Series I: Non-alcoholic](#) also includes information related to tea, soft drinks, and water. Note that fruit juice material is generally included under the topic “Fruits, Vegetables, and Nuts.”
- [Catalogs \(Circa 1881 to circa 1929\)](#) Catalogs for kitchen and household products, such as knives, cleavers, fruit presses, cider mills, mop wringers, boot and glove fasteners, ice cream freezers, washboards, garden implements, stove pipes, bread boxes, and jelly moulds. It also includes a small number of catalogs for food products, such as canned vegetables, kosher meats and sausages, salt fish, and pickles.
- [Cereal Products \(circa 1880s-1991\)](#). Cereal product publications produced by large companies such as Quaker, Ralston, Kellogg, Postum, General Mills, and Battle Creek Foods, as well as ephemera related to lesser-known cereal companies.
- [Children \(1905-1999\)](#). Ephemera that were produced with children as the marketing audience. Many of them are children's stories featuring brand-name food products, such as Pillsbury flour, Royal Baking Powder, and Nestle Milk.
- [Cocoa and Chocolate \(1880-1999\)](#). Items promoting ground cocoa, chocolate, chocolate candy, and chocolate and cocoa companies such as Hershey, Ghirardelli, Walter Baker Co., and Droste.
- [Companies and Corporations](#). Ephemera related to various large household-related companies, such as Avon, Metropolitan Life Insurance, and utility companies.
- [Condiments \(1899-2001\)](#). Promotional items related to ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise and salad dressings, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, Tabasco/Creole sauce, vinegar, pickles, barbeque sauces, and various other sauces and relishes.

- [Culinary Ephemera: Cooking Schools \(1976-2001\)](#). Course lists and promotional materials for several American and European cooking schools.
- [Culinary Ephemera: Cookware \(circa 1870s - 1994\)](#). Ephemera promoting various manufacturers of cookware such as Wear-ever, Pyrex, and Corning.
- [Corn Products \(1876-1988\)](#). Materials on products made from corn, including corn syrup, cereals, corn starch, corn oil, and miscellaneous products.
- [Dairy \(circa 1890s-2004\)](#). Items promoting milk, milk products such as ice cream, and milk producers and processors. [Series I: Cheese](#) focuses on cheese producers, including the American Cheese Society, various iterations of the Kraft Foods Company, Maytag Dairy Farms, Inc., Shefford Cheese Co., Inc, and the Switzerland Cheese Association.
- [Die Cut \(1991-2001\)](#). Promotional materials for a wide array of products. These publications were produced using the die cutting process, in which paper or card stock is cut into a decorative shape using a steel cutting die.
- [Ethnic \(Circa 1910s - 2004\)](#). Publications issued by various (mostly American) corporations and other organizations referencing specific cuisines to promote their products, featuring ingredients, processed foods, and recipes drawing on a wide range of cuisines from across the world including Mexican, Italian, Jewish, Chinese, and others.
- [Fats \(1889-circa 1990s\)](#). Promotional materials relating to various kinds of fat used in food preparation, including lard, margarine, oil, and shortening.
- [Fish and Seafood \(1861-2011\)](#). Ephemera promoting fresh, frozen, and canned seafood by by companies such as Star-Kist, Kemp's, and Gorton's, as well as pamphlets produced by fishery cooperatives and state and private marketing associations.

- [Flour Products, Leavening Agents, and Baked Goods \(1864-2002\)](#). Promotional materials relating to flour (primarily wheat flour); leavening agents such as yeast, baking powder, and baking soda; and some material focused generally on baked goods. [Series I](#) Flour includes publications from various flour companies including Robin Hood Flour Mills, Washburn Crosby Company, and King Arthur Flour, among others, this series includes publications from corporations that produced both flour and baking mixes, such as various iterations of the Pillsbury company. Within [Series II: Leavening Agents](#) yeast materials primarily date from 1920s-1930s and after 1970. Some notable corporate authors include Fleischmann & Co., Red Star Yeast and Products Company, National Yeast Co., Northwestern Yeast Company, and Golden Gate Compressed Yeast Company. There is stronger late-19th and early-20th century representation among those focused on baking powder, with most publications dating from the 1890s-1940s. Some notable corporate authors include Calumet Baking Powder Company, Cleveland Baking Powder Company, Davis Baking Powder Company, Pure Baking Powder Co., Royal Baking Powder Company, Rumford Baking Powder Co., and Warner Baking Powder Company.
- [Culinary Ephemera: Food Preservation \(Circa 1860s to 1994\)](#). Ephemera with canning, freezing, and preserving tips and instructions, advertisements for canning supplies, as well as recipes for jams, jellies, pickles, relishes, and other canned and preserved foods.
- [Fruits, Vegetables, and Nuts \(1885-2003\)](#). Promotional materials for nuts of various types, including peanuts, coconuts, fresh and dried fruits, fruit juices, and canned fruits.
- [Gelatin and Tapioca \(Circa 1850s - 2000\)](#). Items promoting Jell-O, Knox, other gelatins, and various tapioca products.

- [Government Documents \(Circa 1910s - Circa 1980s\)](#). Pamphlets produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state extension services, and home economics departments at state universities. In addition to the “War” boxes, these materials are especially useful for further exploration of war-related topics.
- [Health Food](#). Ephemera private, non-profit, and government organizations, such as the American Cancer Society, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the American Heart Association. Other items promote the products of health and organic food companies and products such as Muir Glen Organic and Stouffer's Lean Cuisine.
- [Hotels](#). Ephemera promoting hotels and resorts. Much of this material is currently not cataloged; the box that is cataloged focuses on the latter half of the 20th century.
- [Housekeeping \(circa 1870s-1990s\)](#). Promotional materials related to household tasks from a variety of companies.
- [Kitchen Planning](#). Ephemera promoting large equipment, stove and refrigerator sets, and information on kitchen design.
- [Meats and Eggs](#). Ephemera promoting meat and egg products, especially processed meats by Armour, Beech-Nut, and Swift, as well as publications from the National Livestock & Meat Board.
- [Multi-Product Food Companies \(1873-1995\)](#). Materials promoting a wide variety of food products, ranging from snacks to salad dressings to pickles to desserts. Most are published by corporations that produce multiple, sometimes unrelated, food products.
- [Newspapers and Magazine](#). Food-related ephemera promoting various newspapers and magazines, especially housekeeping and cooking-related publications and columns.

- [Paper](#). Ephemera promoting various food and entertainment-related paper and foil products such as parchment paper, party decorations, baking cups, tin foil, and paper bags.
- [Pasta, Rice, Grains, Legumes](#): Items promoting pasta, rice, beans, peas, and lentils.
- [Patent Medicine](#). Ephemera promoting 19th and early 20th century patent medicines, including Lydia Pinkham, Ransom and Winslow, C. I. Hood & Co., Dr. J. C. Ayers & Co., and veterinary products.
- [Radio and Television](#). Food-related ephemera promoting radio and television programs and stations, especially housekeeping and cooking-related programs, and Hollywood and Broadway (celebrities).
- [Refrigerators and Freezers](#). Ephemera related to various refrigerator models, freezers, ice, ice boxes, and ice cream freezers/makers.
- [Retail Solicitation](#). Ephemera related to department and general stores, promotions, and trading stamps, with numerous Brides' Books in [Box 375](#).
- [Spices, Extracts, and Salt Products \(1886 to 1994\)](#). Ephemera related to herbs and spices, flavoring extracts, and salt products.
- Stoves : [Oil](#), [Wood](#), [Gas](#), [Electric](#). Includes advertisements, recipes, operating instructions, and catalogs for stoves and barbeques.
- [Sweetening Products](#). Materials related to various sweeteners including: sugar, honey, molasses, malt products, marshmallows, mapleine, syrup, saccharin, and non-chocolate candy.

- [Soups and Bouillon](#). Promotional material related to canned soups and packaged bouillon. Campbell's, Oxo, Lipton, Borden, Heinz, and many smaller companies are represented in these boxes.
- [Tableware](#). Items promoting silver, linen, crystal, china, candles, proper place setting, and ephemera about serving and entertaining.
- [War](#). Food-related material from the World War I and II time periods, including how to cook “by the ration book,” and victory gardens. War time food-related information can also be found in some of the “Government Documents” boxes.