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**"The most social utensil in the world": Chafing dish recipes for  
popularity, 1890-1920**

**Naus, Laura, M.A.**  
**University of Delaware, 1991**

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**"THE MOST SOCIAL UTENSIL IN THE WORLD":  
Chafing Dish Recipes for Popularity, 1890-1920**

By  
Laura Naus

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of  
Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Early American Culture

June 1991

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"THE MOST SOCIAL UTENSIL IN THE WORLD":  
Chafing Dish Recipes for Popularity, 1890-1920

By

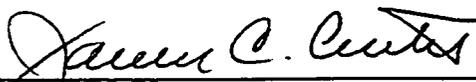
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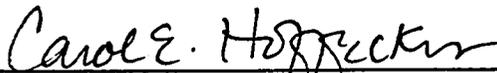
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The chafing-dish is the most social utensil in the world. Time was when the teakettle held that proud position, but it has been reduced to the second place. One may offer a cup of tea to any one, friend or stranger, but when one has assisted at a chafing-dish supper, formality is over forever. Those who forgather with suggestion and criticism, officious shakes of pepper and friendly dredges of flour, meet as intimates afterwards. No wonder the chafing-dish is popular! There's magic in it.

--Josephine Grenier, "Chafing Dish Suppers"

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I now know why acknowledgements often include the trite but true phrase: this paper could never have been completed without the assistance of.... While many individuals were helpful, I am particularly grateful to the staff at the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum Libraries. Neville Thompson, Librarian in Charge of Printed Book and Periodical Collection, and Jill Hobgood, Assistant Librarian, enthusiastically and tirelessly acquired chafing-dish cookbooks, secured hard-to-find magazine articles, and offered numerous leads. Ever ready to listen and offer advice, they made research at Winterthur a pleasure. I am also indebted to the staffs of the Hagley Library and of the Morris Library at the University of Delaware. Thanks are also due to my advisor, Ritchie Garrison, for patiently listening, for calmly reassuring, and for astutely criticizing. I am also grateful to my classmates for their insights and for their companionship. Finally, I would like to thank my family for their love and support.

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#### ABSTRACT

Between 1890 and 1920, the chafing dish was a stock article for home entertaining, dorm room larks, and bachelor camaraderie. Basically a double-boiler over a portable heating device, the chafing dish cooked meals at the table. This fashion is charted through analysis of trade catalogues, etiquette books, cookbooks, household manuals, magazines, and popular literature. Not a new invention, the chafing dish became popular after 1890 because manufacturers and home economists aggressively marketed the chafing dish to middle-class Americans as the means to a more rewarding social life. Associated with both feminine domesticity and the male dominated public world of clubs, restaurants, and theaters, the chafing dish party combined nineteenth-century requirements for propriety with twentieth-century expectations of intimacy and gender mutuality. When public leisure activities became the dominant mode of courtship and informal socializing in the twenties, the chafing dish lost popularity.

## INTRODUCTION

Flash! The camera catches men and women gathered around a chafing dish in 1895 (see fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> Between 1890 and 1920, the chafing dish was a stock article for home entertaining, dorm room larks, and bachelor camaraderie. Turn-of-the-twentieth-century hostesses and hosts used the chafing dish, basically a double-boiler over a portable heating device, to cook meals right at the table in front of guests. By the thirties, chafing dish cookery was already the stuff of nostalgia, associated with "fudge parties at college in a long-past era," and remembered as the "first step that led to the altar" for courting couples "twenty years ago."<sup>2</sup> The chafing dish became a symbol of conviviality at the turn of the century because it offered consumers a means for reconciling nineteenth-century domestic ideals with twentieth-century public leisure values. As public leisure activities became a dominant mode of courtship and socializing in the twenties, the chafing dish supper began to seem

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<sup>1</sup> Between 1890 and 1920, the term "chafing dish" was spelled with and without a hyphen. For the sake of consistency, I have adopted the spelling without a hyphen. When quoting titles or text, I have used the original spelling.

<sup>2</sup> Demetria M. Taylor, "Consider the Chafing Dish," Good Housekeeping, February 1935, 89; Richardson Wright, "The Chafing Dish Era," House and Garden, October 1929, 88.

quaintly homey instead of daringly intimate.

The set of discourses which popularized the chafing dish between 1890 and 1920 played upon both declining nineteenth-century notions of propriety and emerging twentieth-century desires for self-expression. This opposition between formality and intimacy also spoke to conflicting values within nineteenth-century culture and was articulated in terms of the notion of separate male/public and female/domestic spheres. Promotional material stressed the feminine, refined, homey quality of chafing dish cookery while connecting the chafing dish to the male dominated, openly sensual, public leisure world of clubs, restaurants, and theaters. Chafing dish literature evoked contradictions which consumers could not reconcile through nineteenth-century ideology. The resolutions that chafing dish literature offered helped consumers move from a nineteenth-century to a twentieth-century vision of courtship, comradeship, and consumption.

**"WE REVIVED FROM OBSCURITY THIS HISTORIC DISH"<sup>3</sup>:  
THE HISTORY OF THE CHAFING DISH, ANTIQUITY TO 1890**

No new invention spurred the chafing dish fashion. Though the electric versions promoted in the early twentieth century represented technological advance, the spirit lamp contraptions that first garnered widespread attention in the 1890s offered an old

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<sup>3</sup> Josephine Grenier, "Chafing Dish Suppers," Harper's Bazar, February 1902, 162.

technology, an older name, and a positively ancient approach to cookery. The turn-of-the-twentieth-century identification of the chafing dish with upper-class, informal, bachelor camaraderie echoed earlier discourses regarding portable cookery. Cookbook authors, though, felt the need to remind readers of this: "There seems to exist in the mind of many the wholly to be contradicted notion that the chafing dish is a utensil of modern invention."<sup>4</sup> Writers included histories of the chafing dish both to enhance the gadget's appeal and to broaden familiarity with what had only recently been a mostly elite and institutional service apparatus.

Consumers had reason to be confused. In the 1880s, the term "chafing dish" was applied to hot water warmers and a variety of alcohol lamp (or spirit lamp) heated dishes (see figs. 2-3).<sup>5</sup> Alcohol lamp devices identical to those known as chafing dishes were

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<sup>4</sup> Fannie Merritt Farmer, Chafing Dish Possibilities (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1898), 13.

<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Mary F. Henderson, Practical Cooking & Dinner Giving (New York: Harper & Bros., 1880) 33, 60; George A. Peltz, ed., The Housewife's Library (Edgewood Publ., 1885), 290; Maria Parloa, Miss Parloa's Kitchen Companion (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1887), 54; Bramhall, Deane & Co., Manufacturers of Cooking and Heating Apparatus (New York: The Company, 1882), 46; The Troy Stamping Works, Granite Ironware Price List 1883 (New York: The Company, 1883), 20; Lalance and Grosjean Mfg. Co., Lalance and Grosjean M'f'g Co. (New York: The Company, 1885), 18 -21, 114, 218; The Central Stamping Co., A Book Illustrating and Describing the Various Line of Goods Produced in the Several Factories of the Central Stamping Co. (New York: Lockwood Press, 1889), 210-11, 212.

also known as entree dishes.<sup>6</sup> The contraption popularized in the 1890s was most similar to what was known in the 1880s and earlier as an oyster chafer, an oyster chafing dish, an oyster dish, or an oyster stand (see fig. 4).<sup>7</sup> After 1890, oyster chafers, renamed chafing dishes, were offered in a profuse number of models and aggressively marketed to middle-class as well as upper-class consumers. The extended marketing, the expanded designs, and the changed terminology in effect "repackaged" the chafing dish and created the false impression that it was a new product.<sup>8</sup>

The chafing dish histories food writers offered forth at the turn of the twentieth century eclipsed the late nineteenth-century

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<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Reed & Barton, Reed and Barton, Artistic Workers in Gold and Silverplate (Taunton, Mass.: The Company, 1884) 265, 351.

<sup>7</sup> Sydney Shepard & Co., Illustrated Catalogue of Goods Manufactured by Sydney Shepard & Co., Proprietors of the Buffalo Stamping Works (Buffalo: The Company, 1873), 50; The Troy Stamping Works, Granite Ironware, 20; Lalance and Grosjean Mfg. Co., Lalance and Grosjean, 114, 218; The Central Stamping Company, A Book Illustrating, 212; Agate Iron-Ware, Agate Iron Ware (N.Y.: Lalance and Grosjean Mfg. Co., ca. 1880). While the earliest mention that could find in trade catalogues to the oyster chafer was the 1873 Sydney Shepard catalogue (see above), an auction catalogue, Rowland R. Minturn & Co., Catalogue of Valuable Furniture (New York: Spear & Nesbitt, 1834), 5, lists "1 oyster Dish with Lamp."

<sup>8</sup> For example, Lalance & Grosjean, Lalance & Grosjean, 114, offered an agate iron-ware oyster chafing dish in 1885; Agate Iron-Ware, The Agate Cookbook (New York: Lalance & Grosjean, 1890), 6, advertised the "Sawtelle Agate Chafing Dish Outfit," which was quite similar to the earlier oyster chafing dish (even sharing the same type of burner), though it came with extra equipment and it was supposedly larger to especially accommodate Miss Sawtelle's chafing dish recipes.

range of food warmers, linking the post-1890 alcohol lamp chafing dish to ancient Greece and Rome, aristocratic and intellectual eighteenth-century Europe, and colonial America.<sup>9</sup> While this linkage served the critical rhetorical purpose of connecting the post-1890 chafing dish to the elite traditions of Western civilization, it was somewhat deceptive. Although alcohol lamp and hot water warming devices existed as least as far back as the eighteenth century, the term chafing dish was most firmly associated with the brazier form prior to the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup> The brazier chafing dish was indeed connected to upper-class culture, but other portable heating devices were promoted as economical.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Marion H. Neil, Salads, Sandwiches and Chafing Dish Recipes (Philadelphia: David McKay, Publ., 1916), 13; Janet McKenzie Hill, Salads, Sandwiches and Chafing-Dish Dainties, rev. ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1907), 151-2; Farmer, Chafing Dish Possibilities, 13-15; Frank Schloesser, The Cult of the Chafing Dish (London: Gay & Bird, 1905), 2nd ed., 3; Olive A. Cotton, Chafing Dish Recipes (New York: A. Mackel & Co., 1899), 1-3; H. M. Kinsley, One Hundred Recipes for the Chafing Dish (New York: Gorham Mfg. Co., 1894), 14-21; Walker Aken, "What You Can Do with the Chafing Dish," Harper's Bazar, 9 December 1899, 1052; Janet McKenzie Hill, "The Chafing-Dish," The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, December-January 1897-1898, 213.

<sup>10</sup> See Karen Hess, Martha Washington's Booke of Cookery, transcription with historical notes and annotations (N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1981), 22-4; Dr. A. H. T. Robb-Smith and Linda Campbell Franklin, "Conjurers, Necromancers, Braziers, Chafing Dishes, Woks & the Like," Kitchen Collectibles News 3 (November-December 1986): 85, 89; Dorothy T. Rainwater and H. Ivan Rainwater, American Silverplate (Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Inc. and Hanover, 1968), 288.

<sup>11</sup> See Robb-Smith and Campbell, "Conjurers," 86-91; Thomas Webster, Encyclopedia of Household Economy (N.Y.: Harper & Bros., 1845), 832-5.

There is little reason to doubt that the concept of cooking over a portable stove is ancient, and the use of the term chafing dish to refer to a brazier dates back to the fifteenth century.<sup>12</sup> According to culinary historian Karen Hess, the term chafing dish derives from the French "chauffer," meaning "to heat."<sup>13</sup> In her discussion of sixteenth and seventeenth century cookbooks, Hess notes that the term chafing dish signified a heating source--a dish of coals--and not a container in which food was cooked.<sup>14</sup> Chafing dishes were either small braziers of brass, wrought-iron, or copper, or large basins for coals set upon high tripods.<sup>15</sup> There is no evidence that either the small or the large chafing dishes were sold with matching cooking vessels. Contemporary paintings and manuscripts indicate that the small braziers were used with pairs of matched pewter or silver plates.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Robb-Smith and Campbell Franklin, "Conjurers," 89, offer a fifteenth century citation; Hess, Martha Washington's Booke, 22, traces the chafing-dish term back to the sixteenth century; Rainwater and Rainwater, American Silverplate, 288, also trace the term back to the sixteenth century.

<sup>13</sup> Hess, Martha Washington's Booke, 22.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Hess, Martha Washington's Booke, 22-4; Peter G. Rose, trans. and ed., The Sensible Cook: Dutch Foodways in the Old and the New World (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1989), 15, 17, 63; Robb-Smith and Campbell, "Conjurers," 85.

<sup>16</sup> Hess, Martha Washington's Booke 24; Robb-Smith and Campbell, "Conjurers," 90; Rose, Sensible Cook, 17, 63; Jane Carson, Colonial Virginia Cookery: Procedures, Equipment, and Ingredients in Colonial Cooking (Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg, 1968;

The brazier chafing dish was used both for warming or even cooking food at the table and for the kitchen preparation of dishes too delicate to be cooked in the hearth.<sup>17</sup> This understanding of the chafing dish as a kitchen tool as well as a service item persists in cookbooks until after the Civil War, when hearth cookery was no longer the norm in urban areas.<sup>18</sup>

Although chafing dishes appear in upper-class eighteenth and nineteenth-century American inventories, it is not clear to what degree the middle and the lower classes (outside of servants in wealthy households) were familiar with the form. William Woys Weaver contends that the chafing dish was exclusively an upper-class item in the eighteenth century, using this assumption to explain why the middle-class and the lower-class were unfamiliar with the sauces that the chafing dish made possible to prepare.<sup>19</sup> Some of the other portable cookers available in the eighteenth and early nineteenth

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Williamsburg, Va.: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1985), 34.

<sup>17</sup> Hess, Martha Washington's Booke, 24; Elisabeth Donaghy Garret, At Home: The American Family, 1750-1870 (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990), 81-2; Carson, Colonial Virginia Cookery, 34, 60; William Woys Weaver, "White Gravies in American Popular Diet," in Food In Change: Eating Habits from the Middle Ages to the Present Day, ed. Alexander Fenton and Eszter Kisba'n (Edinburgh: John McDonald, Publ., in association with the National Museums of Scotland, 1986), 46.

<sup>18</sup> Hess, Martha Washington's Booke, 24.

<sup>19</sup> Weaver, "White Gravies," 46-7.

century were also elite forms, such as the alcohol lamp heated, silver-plated teakettles and entree dishes.

At the same time, eighteenth and early nineteenth-century advertisers and cookbook authors championed certain portable cookers as boons to thrifty bachelors, travellers, and others living without complete kitchen facilities.<sup>20</sup> Cunning little devices of tin, such as dispatches, conjurers, and necromancers were advocated for their speedy and economical cooking of meals with a minimum of paper fuel.<sup>21</sup> An 1797 New York newspaper advertisement recommended the patent conjurer as a "cheaper and more expeditious way of cooking...than any before invented;" "It is very convenient for gentlemen in Chambers," the advertisement further notes, as well as being "particularly convenient for masters of vessels."<sup>22</sup> Alcohol fueled contraptions made of tin, such as the aetna, could be obtained from the mid-nineteenth century onward.<sup>23</sup> Describing the variety of available portable cooking devices, the 1845 Encyclopedia of Domestic Economy mentioned their usefulness "in an apartment where there is no regular fitting-up for this purpose, in traveling, in camps, at sea, at picknick parties, and similar cases which may easily be

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<sup>20</sup> Robb-Smith and Campbell, "Conjurers," 86-8.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Rita Susswein Gottesman, The Arts & Crafts in New York, 1777-1799 (New York: The New York Historical Society, 1965), 261.

<sup>23</sup> Webster, Encyclopedia, 835.

imagined."<sup>24</sup> Regardless of whether or not the middle class and poor actually used these gadgets, they were publicized through a rhetoric of economy that would later be applied to chafing dishes in the late nineteenth century.

The mid-nineteenth-century advertizing campaign in Britain for Soyer's Portable Magic Stove offered an even more exact precedent for marketing strategies of late nineteenth-century chafing dish manufacturers. Bramah and Prestage, the makers of Soyer's Portable Magic Stove, claimed that their alcohol fueled product was economical, but also cultivated an elite aura by through the endorsement of Alexis Soyer, the celebrated French chef of London's exclusive Reform Club.<sup>25</sup> In the 1849 London edition of Soyer's The Modern Housewife or Menagere, an advertisement by Messrs. Bramah and Prestage for Soyer's Portable Magic Stove trumpeted that it was "the most useful, ingenious, simple and economical cooking apparatus ever invented," which could have been used in the "parlor of the wealthy, the office of the merchant, the studio of the artist, or the attic of the humble."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> It is not clear to what degree Soyer actually had a hand in the invention of the device. See F. Volant and J. R. Warren, Jr., comp. and ed., Memoirs of Soyer (London: W. Kent & Co., 1859; Rottingdean, Sussex: Cooks Books, 1985), 156-62.

<sup>26</sup> Alexis Soyer, The Modern Housewife or Menagere (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1849), 443.

In 1850, the Morning Post enthusiastically predicted that the Magic Stove would "cause a complete revolution in cooking, and that every man becoming his own cook, no bachelor's chambers, no traveller, will be without it."<sup>27</sup> Soyer's Magic Stove may not have succeeded in popularizing table-cookery among the masses in America, but innovation in alcohol devices continued, and, by the late nineteenth century, trade catalogues and mail order catalogues showed a range of portable, alcohol fueled devices for use in the sick room, in the nursery, at camp, or on travels.<sup>28</sup>

By the 1870s, the term chafing dish is not associated with large kitchen or small tabletop braziers, but with hot water warmers or alcohol lamp heated dishes. Trade catalogue in the 1870s and 1880s identified entree dishes over lamps as chafing dishes, while household manuals of the 1880s more broadly defined chafing dishes as either dishes over alcohol lamps or as hot water warmers (see figs. 2-3, 5).<sup>29</sup> Household manuals recommended using the alcohol lamp

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<sup>27</sup> Volant and Warren, Memoirs, 159.

<sup>28</sup> Lalance & Grosjean Mfg. Co., Lalance & Grosjean, 34; The Central Stamping Co., A Book Illustrating, 122, 213; Montgomery Ward & Co., Catalogue and Price List No. 34 Fall Winter 1883 (Chicago: The Company, 1883), 154.

<sup>29</sup> Shepard, Sidney & Co., Illustrated Catalogue, 50; Edward D. Bassford, House Furnishing, Hardware, China, Glass, Cutlery and Silverware (New York: The Company, 1877), 17; Bramhall, Deane & Co., Manufacturers, 46; Lalance & Grosjean Mfg. Co., Lalance & Grosjean, 18-21, 114, 218; The Central Stamping Co., A Book Illustrating, 210-12; Henderson, Practical Cooking, 33, 60; Peltz, Housewife's Library, 290; Parloa, Miss Parloa's, 54.

chafing dish for keeping food warm or for cooking at the table, especially at breakfast or supper parties.<sup>30</sup>

Cookbooks of the 1870s and 1880s featured scattered references to chafing dish recipes, some specifying alcohol lamp devices.<sup>31</sup> Some recipes emphasized the chafing dish as a service utensil, noting its usefulness in bringing oysters, beefsteak, chicken, or rechauffes (reheated dishes) to the table piping hot.<sup>32</sup> Quite often, the recipes suggested using the chafing dish for the table-side preparation of terrapin, oysters, venison, and various rechauffes.<sup>33</sup> Though the chafing dish recipes were not set aside in their own section, they were mostly relishes (appetizers, hors-d'oeuvres, kickshaws) and entrees, or dishes which either

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<sup>30</sup> Henderson, Practical Cooking, 33, 264-5; Corson, Miss Corson's, 142, 153.

<sup>31</sup> Marion Harland, Common Sense in the Household: A Manual of Practical Housewifery (New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1874), 73-4, 89, 90, 94, 99-100; The Home Cook Book, compiled from recipes contributed by ladies of Chicago and other cities and towns: originally published for the benefit of the home for the friendless, Chicago, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Fred Waggoner, 1876), 77; Agate Iron-Ware, Agate Iron Ware (New York: Lalance & Grosjean, ca. 1880); Henderson, Practical Cooking, 115-116; Juliet Corson, Miss Corson's Practical American Cookery and Household Management (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1885), 283, 289, 293-4, 299-300; Parloa, Miss Parloa's, 219, 298-99; Mrs. B. C. Howard, Fifty Years in a Maryland Kitchen, 3rd edition (Baltimore: Turnbull Bros., 1877), 43, 74-5.

<sup>32</sup> Howard, Fifty Years, 74-5; Harland, Common Sense, 74, 79, 88-9, 90, 94, 112.

<sup>33</sup> The Home Cook Book, 77; Agate Iron-Ware, Agate Iron Ware; Henderson, Practical Cooking, 115-116; Corson, Miss Corson's, 283, 289, 293-4, 299-300; Parloa, Miss Parloa's, 219, 298-99; Howard, Fifty Years in a Maryland Kitchen, 43.

supplemented the main meat courses at a formal dinner or comprised the central refreshment at the more informal meals of breakfast, luncheon, supper, or tea.<sup>34</sup>

According to household manuals of the late nineteenth century, luncheons, breakfasts, suppers, and teas were appropriate occasions for less elaborate menus and service.<sup>35</sup> These relatively casual affairs offered a mode of entertaining less intimidating than the forbiddingly complex, expensive, and highly ritualized formal dinner.<sup>36</sup> The easygoing ambience of luncheons and suppers was considered especially appropriate to intimate gathering of all men or all women. While the luncheon party was considered an especially feminine meal, the supper party was associated with male

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<sup>34</sup> Susan Williams, Savory Suppers and Fashionable Feasts (New York: Pantheon Books, in association with the Strong Museum, 1985), 158, 162, 164, 175-176, 186-7, 191, 243; Corson, Miss Corson's, 33-40, 147, 153-4, 267.

<sup>35</sup> Corson, Miss Corson's, 142-3, 147, 150-4; Henderson, Practical Cooking, 33-40; Social Etiquette of New York, new and enlarged ed. (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1883), 69-71, 112-13, 117-18.

<sup>36</sup> For commentary on the rising popularity on informal entertainments, see Karen Halttunen, "From Parlor to Living Room: Domestic Space, Interior Decoration, and the Culture of Personality," in Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920 ed. Simon J. Bronner (New York: W. W. Norton, published for the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1989), 169; For descriptions of the formal dinner party, see Williams, Savory Suppers, 75-80; John F. Kasson, Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America (New York: Hill & Wang, 1990), 201-10; Harvey Levenstien, Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet (New York: Oxford University press, 1988), 16-20.

camaraderie.<sup>37</sup>

In the 1890s, cookbook authors claimed that bachelors pioneered the new usage of chafing dishes.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, the dishes associated in the 1880s and later with chafing dish cookery -- the venison in currant jelly sauce, the Welsh rarebit (or rabbit), the frizzled beef, the devilled specialties -- are recommended for the bachelor suppers:

The dishes suitable for a gentlemen's supper are hot and cold entrees, ... shellfish and game of all kinds, Welsh rarebits...devilled dishes.... Unless the occasion is some special one, all formality is dispensed with, the dishes being placed upon the table at the beginning of the supper, the hot ones over chafing dishes, and the attendant leaving the room after the first service.<sup>39</sup>

These bachelor or gentlemen's suppers anticipated, but are not to be confused with the chafing dish suppers popularized in the 1890s. As described by the 1880s household manuals, these upper-class late night feasts were multi-course undertakings, similar in ambience, perhaps, but not in content to the simpler feasts advocated in turn-of-the-century chafing dish cookbooks.<sup>40</sup>

The promotional campaign after 1890 was so massive that it

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<sup>37</sup> Social Etiquette of New York, 111, 117-18; Corson, Miss Corson's, 147, 152; Henderson, Practical Cooking, 36, 89.

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, Farmer, Chafing Dish Possibilities, 19.

<sup>39</sup> Corson, Miss Corson's, 153. Welsh rarebit, a dish of melted cheese and ale (or beer), is also known as Welsh rabbit.

<sup>40</sup> See, for example, Henderson, Practical Cooking, 40.

is hard to know to what degree the chafing dish cookery fashion sprang from a subculture of wealthy bachelors and to what degree it was fabricated. Regardless of whether they were responding to an existing fad among the elite or simply manipulating old conventions regarding tabletop cookery, chafing dish manufacturers and food writers of the 1890s greatly broadened the audience for chafing dish cookery. Through a complex promotional campaign involving cookbooks, magazines, popular literature, and advertisements, chafing dish manufacturers assiduously courted the middle class consumer and transformed an obscure, elite service utensil into a widely familiar, popular culture appliance. One manifestation of the new marketing strategy was the altered and expanded range of chafing dish designs.

**"SO MANY AND VARIED ARE THE STYLES OF CHAFING DISHES":<sup>41</sup>  
THE TRANSFORMATION OF CHAFING DISH DESIGN, 1870-1920**

"So many and varied are the styles of chafing dishes, one must be governed by his taste and the extent of his purse strings in making a selection," Fannie Farmer observed in 1909.<sup>42</sup> The great diversity of chafing dish designs, materials, and prices available between 1890 and 1920 indicated a chafing dish market both broadened and changed from that of the 1880s. While 1880s chafing dishes reflected an upper-class and institutional demand for service utensils, the 1890-1920 range of chafing dishes suggested an upper-

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<sup>41</sup> Farmer, Chafing Dish Possibilities, 20.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

class and a middle-class desire for entertainment appliances. The enormous range of chafing dish designs available between 1890 and 1920 not only reflected a new market, but suggested an increasingly complex and varied understanding of the chafing dish's cultural meaning.

Immediately prior to 1890, the chafing dish appeared in greatest variety in trade catalogues mainly directed at an institutional market.<sup>43</sup> Chafing dishes in these catalogues were offered in enamel on steel and planished tin.<sup>44</sup> These relatively inexpensive materials were fashioned in imitation of ornate silverplate entree dishes or made into plain utensils, without any decorative trim. The chafing dish components -- stand, lamp, hot water pan, dish, cover -- were sold together as a set or separately as interchangeable pieces, facilitating the replacement or substitution of parts within an institutional kitchen. The same chafing dish pan, for example, was offered with a high or a low cover. This versatility was more important than style, and the chafing dish was not offered in the broad range of patterns that

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<sup>43</sup> See for instance, The Central Stamping Co., A Book Illustrating, 210-12. These hotel ware catalogues featured the same type of planished tin chafing dishes after 1890, as in the case of Duparquet, Huot & Moneuse Co., Price List, Duparquet, Huot & Moneuse Co., to Accompany Our Pocket Edition Catalogue, 1892 (New York: The Company, 1892), 25.

<sup>44</sup> Bramhall, Deane & Co., Mfg. of Cooking, 46; Lalance & Grosjean, Lalance & Grosjean, 18-21, 114, 218; The Central Stamping Co., A Book Illustrating, 210-12.

silver-plated entree dishes came in. The chafing dish was offered in a range of large sizes -- 10" - 24" diameter -- particularly suited to keeping warm restaurant or hotel size quantities of food (see fig. 5).

The large size of these chafing dishes in proportion to their small spirit lamps suggest that these utensils were more practical for keeping food hot than for cookery. The oval or oblong versions were especially unsuited to cookery. The lamp was often obscured by a pierced band around the base, making it impossible to adjust the flame -- another block to use for cooking (see fig. 5). The oyster chafer had an exposed lamp and a small, round pan, which made it more suitable for cookery (see fig. 4).

Between 1890-1920, magazines and cookbooks widened middle-class familiarity with the term chafing dish and advanced consensus on the use of the term. Instead of including scattered references to the device, cookbooks devoted complete chapters or sections to the use of the chafing dish in the late 1890s.<sup>45</sup> Entire cookbooks

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<sup>45</sup> Fannie Merritt Farmer, The Boston Cooking-School Cook Book (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1896), 463-72; Hill, Salads, Sandwiches, 151-218; Mrs. Mary J. Lincoln, Mrs. Lincoln's Boston Cook Book (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1901), 507-11; Helen Cramp, The Institute Cook Book (Springfield, Mass.: E. A. Merriam, Publ., 1913), 461-70; Neil, Salads, Sandwiches, 17-67; Linda Hull Larned, The Hostess of To-Day (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 259-79; Mrs. Francis Carruthers, Twentieth Century Home Cook Book (Chicago: The Charles C. Thompson Co., 1906), 258-72; Christine Terhune Herrick, The Consolidated Library of Modern Cooking & Household Recipes (New York: R. J. Bodmer Co., 1905).

focused on the art of chafing dish cookery.<sup>46</sup> Magazines charted the fashion with numerous illustrated articles.<sup>47</sup> In all this new

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<sup>46</sup> H. L. Sawtelle, What One Can Do with a Chafing-Dish: A Guide for Amateur Cooks, 4th ed. (New York: John Ireland, 1892); Thomas J. Murrey, Good Things from a Chafing Dish (New York: Gorham Mfg. Co., 1890); Harriet P. Bailey, On the Chafing Dish: A Word for Sunday Night Tea (New York: G. W. Dillingham for Meriden Britannia Co., 1890); John C. Jewett Mfg. Co., The Jewett Chafing Dish: With a Collection of Recipes for the Chafing-Dish (Buffalo: The Company, 1892); S. Sternau & Co., Chafing Dish Recipes (New York: The Company, 1892); S. Sternau & Co., The Uses of the Chafing Dish (New York: The Company, 1897); Kinsley, One Hundred Recipes; Welsh, Bachelor; Cotton, Chafing Dish Recipes; Gesine Lemcke, Chafing-Dish Recipes (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1899); Manning, Bowman & Co., Recipes; Manning, Bowman & Co., Recipes for the Chafing Dish (Meriden, Conn.: The Company, ca. 1900); Frank Schloesser, The Cult of the Chafing Dish (London: Gay and Bird, 1905); Farmer, Chafing Dish Possibilities; Alice Laidlow Williams, Sunday Suppers: Being Fifty-Four Chafing-Dish Recipes, Old and New (New York: Duffield & Co., 1912); Alice L. James, The Chafing-Dish: Together with Directions for the Preparation of Sandwiches (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912); May E. Southworth, Midnight Feasts: Two Hundred & Two Salads and Chafing-Dish Recipes (San Francisco: Paul Elder & Co., 1914).

<sup>47</sup> Charlotte James Wills, "Chafing Dish Cookery," The Boston Cooking School Magazine, Spring 1897, 236-8; Deshler Welch, "The Connoisseurs of Poverty Flat," Cosmopolitan, April 1900, 661-6; Martha Cobb Sanford, "The Chafing-Dish and the College Girl," Woman's Home Companion, Vol. 31, April 1904, 12-3; Sarah Tyson Rorer, "Mrs. Rorer's Best 20 Summer Recipes," Ladies Home Journal, August 1904, 28; Sarah Tyson Rorer, "The Chafing Dish for Impromptu Affairs," Ladies Home Journal, November 1905, 64; Sarah Tyson Rorer, "The Chafing Dish," Good Housekeeping, August 1914, 272-4; "Novelties in Chafing Dish Cookery," Harper's Bazar, 20 January 1900, 51; Helena Judson, "Novel Uses for the Chafing-Dish," The Delineator, August 1909, 137; Rosamund Lampman, "Chafing-Dish Suppers," Harper's Bazar, February 1910, 37; Rosamund Lampman, "Chafing-Dish Receipts," Harper's Bazar, March 1911, 125; Christine Terhune Herrick, "Chafing Dish Creations," Harper's Bazar, December 1905, 1160-3; Grenier, "Chafing Dish Suppers"; Josephine Grenier, "With a Chafing Dish," Harper's Bazar, March 1909, 284-6; Aken, "What You Can Do,"; Harriet Blogg, "The Dainties at College Girls' Spreads: How They Prepare Them: As Told by the College Girls Themselves," Ladies Home Journal, September 1907, 31; Hill, "Chafing

material there was a general agreement on what a chafing dish was: the term chafing dish referred to a tabletop cooker that resembled in form what had been known as the oyster chafer, oyster dish with lamp, oyster chafing dish, or oyster dish on stand (see figs. 4, 6).

When the oyster chafer of the 1880s became the chafing dish of the 1890s, the chafing dish began being carried by silver-plate, nickel-plate, and copper manufacturers as well as by graniteware and tinware manufacturers.<sup>48</sup> The chafing dish appeared in trade catalogues aimed at the private family market and made its way into mail order catalogues and magazine advertisements (see fig. 7).<sup>49</sup>

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Dish."

<sup>48</sup> Manning, Bowman & Co., Recipes for the Chafing Dish (Meriden, Conn.: The Company, ca. 1900); Rochester Stamping Co., Chafing Dishes. Catalogue "B" (N.Y.: The Company, ca. 1900); Kinsley, One Hundred Recipes; Bailey, On the Chafing Dish; John C. Jewett Mfg. Co., The Jewett Chafing Dish; Rochester Stamping Co., Catalogue of High-Grade Metal Specialties (Rochester, N.Y.: The Company, 1899), 19; S. Sternau & Co., Catalogue 25 (Brooklyn, N.Y.: The Company, 1912); S. Sternau & Co., S. Sternau & Co., Makers of Sternauware Catalogue 1909 (N.Y.: The Company, 1909); General Electric Co., Electrically Heated Household Appliances (New York: The Company, 1910), 15; General Electric Co., Electric Heating & Cooking Appliances: Their Application to Home, Office, and Factory (New York: The Company, 1912), 9, 18-19; Reed & Barton Co., General Catalogue (in 4th div.) Sterling Holloware, 3rd div. (Taunton, Mass.: The Company, 1910), 114; Reed & Barton Co., Silversmiths, Jewelers, Diamond Merchants (N.Y.: The Company, ca. 1910), 87; Rochester Stamping Co., Catalogue "L" (Rochester, N.Y.: The Company, ca. 1911); Lander, Frary & Clark, Universal Electrical Home Needs Catalogue 58 (New Britain, Conn.: The Company, 1917), 19-22.

<sup>49</sup> Sears & Roebuck Co., Consumer's Guide, Fall 1900. Reprint edition (Northfield, Ill.: DBI Books, 1970), 158; Sears & Roebuck Co., The 1902 Edition of the Sears and Roebuck Catalogue. Reprint edition with introduction by Cleveland Amory (New York: Bounty Books, 1969) 114; Ludwig Bauman & Co., section No. 5 Catalogue, Complete

The use of the term chafing dish within trade catalogues and the type of trade catalogues that began carrying the chafing dish in the 1890s also reflect the intensified popularity and the changed understanding of the form. The term chafing dish appeared with greatest frequency in tin and agate ware catalogues in the 1880s, where the utensil was offered in large sizes -- 10'' to 24" diameter -- and in components that could be purchased separately or together for the convenience of an institutional trade.<sup>50</sup> The smallest version, the one model meant for cookery rather than warming, the oyster chafer, usually came in one, fairly plain style per catalogue.<sup>51</sup>

In the 1890s, silver-plate and nickel-plate catalogues began featuring the chafing dish in a variety of high-style designs, reflecting its new popularity for display and use in upper and middle-class homes.<sup>52</sup> The chafing dish was offered in both

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House Furnishers (N.Y.: The Company, 1895), 42, 44; Montgomery Ward & Co., Catalogue No. 57, Spring & Summer, 1895. Reprint with an introduction by Boris Emmet (New York: Dover Publ., 1969), 428; Jordan, Marsh & Co., Fall and Winter 1895-6, Price List and Catalogue (Boston: The Company, 1895), 218; John Wanamaker, Goods & Prices, 146; Gimbel Bros., The Household Catalogue (New York: The Company, ca. 1900).

<sup>50</sup> See, for instance, Lalance & Grosjean, Mfg., Lalance and Grosjean, 18-21;

<sup>51</sup> See, for instance, Lalance & Grosjean Mfg. Co., Lalance & Grosjean, 114, 218.

<sup>52</sup> See for instance, Reed & Barton, Sterling Holloware, 114.

exorbitant as well as relatively inexpensive models, allowing full middle class participation in a hierarchy of conspicuous consumption.<sup>53</sup>

The chafing dish hierarchy of form was based most broadly on material. Silver-plate was the most expensive material, followed by a middle category of nickel-plate and copper.<sup>54</sup> Tin and Agate Ware, highly popular materials for chafing dishes in the 1870s and 1880s, were the least expensive materials.<sup>55</sup> Chafing dishes in the middle category of nickel-plate and copper were offered for a cheaper price when equipped with a wrought-iron stand (see fig. 6).

Factors such as ornamentation, size, and supplementary equipment boosted or lowered expense, sometimes even edging a chafing dish of one type of material into the price range of costlier or of cheaper materials. Elaboration of ornament was one means of increasing price, and it usually focused upon the knees of the stand

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<sup>53</sup> As an example of the chafing dish price range, in 1895, John Wanamaker, Goods & Prices, 146, offered chafing dishes in tin for \$.65, in Agate Ware for \$ 1.75, and in nickel-plate for \$ 2.00 - 3.75; In 1910, General Electric Co., Electrically, 15, offered an aluminum electric chafing dish for \$ 14.00; In 1910, Reed & Barton, Silversmiths, 87, offered silver-plated chafing dishes for \$ 15.50 - 400.00; In 1912, S. Sternau & Co., Catalogue 25, 66, offered a nickel-plated chafing dish for \$5.65.

<sup>54</sup> See Farmer, Chafing Dish Possibilities, 20; Farmer, Boston Cooking-School, 463.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

legs, upon the rim of the dish, and upon the lid and dish handles.<sup>56</sup> A pair of handles on the water pan, a tray for the stand, and an "improved" burners were practical features that also could increase the cost of a chafing dish.<sup>57</sup> Providing a size smaller than the usual two or three pint capacity or eliminating the water pan were ways of cutting expenses.<sup>58</sup>

Though the chafing dish was sometimes offered in an oval form most suited for food warming, overwhelmingly the catalogues featured an oyster-chafer-like device meant for cookery. Offered in small to smaller sizes -- three pints to one half pint -- this utensil was not practical for keeping entrees warm for large crowds. Manufacturers stressed the chafing dish's use for table-side cookery by offering the chafing dish in sets, or with supplementary equipment (see fig. 8). Consumers could upgrade their chafing dish by adding matching fork and spoon serving pieces, or by supplementing the cooking blazer with a cutlet pan or a toaster. Devotees of the hot cheese concoction could acquire Rochester Stamping Company's Welsh rarebit set (see fig.9).

The largest nickel-plated sets cost as much as more simply

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<sup>56</sup> For an example of the way in which design was manipulated in regards to cost, see Rochester Stamping Co., Chafing Dishes, esp. 14-15, 20-1, 26-7, 34-7, 40-3.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Rochester Stamping Co., Chafing Dishes, 14-5, 20-1; S. Sternau & Co., S. Sternau & Co., Makers of Sternauware, 51.

equipped silver-plated models, indicating that the many different styles of chafing dishes available not only reflected a hierarchy within a broad market, but divergence within the market over whether that hierarchy was most appropriately focused around display or function. Consumers could choose to spend more money on appearance, ordering stag-horn handles instead of wood, or they could focus upon practical features, such as handles on the hot water pan. Silver-plate catalogues, focused upon the display function, offering a much smaller range of matching equipment than did Sternau catalogues, which featured a wide range of alcohol burning devices in copper and nickel-plate.<sup>59</sup>

This tension between practicality and aesthetics also came into play in the choice of heating device. The more expensive chafing dishes came with better ventilated, more powerful alcohol lamps. To accommodate the consumer who wished to use the chafing dish for serious cooking, chafing dish manufacturers also offered gas jet lamps and alcohol stoves (see fig. 10).<sup>60</sup> By far the most expensive copper or nickel-plate chafing dishes were the electric models. Available as early as the 1890s, the electric chafing dish

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<sup>59</sup> See for example, Reed & Barton, Illustrated Catalogue, 87; S. Sternau & Co., S. Sternau & Co..

<sup>60</sup> See, for example, Manning, Bowman & Co., Recipes, 32; Rochester Stamping Co., Catalogue "L", 41.

became widely marketed after 1900 (see fig. 11).<sup>61</sup> Though lauded as safer than alcohol lamp chafing dishes, the electric chafing dish did not necessarily represent a more pragmatic choice, especially given the uncertainties of early electricity and its unavailability in rural areas.<sup>62</sup>

In some ways, the functional and the display values are difficult to separate. The idea of a matched set is an aesthetic idea as well as a pragmatic concept. Moreover, even the plainest chafing dish in the humblest materials gestured toward the value of display through a form that echoed long-handled colonial braziers and Victorian silver service more than contemporary kitchenware. Demonstrating that manufacturers did not necessarily see function in opposition to display, Sternau offered ornate baroque chafing dishes with powerful, chunky alcohol stoves as well as with delicate alcohol lamp stands (see fig. 10). Indeed, function could be ostentatious, as with the Yacht Chafing Dish, engineered to swing with the waves.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Maud Lancaster, Electric Cooking, Heating, and Cleaning: A Manual of Electricity in the Service of the Home, American ed., rev. by Stephen L. Coles (New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1914), 52, cites display of electric chafing dish at 1891 Crystal Palace Exhibition.

<sup>62</sup> For an example of an article that lauds the safety of electric chafing dishes see, Carmelita Beckwith, "Cooking by Electricity," The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, August-September 1899, 61.

<sup>63</sup> Kinsley, One Hundred Recipes, 85.

The range of chafing dish design also responded to changing aesthetics regarding display. While ornate, baroque chafing dishes appealed to late nineteenth-century taste for ostentatious show, the chafing dish also became an emblem of trends toward greater simplicity in interior decoration and lifestyle. Stickley sold a special chafing dish stand, while The Craftsman and Louise Brigham's Box Furniture offered instructions for making chafing dish furniture.<sup>64</sup> By the early 1900s, Sternau was offering chafing dishes in both baroque and "Mission" styles (see fig. 12).

Even while encouraging heightened awareness and agreement on the meaning of the term chafing dish, the promotional literature also indicates that the utensil could be interpreted in diverse ways. As will be discussed later, the different groups promoting the chafing dish had different objectives and values. Readers were faced with uncoordinated and contradictory messages about the chafing dish: the chafing dish was a practical gadget for a quick wash day supper; the chafing dish was recherche, upper-class; the chafing dish was associated with the amateur bachelor cook; the chafing dish was a feminine, domestic pleasure. The tremendous variety of chafing dishes produced in this period not only testify to an expanded market, but indicate the chafing dish's multiple meanings.

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<sup>64</sup> L. & J.G. Stickley, The Work of L. & J.G. Stickley, Fayetteville, New York (Syracuse: The Company, n.d.), 13; From the Craftsman Workshop, The Craftsman June 1908, 322-6; Louise Brigham, Box Furniture: How to Make a Hundred Useful Articles for the Home (N.Y.: The Century Co., 1910), 168-70.

"THE MERE SIGHT IS ENOUGH TO... LURE THE DOLLARS":<sup>65</sup>  
 THE PROMOTION OF THE CHAFING DISH, 1890-1920

The demand for the vast array of chafing dishes flooding the market in the 1890s was in no way spontaneous but, instead, the fruit of coordinated promotion on the part of retailers, metal-goods manufacturers, convenience food manufacturers, domestic scientists, food writers, and mass-market magazines. These groups introduced a minority group fashion to the middle-class and helped enshrine the chafing dish as an icon of popular culture for thirty years. In order to understand why chafing dish manufacturers received so much assistance from magazines, domestic scientist experts, and even manufacturers of other products, one must understand the relationship between these groups and their individual goals within a changing marketplace.

By the late nineteenth century, the industrial development that made possible the mass manufacture of goods such as chafing dishes had led to a commodity production capacity that outstripped consumer demand.<sup>66</sup> The task set before manufacturers and retailers

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<sup>65</sup> James, The Chafing-Dish (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1912), 4.

<sup>66</sup> William Leach, "Strategists of Display and the Production of Desire," in Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920, ed. Simon J. Bronner (New York: W. W. Norton & Co. in association with the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1989), 100.

was to find new ways to increase consumer demand for goods and more efficient ways of bringing these goods to the public.<sup>67</sup> Exploiting the new leisure ethic and culture of personality, corporations launched campaigns in which they claimed their products to be necessary to a more socially rewarding lifestyle.<sup>68</sup>

Claiming to be responding to a pre-existing high society fashion, chafing dish manufacturers connected their product to an image of upper-class leisure. To foster this elite mystique, manufacturers commissioned cookbooks that initiated consumers into the intricacies of chafing dish cookery with recipes for fancy dishes culled from restaurants, hotels, clubs, caterers, and bon-vivants.<sup>69</sup> The cookbooks frequently contained illustrations of various chafing dish models as well as depictions of this utensil in use by elegantly dressed couples in well appointed interiors.<sup>70</sup> Given to chafing dish purchasers or sold separately, the cookbooks served as catalogues, as

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<sup>67</sup> Leach, "Strategists of Display," 101; For a complete discussion of the ways in which manufacturers developed new products and new methods for bringing these products to consumers see, Susan Strasser, Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989).

<sup>68</sup> Leach, "Strategists of Desire," 101; T. J. Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization: Advertising and the Therapeutic Roots of the Consumer Culture, 1880-1930," in The Culture of Consumption, ed. Richard Wrightman Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 3-38.

<sup>69</sup> See especially, Murrey, Good Things; Kinsley, One Hundred Recipes.

<sup>70</sup> See for example, S. Sternau & Co., Uses of the Chafing Dish.

recipe books, and as guidebooks to cosmopolitan camaraderie.

Manufacturer attempts to create an image for the chafing dish were mediated by promotional strategies at the retail level. The late nineteenth-century phenomenon of mail-order catalogues, for example, enhanced manufacturers' efforts by similarly appealing to a national audience.<sup>71</sup> Another product of the late nineteenth century, department stores, created a fantasy-like ambience that not only unleashed consumer desire, but encouraged the notion that consumption was a means to a fuller life.<sup>72</sup> This effect was most obvious with the largest department stores, which had palatial, exotic, theatrical interiors where a large variety of goods were tantalizingly arrayed.<sup>73</sup> "With the inviting and ever increasing array of chafing-dishes on view, at the many department stores," Alice James observed, "the marvel is that anybody can pass a table whereon they are displayed in resplendent rows, without stopping long to admire the ensnaring beauty spread out in such profusion."<sup>74</sup> Indeed, she went on, the "mere sight is enough to make one yearn for possession and to

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<sup>71</sup> Thomas J. Schlereth, "Country Stores, County Fairs, and Mail-Order Catalogues: Consumption in Rural America," in Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920, ed. Simon J. Bronner (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., for the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1989), 364-75; Strasser, Satisfaction Guaranteed, 212-14.

<sup>72</sup> Leach, "Strategists," 99-132.

<sup>73</sup> Leach, "Strategists," 111-27; Strasser, Satisfaction Guaranteed, 207-11.

<sup>74</sup> James, Chafing-Dish, 3-4.

lure the dollars from one's purse."<sup>75</sup>

Despite the participation of department stores and mail-order catalogues in a national consumer culture, consumers were regionally affected by retail promotion.<sup>76</sup> Rural consumers were likely to be more dependent upon catalogues than urbanites for access to chafing dishes.<sup>77</sup> Residents of large cities and surrounding suburbs could shop at the most lavish department stores, while citizens of smaller cities and isolated towns experienced department store shopping on a different, probably more intimate and subdued scale. Big city shoppers were probably subject to the greatest pressure to purchase chafing dishes, since the largest of department stores not only had highly seductive and sophisticated displays, but also a temptingly large variety of designs and prices categories.<sup>78</sup> Rural customers viewed a much smaller range of chafing dishes through the possibly less tempting medium of print.

While retailers shaped the degree and the nature of consumer access to chafing dishes, manufacturers were not dependent on retailers for bringing the chafing dish image to a national audience.

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<sup>75</sup> James, Chafing-Dish, 4.

<sup>76</sup> Strasser, Satisfaction Guaranteed, 211-12.

<sup>77</sup> Strasser, Satisfaction Guaranteed, 211-12; Schlereth, "Country Stores," 364-75.

<sup>78</sup> For a contemporary description of the seductiveness of department store displays, see James, Chafing-Dish, 3-4.

By the mid-1890s domestic scientists had seen the potential of the chafing dish for the practical housewife and played an instrumental role in promoting the utensil among the middle-class.<sup>79</sup> As Laura Shapiro has explored in depth in Perfection Salad, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, domestic scientists (later known as home economists) cooperated with manufacturers, endorsing their products, in exchange for recognition as experts and for respect within the male world of business.<sup>80</sup> The larger goal of the domestic scientists was to rationalize housework in order to win recognition for homemaking as a profession.<sup>81</sup> The influence domestic scientists secured in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was enormous, and manufacturers had much to gain from their assistance.<sup>82</sup>

The domestic scientists were particularly enthusiastic over the chafing dish because its image could be manipulated to address their own concerns.<sup>83</sup> Proponents of domesticity had been long troubled by widespread feminine distaste for housework as drudgery.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Laura Shapiro, Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1986), 103-4.

<sup>80</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 192.

<sup>81</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 9.

<sup>82</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 191-204.

<sup>83</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 103-4.

<sup>84</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 29.

In a society that valued conspicuous leisure as proof of elite status, domestic scientist had an uphill battle to prove that housework was not intrinsically a lower-class chore.<sup>85</sup>

Chafing dish cookery captured the essence of the domestic scientist message: cookery could be dainty, easy, and upper class.<sup>86</sup> The housekeeper could neatly and quickly prepare food outside the kitchen in a utensil that was as elegant as a tea set -- with or without the assistance of a maid. This image particularly appealed to cookery instructor Sarah Tyson Rorer, and she mentioned it and used it frequently in her many lectures.<sup>87</sup> Newspaper accounts of her lectures brought the chafing dish to a very wide audience.<sup>88</sup>

Lectures and newspaper accounts of the same were but two of the venues through which domestic scientists reached a broad audience. The Boston Cooking-School serves an example of the many ways just one institution could reach an audience. The school took the chafing dish as its symbol, its official school pin depicting a small chafing dish.<sup>89</sup> The head of the school, Fannie Farmer, added a

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<sup>85</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 104-5.

<sup>86</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 103-4.

<sup>87</sup> Emma Seifert Weigley, Sarah Tyson Rorer: The Nation's Instructress in Dietetics and Cookery (Philadelphia.: The American Philosophical Society, 1977), 73, 132-3.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 104.

chapter on chafing dish cookery to her extremely popular all-purpose tome, The Boston Cooking-School Cookbook; Fannie Farmer and another member of the school faculty, Janet McKenzie Hill, each authored cookbooks on chafing dish cookery.<sup>90</sup> The magazine produced under the direction of the school contained articles on chafing dish cookery, weekly menus with recipes prominently featuring chafing dish meals, advertisements for chafing dishes, advertisements for courses of instruction in chafing dish cookery, advertisements for chafing dish cookbooks, and advertisements for food featuring or mentioning chafing dishes; the magazine also offered a chafing dish as a premium for a certain number of magazine subscriptions.<sup>91</sup> The prominence of the Boston Cooking-School possibly was partial inspiration for the vast number of other articles, chapters, books, and courses on chafing dish cookery that appeared between 1895-1920.

Because the chafing dish was ideal for already prepared ingredients, the chafing dish also appealed to manufacturers of

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<sup>90</sup> Farmer, Boston Cooking-School; Farmer, Chafing Dish Possibilities; Hill, Salads, Sandwiches.

<sup>91</sup> Charlotte James Wills, "Chafing Dish Cookery," The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, Spring 1897, 236-8; "Seasonable Menus for a Week in June," The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, June 1896, 35; Aluminum Dist. Co., Aluminum Dist. Co. Advertisement, The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, Winter 1896-1897, 175; Boston Cooking-School Notice of Chafing Dish Lessons, The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, Spring 1897, 252; Boston Cooking-School Cookbooks Advertisement, The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, December 1906, vii; Lea & Perrins, Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce Advertisement for Lea & Perrins, The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, December 1906, xvii; Boston Cooking-School Chafing Dish Premium Advertisement, The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, February 1907, xxvii.

canned goods and bottled sauces, spices, and condiments. The chafing dish appeared or was mentioned in advertisements for such products (see figs. 13-4). The chafing dish connected convenience with elegance and epicureanism. In an advertisement for Armours Extract of Beef extract that ran in Ladies Home Journal, readers were advised to use the product in chafing dish cookery.<sup>92</sup> The chafing dish itself was praised and readers were offered cookbook on its use as a premium.<sup>93</sup> Some chafing dish cookbooks returned this type of favor by specifying the use of particular brands of beef extracts or other prepared products.<sup>94</sup>

The pragmatic, timely, upbeat orientation of the mass-market magazines of the late nineteenth century fostered a supportive editorial climate for introducing middle-class readers to the chafing dish.<sup>95</sup> Just as the domestic scientists sought a reputation as

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<sup>92</sup> Armours, Armours Extract of Beef Advertisement, Ladies Home Journal, January 1904, 20; Armours, Armours Extract of Beef Advertisement, Ladies Home Journal, March 1904, 30.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> For example, Sawtelle, What One Can Do, specifies Agate Chafing Dishes, recommends Johnston's Fluid Beef Extract, calls for Cerealine Flakes, specifies Libby, McNeil & Libby's ox tongues, advocates Warren's Prunes, and praises Health Food Company's Wheatena, 3, 10, 23, 38, 75, 76.

<sup>95</sup> The foregoing discussion on mass market magazines is based upon, Christopher P. Wilson, "The Rhetoric of Consumption: Mass-Market Magazines and the Demise of the Gentle Reader, 1880-1920," The Culture of Consumption: Essays in American History, 1880-1920, ed. Richard Wrightman Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 44-64.

experts on housekeeping, mass-market magazines courted reader loyalty by cultivating an image as intimate and reliable advisor on current events, fashion, and consumer trends. Just as advertising created consumers who sought self-realization through goods and saw it always just a commodity away, mass-market magazines cultivated a readership that equated enlightenment with being up-to-date and saw it always just an issue away. The chafing dish was just the type of article mass-market magazines wished to give exposure: it promised fashion, function, and social intimacy.

The mass-market magazines that proliferated after 1883 -- general publications as well as women's cookery and housekeeping magazines -- offered a range of opportunities for promoting the chafing dish. In any given issues, the reader was potentially subject to a multi-layer appeal: In addition to advertisements and recipes, magazines offered articles on new chafing dish designs, fiction and non-fiction accounts mentioning chafing dish use, answers to reader queries on chafing dish cookery, and poetry dedicated to the chafing dish.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Grenier, "Chafing Dish Suppers"; Sanford, "The Chafing-Dish and the College Girl"; Blogg, "The Dainties at College Girls' Spreads"; Isabel Gordon Curtis, "Light Housekeeping," Good Housekeeping, January 1905, 3-8; John Kendrick Bangs, "A Chafing-Dish Party," Harper's Bazar, December 1896, 159-66; "Query No. 91," Boston Cooking-School Magazine, April-May 1898, 372; Anna Taylor Burbank, "To My Mistress," Good Housekeeping, January 1911, 11; Augusta L. Hanchett, "The Chafing-Dish," Boston Cooking-School Magazine, December-August 1898-9, 192.

The chafing dish had such broad appeal that mention of it was not restricted to magazines and books directed at women. Not all readers had access to the same magazines and books, meaning that certain segments of the population would be influenced indirectly, if at all, by certain material. For example, an article by Deshler Welch in Cosmopolitan gave the bohemian, bachelor interpretation to an educated male and female middle-class audience, while an article in Woman's Home Companion on college girl chafing dish frolics reached a mostly, if not exclusively, female middle-class audience.<sup>97</sup>

The model of chafing dish cookery as presented in advertisements, cookbooks, magazine articles, cooking demonstrations, and catalogues did not necessarily mirror or inspire identical practice: the promotional material itself indicates that the chafing dish entered popular culture in a more complex manner than a simple one-to-one relationship between marketing and consumption. The commercial chafing dish image was not generated in a monolithic fashion; created by groups with related, but different interests, the chafing dish image was composed of sets of often contradictory ideas that consumers could choose among, recombine, and differently reconcile. Just as the chafing dish was produced in response to a fashion, its image continued to be influenced by consumers, and not

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<sup>97</sup> Deshler Welch, "The Connoisseurs of Poverty Flat," Cosmopolitan, April 1900, 661-6; Sanford, "Chafing-Dish."

all mention of chafing dishes reflected the opinions of manufacturers and domestic scientists.

Between 1890 and 1920 the chafing dish gained appeal as a popular cultural symbol, appearing in advertisements for convenience foods, on sheet music, and in illustrations for young women's fiction.<sup>98</sup> To find out why and how such images were distributed, we must look beyond the need for commercial profit and ask how the image of the chafing dish spoke to widespread cultural themes.

**"IT SEEMS THE TRUE SYMBOL OF GOOD FELLOWSHIP":<sup>99</sup>  
THE IMAGE OF THE CHAFING DISH, 1890-1920**

The promotional material for the chafing dish generated not one image, but several image clusters that consumers could combine and recombine within the limitations of ongoing and emergent social discourses. The seemingly incompatible associations of the chafing dish with bachelor fraternity and with feminine domesticity obtain cultural significance in relation to each other through a discourse on gender, class, and cuisine. This discourse encompasses a set of interwoven opposition -- formal/informal, ostentatious/homey, public

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<sup>98</sup> See, for example, Bubbling Over, John William Kellette, composer (N.Y.: Jos. W. Stern Co., 1919), Hobgood Collection; Amy Bell Marlowe The Girls of Rivercliff School, or Beth Baldwin's Resolve (N.Y.: Grosset & Dunlap, 1916), Frontispiece.

<sup>99</sup> Kinsley, One Hundred Recipes for the Chafing Dish, 22.

leisure/domestic repose, male/female -- which represent both tensions over conflicting values within nineteenth-century society and a shift to twentieth-century ideals.

Scholars have noted that the 1890-1920 (or, more broadly, 1880-1930) period was one of transition between a cultural focus on production, character, ritual, and gender segregation to an emphasis on consumption, personality, authenticity, and gender mutuality.<sup>100</sup> While ceremonious parlors, formal calling, and elaborate entertaining persisted through to the twentieth century, a challenge emerged between 1890 and 1920 in the form of the dating system, movies, automobiles, telephones, open plan houses with living rooms, and increased middle-class female access to public places of entertainment.<sup>101</sup> The value clashes imbedded in this shift were not completely new, but echoed earlier nineteenth-century conflicts, such as that between sincerity and artifice, and comfort and display.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Halttunen, "From Parlor to Living Room," 157-89; Lewis A. Erenburg, Steppin' Out: New York Nightlife and the Transformation of American Culture, 1890-1930, Contributions in American Studies, no. 50 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981), xiv; Lears, "Salvation to Self-Realization"; Beth L. Bailey, From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 13-76.

<sup>101</sup> See Halttunen, "From Parlor;" Erenburg, Steppin' Out; Bailey, Front Porch, 7, 13-25; Katherine C. Grier, Culture & Comfort: People, Parlors, and Upholstery, 1850-1930 (Rochester, N.Y.: The Strong Museum, distributed by the University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 287-300.

<sup>102</sup> See Grier, Culture & Comfort, 96-102.

When the chafing dish first became popular in the 1890s, upper and middle-class men and women still occupied their separate nineteenth-century spheres, with their very different leisure worlds.<sup>103</sup> The nineteenth-century world was divided into a private domestic sphere of morality, nurture, and comfort presided over by women, and a public sphere of production, competition, and vice controlled by men.<sup>104</sup> At home, women controlled a social world based on the rituals of social calls and private entertainments.<sup>105</sup> Men controlled the public leisure realm of hotels, restaurants, theaters, saloons, and clubs.<sup>106</sup> While the chafing dish was recommended as a home entertainment, it was associated with bachelors, clubs, theaters, and restaurants. In promoting the chafing dish supper, manufacturers, domestic scientists, and other chafing dish devotees reframed home-based socializing in term of male leisure values. In order to consider the significance of this focus, it is necessary to more closely examine the male leisure world.

Clubs, in particular, were seen as a male alternative to

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<sup>103</sup> See Erenburg, Steppin' Out, 5-25.

<sup>104</sup> Erenburg, Steppin' Out, 5-25; for a more complete discussion of the cult of domesticity, see Glenna Matthews, "Just a Housewife:" The Rise and Fall of Domesticity in America (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1987), especially 74-85 for her discussion of male rebellion against domesticity.

<sup>105</sup> Bailey, Front Porch, 13-24; Erenburg, Steppin' Out, 5-25.

<sup>106</sup> Erenburg, Steppin' Out, 5-25.

feminine domesticity.<sup>107</sup> Often exclusive retreats, clubs were second (and sometimes only) homes for upper and middle-class men, complete with sleeping quarters, bedrooms, and libraries.<sup>108</sup> Men could discuss business, but these establishments offered the equally important opportunity to display and acquire status through a particular mode of relaxation. The upwardly mobile man needed to demonstrate that he knew how to enjoy wealth, that he was an insider to the secrets of the good life.<sup>109</sup> To this end, a man might present himself as a connoisseur of fine wine, superior or exotic cuisine, costly goods, and the best mode of travel.<sup>110</sup>

If clubs represented an ideal of all male bonhomie, restaurants and theaters conjured images of men and women together, socializing away from the home and its associated code of propriety.<sup>111</sup> Attending the theater or going to a restaurant, a woman was in male territory, no longer courting or socializing within her own sphere of control.<sup>112</sup> For women in the late nineteenth

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<sup>107</sup> See, for example, G. S. Crawford, "Club Life Versus Home Life," The Arena, August 1896, 418-31; Lyman A. Phillips, A Bachelor's Cupboard: Containing Crumbs Culled from the Cupboards of the Great Unwedded (Boston: John W. Luce & Co., 1906), 4; John Timbs, Clubs & Club Life in London (London: Chatto & Windus, 1872).

<sup>108</sup> See Crawford, "Club Life."

<sup>109</sup> See especially, Phillips, Bachelor's Cupboard, 1-6.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Erenburg, Steppin' Out, 33-56.

<sup>112</sup> Bailey, Front Porch, 20.

century, a visit to a restaurant or theater offered a glimpse into a world of masculine power, self-indulgence, and open sensuality.<sup>113</sup>

This risqué' aura of sex and power found ultimate expression in the sumptuous restaurants along Broadway, the lobster palaces, which were popular meeting places for after theater suppers at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>114</sup> "In the lobster palaces of Broadway," Lewis Erenberg writes, "what was important was money and the gratification it could buy, not disciplined self-denial."<sup>115</sup> In the fantastical, opulent settings of these restaurants, "patrons played at... being big men and women, creatures of will and appetite... removed from the constraints of time, place, and circumstance," Erenberg writes; "They could buy anything they wanted."<sup>116</sup>

Of all men, bachelors were seen as the ultimate connoisseurs of the public leisure world because, unlike married men, they were not even partly constrained by home life.<sup>117</sup> Even wealthy bachelors

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<sup>113</sup> Erenberg, Steppin' Out, 33-55.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Erenberg, Steppin' Out, 42.

<sup>116</sup> Erenberg, Steppin' Out, 51.

<sup>117</sup> For a discussion of "bachelor books" as part of a male fantasy of rebellion against domesticity, see, Matthews, "Just a Housewife", 85; see also, Phillips, Bachelor's Cupboard; Schloesser, Cult; Deshler Welch, The Bachelor and the Chafing Dish: With a Dissertation on Chums (N.Y.: F. Tennyson Neely, 1895); Alden, Mrs.

were not expected to maintain a large household with servants, and so were free from the obligation to hold entertainments at home.<sup>118</sup> To repay social debts, an upper class bachelor might hold a theater party, which involved taking guests to the theater and then afterwards to a restaurant for supper.<sup>119</sup> Social Etiquette of New York prophesied in 1878 that as "club life among gentlemen tends more and more to postpone marriage, this method of entertaining is likely to increase in our city."<sup>120</sup>

Etiquette books of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century continued to present theater parties as the special resort of single men. The bachelor theater party was expected to be somewhat unconventional, quite informal, and very gay. As Walter Germain Robinson expressed it in 1909, "Bachelor entertainments are supposed to be more or less out of the ordinary rut."<sup>121</sup> The chafing dish

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Cynthia Westover, et al., Correct Social Usage: A Course of Instruction in Good Form, Style, and Deportment by Eighteen Distinguished Authors, 12th rev. ed. (N.Y.: The New York Society for Self-Culture, 1909), 582-92; Social Etiquette of New York, 119-25; A Woman of Fashion, Etiquette for Americans (N.Y.: Herbert S. Stone & Co., 1898), 223-35.

<sup>118</sup> Alden et al., Correct Social Usage, 582-92; Social Etiquette of New York, 119-25; A Woman of Fashion, Etiquette for Americans, 223-35.

<sup>119</sup> A Woman of Fashion, Etiquette for Americans, 233-4; Social Etiquette of New York, 119-23; Cooke, Social Etiquette, or Manners and Customs of Polite Society (N.p., 1899.), 297-8; Alden et. al., Correct Social Usage, 586-92.

<sup>120</sup> Social Etiquette of New York, 123.

<sup>121</sup> Alden et. al., Correct Social Usage, 591.

lent itself perfectly to this type of entertainment and offered an opportunity for adding novelty. Walter Germain Robinson suggested that instead of the "regulation restaurant supper [after the theater] the host might ask guests to his apartments for a Welsh rarebit or a chafing-dish supper or something of that sort."<sup>122</sup> The bachelor could even eliminate the theater element and just have a chafing dish supper party. In 1899, Maude Cooke reported:

Bachelors who live in apartments are giving "Dutch" parties on roofs, and, in those cases, the refreshments consist of beer and ale served from the wood, rye bread and cheese sandwiches, sausages cooked in a chafing-dish and Rhine wine in the cup.<sup>123</sup>

The cookbooks published by chafing dish manufacturers made this connection to public leisure and bachelor life quite overt. Authors attributed recipes to caterers, hotel chefs, restaurant maitre d's, and club men.<sup>124</sup> Offered in a chatty, anecdotal style, liberally sprinkled with quotations from great literary men, some of these cookbooks conjured an image of the author as an erudite raconteur, a worldly club man.<sup>125</sup> Other cookbooks alluded to bachelor parties and after theater supper with illustrations of well-

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Cooke, Social Etiquette, 303.

<sup>124</sup> See especially, Murrey, Good Things; This practice of alluding to caterers, bachelor cooks, restaurants, and hotels also is followed in bachelor cookbooks, such as Phillips, Bachelor's Cupboard.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

dressed young men and women gathered around the chafing dish.<sup>126</sup>  
 Even chafing dish cookbooks and magazine articles by domestic scientists, directed at a primarily female audience, credited the bachelor with being "pioneer in the use of this utensil."<sup>127</sup>

The cookbooks also evoked a bachelor epicure philosophy of cookery which valorizes creativity and personal satisfaction.<sup>128</sup> Implicit in many of the chafing dish cookbooks, this philosophy was quite explicit in cookbooks and articles directed at bachelors. Wrote Frank Schloesser in The Cult of the Chafing Dish, "It is certain that if one cooks to satisfy oneself (always supposing oneself to be a person of average good taste), then ones guests will be equally satisfied -- if not more so."<sup>129</sup> While the bachelor epicure appreciates his own good food, as Deshler Welch observed,

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<sup>126</sup> S. Sternau & Co., Uses of the Chafing Dish, depicts an all male scene, a two couple "after theater" scene, and a two couple "aboard yacht" scene, 3, 17, 27.

<sup>127</sup> Farmer, Chafing Dish Possibilities, 19.

<sup>128</sup> Laura Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 228-30, argues that the ultimate impact of the domestic science/home economic movement was to undermine interest in cookery until the advent of gourmet cookery in the 1950's reversed the trend, but the bachelor epicure rhetoric of sensuality and sophistication offered an earlier version of the gourmet discourse and suggests a trend parallel to the domestic scientist one Shapiro describes. See also, Laura Shapiro, "Happy Birthday, Fine Living: At 50, Gourmet is Still Banking on the Same Dream," Newsweek, 24 December 1990, 67; Levenstien, Revolution, 206-7.

<sup>129</sup> Schloesser, Cult, 14.

"men of educated tastes may be gourmets without being gluttons."<sup>130</sup> Indeed, "Chaffinda hates gluttons, but takes pleasure in ministering to the modest wants of the discerning acolyte, fostering incipient talent, urging him to higher flights, and tempting him to delicate fantasies."<sup>131</sup>

The bachelor epicure elevated his appetite through a refined palate and prided himself on his sensitivity to all manner of seasonings. "The bachelor has so cultivated his taste," Lyman Phillips informed his reader, "that he can tell in the twinkling of an eye just what [condiments] are used in the preparation of a dish, just what it lacks, and, perchance, if there be too much..."<sup>132</sup> The essence of bachelor epicure cuisine is experimentation with condiments and spices. "It is so alluringly easy to add just a taste of this or that, a few drops of sauce, a sprinkling of herbs, a suggestion of something else."<sup>133</sup>

Despite this appreciation of culinary invention, the recipes themselves were strikingly unoriginal and repeated from one book to the next. Commenting upon her collection of twenty chafing dish cookbooks, Helen Brown contended the "amazing thing about them was

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<sup>130</sup> Deshler Welch, "Connoisseurs," 665.

<sup>131</sup> Schloesser, Cult, 17.

<sup>132</sup> Phillips, Bachelor's Cupboard, 113.

<sup>133</sup> Schloesser, Cult, 11.

that they were so alike.... To own one book was to own them all."<sup>134</sup> The re'chauffe's, creamed dishes, deviled specialties, lobster Newburgs, golden bucks, Scotch woodcocks, and Welsh rabbits of these cookbooks did not represent a new cuisine, but could be found in cookbooks of at least twenty years earlier.<sup>135</sup> A number of these types of dishes --devils, Welsh rabbits, game, shellfish-- are identified in cookbooks of the 1880's as particularly associated with bachelor suppers.<sup>136</sup> If anything, these dishes represented a simplified mode of cookery. Most dishes begin with a melted ounce of butter, to which raw shellfish, canned fish, or pre-cooked meats are added immediately for a saute, or added later, after the addition of flour and milk, for a creamed dish.

Even so, the bachelor epicure saw his cuisine as not only inventive, but decidedly masculine in its refined sensuality. He evoked the names not only of famous chefs such as Careme, but also of literary greats: "Dickens, Thackeray, Reade, Marryat, were all devoted to the art of cooking, and even the sedate Hume, the historian, had no patience with the indifference of women to the

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<sup>134</sup> Helen Evans Brown, Chafing Dish Book, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: The Ward Ritchie Press, 1951), unpaginated introduction.

<sup>135</sup> Henderson, Practical Cooking, 175, 264-5; Corson, Miss Corson's, 249-50, 289, 293-4, 299-300; Parloa, Miss Parloa's, 225, 256, 283-4, 298-9, 368, 393-4, 398, 400, 403-4.

<sup>136</sup> Parloa, Miss Parloa's, 393; Henderson, Practical Cooking, 40, 264; Corson, Miss Corson's, 153.

interesting niceties of the science."<sup>137</sup> While men take pleasure in their food, the bachelor epicure argued, upper and middle class women lack real appetites and view cookery as chore best left to the care of an "unresponsive, unintellectual, and frequently slovenly Biddy."<sup>138</sup> Dismissal of female sensibilities interwove with disparagement of the lower-classes:

The ordinary domestic cook is a tireless enemy of the Chafing Dish. She calls it "fiddle-faddle." Maybe. But inasmuch as it is clean, economical, speedy and rather simple, it would naturally not appeal to her peculiar sense of the culinary art.<sup>139</sup>

The upper and middle class woman was doubly blamed for leaving men to the mercy of "Bridgit" and for herself lacking culinary appreciation. The implication was that true cuisine does not emanate from the home traditions of all classes, but from the professional chefs patronized by the elite. This discourse placed the female domestic sphere second to that of the male, public, professional sphere.

Imbedded within arguments for the masculinity of cookery was an attack on feminine domesticity and its concomitant repression of open sensuality. The cultural expectation that women would engage in conspicuous leisure included the convention that ladies were too ethereal to have hearty appetites.<sup>140</sup> In trying to prove that

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<sup>137</sup> Welch, "Connoisseurs," 665.

<sup>138</sup> Welch, "Connoisseurs," 664.

<sup>139</sup> Schloesser, Cult, 2.

<sup>140</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 72-3, 101.

cookery was not demeaning labor, domestic scientists created a cuisine that was suitably feminine in its refined appearance and refining effect.<sup>141</sup> Feminine food meant sweet, bland, insubstantial dainties neatly contained within artistic presentations.<sup>142</sup> Recommending more solid fare for men and children, Domestic scientists reminded women that cookery was an important science upon which their family's health depended and urged that nutrition be placed before taste.<sup>143</sup> The ideal was controlled food: masked texture, suppressed flavor, defined boundaries.<sup>144</sup>

Though the bachelor epicure presented the chafing dish in opposition to this feminine discourse, other writers showed the chafing dish as furthering the goals of domestic propriety. Like the teakettle with spirit lamp stand, the chafing dish offered a young lady the means for displaying gracefulness. In "Afternoon Tea," domestic scientist Christine Terhune Herrick reminded readers that the "pretty work of tea making... gives opportunity for an almost constant succession of graceful attitudes and actions."<sup>145</sup> Indeed, "it is all gracious and charming, especially to masculine eyes. One

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<sup>141</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 71-105.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Christine Terhune Herrick, "Afternoon Tea," Harper's Bazar, 2 December 1899, 1029.

must be a very awkward or ugly woman who is not attractive when she is making tea."<sup>146</sup> Similarly, Margaret E. Sangster advised in Winsome Womanhood that a "girl should cultivate the art of simple cookery, so that a little supper, deftly prepared over a chafing-dish may not be beyond her skill."<sup>147</sup>

The chafing dish even assumed a refining feminine role within chafing dish literature by men:

Women endowed with the indescribable quality of charm are said to be the supreme development of a perfected race. This quality is chiefly shown in the atmosphere they create. Men and women come into their presence to be helped, stimulated, soothed, or flattered. The presence of the chafing-dish makes itself felt in like manner.<sup>148</sup>

Frank Schloesser playfully named his chafing dish "Chaffinda," and observed that "having a wife in the form of a chafing dish" inspired a "certain politeness in little things, a dainty courtesy...."<sup>149</sup> The feminine associations with cookery is caused to play against rather than undermine the masculinity of the bachelor epicure.

For women, the chafing dish could become similarly personified as a surrogate servant, enabling the housewife to distance herself from the labor and hence the lower class image of

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Margaret E. Sangster, Winsome Womanhood (N.Y.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1900), 51.

<sup>148</sup> Aken, "What You Can Do," 1052.

<sup>149</sup> Schloesser, Cult, 1, 7-8.

cookery.<sup>150</sup> A poem in Good Housekeeping, entitled "To my Mistress," "by a Chafing Dish," promised that "I'll never leave you in the lurch/ to seek for higher wages."<sup>151</sup> In the late nineteenth century, middle-class housewife found it increasingly difficult to find servants, and the chafing dish offered a mode of service in which servants were less necessary.<sup>152</sup>

This is not to say that the chafing dish was considered an acceptable substitute for servants at a formal affair. Fannie Farmer warned readers that the "chafing dish should not find a place on the table when a ceremonious dinner is served."<sup>153</sup> Janet McKenzie Hill concurred with this judgement, though she allowed that "even on such occasions it is of great utility in the butler's pantry.... in keeping hot individual portions."<sup>154</sup> "It is only when we attempt dishes so elaborate and complicated as to require the combined efforts of mistress and maid," Charlotte James Wills insisted, "that

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<sup>150</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 103-4.

<sup>151</sup> Burbank, "To My Mistress."

<sup>152</sup> For an example of how one domestic scientist addressed the servant problem and advocated the chafing-dish as an answer, see Weigley, Sarah Tyson Rorer, 73-4, 132-3. For a discussion of the relationship between the home economics (domestic science) movement, the servant problem, and changes in middle class cookery, see Levenstein, Revolution, 60-71, 80-5. For a general discussion of the servant problem, see Susan Strasser, Never Done: A History of American Housework (N.Y.: Pantheon Books, 1982), 162-79; Matthews, "Just a Housewife", 95-7, 103.

<sup>153</sup> Farmer, Chafing Dish Possibilities, 19.

<sup>154</sup> Hill, "Chafing-Dish," 215.

we feel that the chafing-dish is a 'senseless fad.'"<sup>155</sup> Far from being given to "cancel social obligations of a formal character," Alice James noted, the chafing-dish supper is a meal for "relaxation and absence of restraint."<sup>156</sup>

The chafing dish was most useful for elevating the more casual meal, for which servants were less necessary or not required. Christine Terhune Herrick advised readers that the chafing dish is nowhere "more serviceable and welcome than at the Sunday-night supper."<sup>157</sup> According to Rosamund Lampman, the "charm of a chafing-dish feast lies not in its appointments, but in its simplicity, jolly sociability, and delightful homey influence."<sup>158</sup> "The young housekeeper, too, realizes the advantage of giving little informal affairs in which the chafing-dish plays a prominent part" Rosamund Lampman wrote; "Thus she avoids the difficulties ... of getting up a more elaborate luncheon or perhaps a little dinner."<sup>159</sup> Magazines and household manuals advised that hostesses set a dainty table for a chafing dish meal, refining and elevating the occasion with "doilies

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<sup>155</sup> Charlotte James Wills, "Chafing Dish Cookery," The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, Spring 1897, 236.

<sup>156</sup> James, Chafing-Dish, 10.

<sup>157</sup> Herrick, "Chafing Dish Creations," 1160.

<sup>158</sup> Lampman, "Chafing-Dish Receipts," 125.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

and a large centerpiece" (see fig. 15).<sup>160</sup>

While housewives were thus encouraged to contain the chafing dish meal within the boundaries of propriety, some women relished the intimate and unconventional possibilities of chafing dish suppers. The chafing dish made it possible to bring into the home some of the bohemian excitement of public leisure. In particular, articles on and by college women and bachelor women offered a discourse that matched that of the bachelor epicure.

Engaging in decidedly unlady-like gluttony and rambunctiousness, college women gathered around the chafing dish for "midnight frolics" and "spreads." In "The Chafing-Dish and the College Girl," Martha Cobb Sanford described college women crammed on a single bed:

While one fair guest, perched on a pillow, cuts bread with a penknife, and another, curled up beside her, scrapes chocolate with a miniature hand-saw, . . . a third, mayhap, spears olives with a hat pin. At the foot of the bed, her shirtwaist sleeves rolled up and her pompadour decidedly askew from repeated smotherings of her head in a near-by pillow when overcome with mirth, a plump specimen of a girl splits oyster-crackers and deftly sandwiches sweet chocolate between them. . . . Meanwhile, the rosy cheeked hostess . . . presides over the chafing-dish, wherein oysters are creaming. . . .<sup>161</sup>

Informal or elaborately planned, the chafing dish part offered opportunity for indulgence, for performance, and for intimate

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<sup>160</sup> Rorer, "The Chafing Dish," 272.

<sup>161</sup> Sanford, "Chafing-Dish," 12.

socializing. "However much solicitous mothers may worry over the indigestibility of these toothsome feasts, and maiden aunts cry out at their unconventionality," the college woman's chafing dish party was the "sine qua non of her all-round popularity."<sup>162</sup> The dorm room fudge party became a cliché by the early twentieth century and was often a staple scene in contemporary novels of college life.<sup>163</sup>

If the dorm room spread was rebellion against propriety, the bachelor woman's chafing dish party was an even stronger declaration of independence. Describing the "jolly, chafing-dish side of female bohemianism," Emilie Ruck de Schell notes that at the working woman's apartment "no chaperon is present to see that the arbitrary laws of social form are strictly observed. The men who frequent these cozy dens find in them... untrammelled freedom."<sup>164</sup> In "Light Housekeeping," young working women described their makeshift housekeeping arrangements; the reader learned that chafing dishes made it possible to hold casual, gay parties for male and female friends in the tiniest, most sparsely furnished apartment.<sup>165</sup> Etiquette author Maude Cooke acknowledged the popularity of chafing

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> See, for example, Marlowe, Girls of Rivercliff; Pauline Lester, Marjorie Dean, College Freshman (N.Y.: A. L. Burton Co., 1922); Margaret Warde, Betty Wales, Junior (Philadelphia: Penn Publ. Co., 1906).

<sup>164</sup> Emilie Ruck de Schell, "is Feminine Bohemianism a Failure?" The Arena, July 1898, 70.

<sup>165</sup> Curtis, "Light Housekeeping," 6-7.

dish parties among "bachelor women" and noted the blow that these little affairs struck for informality:

The bachelor women in their cozy little city apartments... are past masters in the use of the chafing-dish and those who have feasted with them will no longer deem that liveried service and stately rooms are necessary to the proper receiving of one's friends.<sup>166</sup>

As used in literature on working women, the chafing dish becomes a metaphor for bachelor independence and intimacy.

Even chafing dish cookbooks written by domestic scientists conceded the influence of bachelors on home entertaining. In Salads, Sandwiches & Chafing-Dish Dainties, Janet McKenzie Hill noted:

By many women cooking is considered, at best, a homely art, -- a necessary kind of drudgery; and the composition, if not the consumption, of salads and chafing-dish production has been restricted, hitherto, chiefly to that half of the race "who cook to please themselves." But, since women have become anxious to compete with men in any and every walk of life, they, too, are desirous of becoming adepts in tossing up an appetizing salad or in stirring up a creamy rarebit.<sup>167</sup>

The fashion for chafing dish cookery among women indicated more than a quest for new forms of ostentation, more than a need to do without servants; the rise of the chafing dish reflected a growing desire to join with men in more informal leisure pursuits.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Cooke, Social Etiquette, 305-6.

<sup>167</sup> Hill, Salads, Sandwiches, ix.

<sup>168</sup> Erenburg, Steppin' Out, argues that women were seeking to join with men in more informal, public leisure at the turn of the century, 24, 86.

As scholars have noted, the period of 1890-1920 saw the introduction of dating as an alternative to calling, the popularization of living rooms in place of parlors, and the rise of mass public entertainments in challenge to home-based socializing.<sup>169</sup> All these changes bespoke a shift toward more open sensuality and more informality in leisure.<sup>170</sup> While these shifts offered new freedoms, they also involved new social controls. Freedom from the requirement to prove character turns into an obligation to demonstrate personality.<sup>171</sup> The chafing dish became equipment for competing in a changing social world in which popularity replaced propriety.

The fashion for chafing dish parties echoed the shift toward peer intimacy, gender mutuality, and competitive individuality. Centered around a small table with few guests, the chafing dish party required men and women to shed reserve. "When one has assisted at a chafing-dish supper, formality is over forever," Josephine Grenier wrote; "Those who forgather with suggestion and criticism, officious shakes of pepper and friendly dredges of flour, meet as intimates afterwards."<sup>172</sup> The chafing dish "invites hospitality, it bespeaks

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<sup>169</sup> See Erenburg, Steppin' Out, 33-227; Bailey, From Front Porch, 13-25; Halttunen, "Parlor to Living Room."

<sup>170</sup> Erenburg, Steppin' Out.

<sup>171</sup> Halttunen, "Living Room to Parlor."

<sup>172</sup> Grenier, "Chafing Dish Suppers," 162.

unconventionality, it simmers of good cheer."<sup>173</sup>

Chafing dish cookery was a game that offered guests and hosts the opportunity to prove themselves genial companions. The cook's role, whether taken up by the host, the hostess, or a guest, was to be both the star player and the butt of good-humored ribbing. To ensure a flawless performance, cookbooks advised that the cook practice ahead of time.<sup>174</sup> Ideally, the cook worked smoothly, noiselessly, daintily; ideally, the end result was delicious.<sup>175</sup> However, jokes abounded about the indigestibility of certain concoctions and about the disasters encountered in their preparation.<sup>176</sup> Therefore, the role of guests was to offer necessary aid, to lighten tension by teasing the cooks, and to bravely consume the final product.<sup>177</sup> "Invitations to these suppers are not intended for the egotistical person, or for one who is morose or sour ... or for one too serious to understand a light jest," Alice James instructed her readers; "So when one receives a summons to an affair

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<sup>173</sup> Aken, "What You Can Do," 1052.

<sup>174</sup> James, Chafing-Dish, 9-10; Schloesser, Cult, 37.

<sup>175</sup> Hill, Salads, Sandwiches, 154-5; James, Chafing-Dish, 12-3; Farmer, Chafing Dish Possibilities, 22.

<sup>176</sup> Welch, Bachelor, 46; Larned, Hostess, 259; Bangs, "A Chafing-Dish Party"; Sanford, "Chafing-Dish," 12; Herrick, "Chafing Dish," 1160.

<sup>177</sup> For fictional accounts of chafing-dish parties that illustrate the role of guests, see Welch, "Connoisseurs," 661-3; Bangs, "A Chafing-Dish Party."

of this sort, one may feel entirely sure... of being credited with all the accomplishments that make one good company."<sup>178</sup>

Though constrained within rules and perfectly proper, the chafing dish party inspired intimacy with its aura of spontaneity and unconventionality. The concoction of dishes at the table not only encouraged guests to express an unseemly interest in food, but the most popular chafing dish delicacy, Welsh rabbit, was made with and accompanied by beer or ale.<sup>179</sup> Moreover, eating late at night violated contemporary precepts of good nutrition, especially when the food was highly spiced.<sup>180</sup> It was popularly believed that eating late at night caused indigestion and nightmares, and chafing dish cookbooks are scattered with playful allusions to the bad dreams that might ensue certain concoctions.<sup>181</sup> Torn between fascination and disapproval, domestic scientist Janet McKenzie Hill asked, "Is it hygienic to eat at midnight?"<sup>182</sup> Answering, "Yes," May E. Southworth

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<sup>178</sup> James, Chafing-Dish, 10.

<sup>179</sup> For a discussion of nineteenth century attitudes toward alcohol, see W. J. Rorabaugh, "Beer, Lemonade, and Propriety in the Gilded Age," in Dining in America, 1850-1900, ed. Kathryn Grover (Rochester, N.Y.: The Margaret Woodbury Strong Museum and the University of Massachusetts Press, 1987), 24-46.

<sup>180</sup> Shapiro, Perfection Salad, 80; Hill, Salads, Sandwiches, 157-8.

<sup>181</sup> See, for example, Phillips, Bachelor Cupboard, 75; Charlotte Brewster Jordan, "Chafing-Dish Concoctions," St. Nicholas, April 1909, 538.

<sup>182</sup> Hill, Salads, Sandwiches, 157.

confessed in Midnight Feasts that late night suppers have "always had a secret fascination, as of forbidden temptations."<sup>183</sup>

"DON'T FORGET THE CHAFING DISH!":<sup>184</sup>  
THE LATER HISTORY OF THE CHAFING DISH, 1920 TO TODAY

Within the context of 1920's social life, the chafing dish lost its association with masculine camaraderie and was understood exclusively as feminine and domestic. In a society in which dating had replaced calling, and in which the cabaret had become a respectable place of entertainment for married and unmarried couples, the chafing dish party began to seem quaintly homey instead of daringly unconventional.<sup>185</sup> By the end of the twenties, the chafing dish party was remembered as a symbol of an earlier, more innocent time. For House and Garden author Richardson Wright in 1929, the casual, home-based courtship of "The Chafing Dish Era" -- when "the chafing dish was the first step that led to the altar" -- set the period apart from both "The Victorian Era that preceded it" and modern society, when it was "no longer fashionable for a young woman to display domestic traits."<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Southworth, Midnight Feasts, iii.

<sup>184</sup> Marguerite Gilbert McCarthy, The Cook is in the Parlor (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1947), 67.

<sup>185</sup> For a discussion of public leisure after 1920, see Erenburg, Steppin' Out, 233-59; for a discussion of courtship after 1920, see Bailey, Front Porch, 25-140.

<sup>186</sup> Wright, "The Chafing Dish Era," 88.

After 1920, the chafing dish was promoted only as one of many labor-saving devices, and most of the increasingly limited reference to chafing dishes was bracketed by mention of other appliances. Florence Taft Eaton's 1922 article for Good Housekeeping, "Sunday Night Suppers at Home," alluded to the "pleasant custom of preparing at least part of the cookery at the table by the use of a chafing dish or grill..."<sup>187</sup> The 1928 edition of the Delineator Cookbook briefly mentioned "Chafing-Dish Suppers," but offered a section on "Cooking at the Table" that refers to a range of appliances for "informal entertaining" in addition to the chafing dish, such as grills, muffin irons, waffle irons, pancake griddles, and toasters.<sup>188</sup>

Set against the backdrop of newer, more efficient, and more versatile electrical appliances, the chafing dish lost its appeal. In particular, the chafing dish was edged out by the toaster, the table grill, and the waffle iron.<sup>189</sup> In 1917, Landers Frary and Clark offered retailers a choice of fourteen electric chafing dish models, as well fewer models of coffee urns, teapots, toasters,

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<sup>187</sup> Florence Taft Eaton, "Sunday Night Suppers at Home," Good Housekeeping, February 1922, 58.

<sup>188</sup> Flora Rose and Martha Van Renssalaer, Delineator Cookbook (N.Y.: The Butterick Publ. Co., 1928), 58, 718-21.

<sup>189</sup> See, for example, Nancy Tomlinson, "Cooking at the Table," Pictorial Review, January 1932, 35; "Buffet Parties are Fun," The Delineator, December 1934, 26, 47.

grills, disk stoves, portable water heaters, and egg boilers.<sup>190</sup> In 1931, the cover of the Landers Frary and Clark trade catalogue showed a woman serving company from a sandwich grill; inside, the catalogue offered thirteen waffle iron models and ten toaster models, as well as fewer models of utility griddles, sandwich toasters, table stoves, coffee urns, and hot plates, and one "colonial pattern" chafing dish.<sup>191</sup> The 1929/1930 Westinghouse trade catalogue did not even include chafing dishes among its array of table cookers, focusing instead on the delights of using waffle irons for "baking perfect waffles right at the table," or table stoves for "making pancakes, french toast and the like."<sup>192</sup>

On the other hand, chafing dish manufacturers and food writers did not completely abandon the chafing dish. The 1933-1934 G.E. Hotpoint catalogue featured a chafing dish that also appeared in a 1935 article entitled, "Consider the Chafing Dish."<sup>193</sup> Cookbooks continued to mention the chafing dish, as one of many appliances

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<sup>190</sup> Landers, Frary & Clark, Universal Electrical Home Needs (New Britain, Conn.: The Company, 1917).

<sup>191</sup> Landers, Frary & Clark, A selection of Best Sellers from the Catalogue of Universal Electric Ware Beautiful (New Britain, Conn.: The Company, 1931).

<sup>192</sup> Westinghouse Electric & Mfg. Co., Domestic Appliance Dept., 1929 1930 Electric Appliance Catalogue 285 (Mansfield, Oh.: The Company, 1929), 9, 14.

<sup>193</sup> General Electric Company, General Electric Hotpoint Heating Device Catalogue, 1933-1934 (Bridgeport, Conn.: The Company, 1933), 13; Taylor, "Consider the Chafing Dish," 89.

useful for keeping food hot at buffet parties, throughout the thirties and forties.<sup>194</sup> In the fifties and sixties, the chafing dish party was revived and the chafing dish once again enjoyed large scale promotion.<sup>195</sup> Even in this revival, the chafing dish was in competition with other appliances such as the fondue pot and the barbecue grill.<sup>196</sup> Though obscure, the chafing dish is still sold today through mail order catalogues and stores.<sup>197</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

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<sup>194</sup> See Dexter Mason, Tipple and Snack: Good Things to Eat and Better Things to Drink (N.Y.: Farrar & Rinehart, 1931), 41, 60, 81; Marjorie Hillis and Bertina Foltz, Corned Beef and Caviar: For the Live-Aloner (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1937), 51, 92-3, 109; Cora-Rose Brown and Bob Brown, 10,000 Snacks, (N.Y.: Farrar & Rinehart, 1937), 30; Hazel Brown, The Working Girl Must Eat (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1944), 172; Ida Bailey Allen, Food for Two (Garden City, N.Y.: Garden City Publ. Co., 1947), 317; McCarthy, The Cook is in the Parlor, 67, 97, 151-2, 165-6.

<sup>195</sup> Rainwater and Rainwater, American Silverplate, 290,4; Alice Wilson Richardson, The Just a Minute Cookbook (N.Y.: Prentice-Hall, 1952), 5, 102; Marguerite Gilbert McCarthy, The Queen is in the Kitchen (N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), 147-70; Brown, Chafing Dish; Victor Bennett, Chafing Dish Magic, ed. Paul Speegle (San Francisco: Hesperian House, 1960); Nedda Casson Anders, Chafing-Dish Specialties (N.Y.: Hearthsides Press, 1954); John Roberson and Marie Roberson, The Chafing Dish Cookbook (N.Y.: Prentice-Hall, 1950); Florence Brobeck, Chafing Dish Cookery (N.Y.: M. Barrows & Co., 1950); T. L. O'Brian, "Rediscovery of the Chafing Dish," House & Garden, September 1950, 128, 156-7; "Chafing Dish Showmanship," Sunset, May 1954, 172-4; "Reinstating the Chafing Dish," Good Housekeeping, March 1950, 172-3.

<sup>196</sup> Benita Eisler, Private Lives: Men and Women of the Fifties (N.Y.: Franklin Watts, 1986), 184, 186-7.

<sup>197</sup> See for example, Crate & Barrel, The Crate & Barrel Catalogue, Fall and Winter, 1990 (Northbrook, Ill.: The Company, 1990), 6.

While the turn-of-the-twentieth-century popularity of the chafing dish represented a specific cultural moment, it was also part of a larger history of chafing dishes. The appeal of the chafing dish at the turn of the century hinged on the tension the chafing dish image set up between a nineteenth-century understanding of propriety and a twentieth-century expectation for intimacy in social life. Associated with the male world of restaurants, theaters, and clubs, the chafing dish image also set up tensions between masculine and feminine and between public and private. When public leisure activities became a dominant mode of courtship and socializing in the 1920s, the chafing dish lost its association with masculine camaraderie and became exclusively associated with feminine domesticity.

The chafing dish's role as sociable utensil was taken over by other appliances because the chafing dish fashion helped establish new attitudes toward portable cooking devices. Though chafing dish fashion lasted about thirty years, it was a product of a modern consumer culture marketing approach that persisted long after the chafing dish fell from popularity. The earlier understanding of portable cookers as economical conveniences or luxurious service utensils was transformed through a mass-market approach to consumer goods. Though the chafing dish eventually lost its premier position as a party appliance, the chafing dish fashion set the pattern for the many appliance fads that followed.

**FIGURES**



Figure 1. A Chafing Dish Party, 1895. From Katie Stewart, The Joy of Eating (Owings Mills, Md.: Stemmer House Publ., 1977), 204.

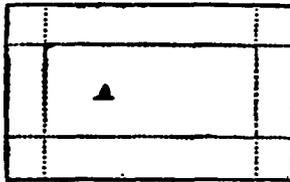
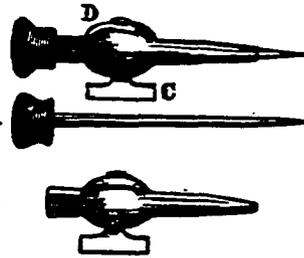
tatoes, filled with fried (*sautéd*) spring chickens, with cream sauce, and surrounded with cauliflower blossoms. A pretty course for dinner, tea, or supper.

*Little Silver-plated Chafing-dish.*—It is about four and a half inches square, for serving Welsh rare-bits, or for small pieces of venison-steak, with currant jelly. One is served to each person at table. The lower part is a reservoir for boiling-hot water. I have seen them also made with little alcohol-lamps underneath, when the thin slices of venison-steak can be partly or entirely cooked at table, in the currant jelly. At least, the preparation served is kept nicely hot.

*An Instrument for drawing Champagne, Soda, and other Effervescing Liquids at pleasure, leaving the last Glass as sparkling as the first.*—The instrument D is driven through the cork in the bottle, the wire A is withdrawn, the button C turned, when the Champagne is drawn through the tube B. When enough is drawn, the button is again turned, and the wire replaced before the bottle is raised. The bottle should then be kept bottom side

up. The instrument is a perfect success, and can be obtained of H. B. Platt & Co., 1211 Broadway, New York. It costs \$1 85.

*Paper Cases for Soufflés, Chickens à la Bechamel, or for any thing that can be served scalloped, or en coquille.*—These cases are easily and quickly made. They furnish a pretty variety at table, filled with any of the materials described among the receipts for articles to be served in paper cases or in shells. To



**Figure 2.** Little Silver-Plated Chafing Dish. From Mrs. Mary F. Henderson, *Practical Cooking and Dinner Giving* (N.Y.: Harper & Bros., 1880), 60.

**Chafing Dish.**—These valuable aids to warm eating can be had in sizes from ten inches to twenty-four and come at prices from about two dollars upward. The cuts of the chafing dish stand including the lamps, the water-pan to insure evenness of heat, and the plate for containing the delicacy to be served. Covers, such as have been shown already, are suitable for chafing dishes. Tea-pots,

coffee-pots, soup tureens, etc., are constructed on the same general methods. We give a sample of the soup tureen with lamp-stand attachment. The form needed for coffee-pots and tea-pots is familiar to all. An alcohol lamp makes the best heating attachment, as its flame is intense and free from smoke. Some of these heating arrangements will be prized in every home.

**Potato Parer.**—A potato parer differs from an apple parer mainly in its capacity for a greater longitudinal and a finer vertical movement, to fit the different lengths and the many inequalities of the potatoes. The little machine here shown does all that is needed for potatoes, and does it rapidly, neatly, and economically. It is valuable for a large family.

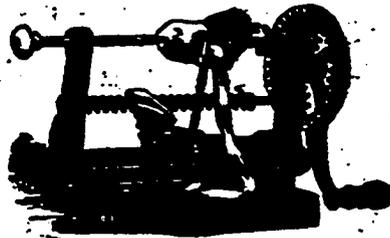
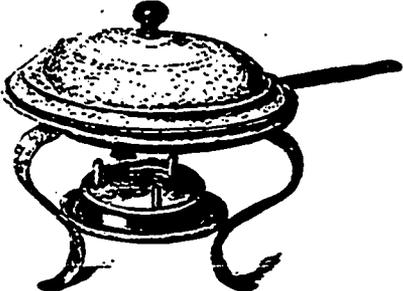


Figure 3. Chafing Dish. From George Peltz, The Housewife's Companion (Edgewood Publ. Co, 1885), 290.

114	LALANCE & GROSJEAN M'F'G CO.	
	Agate Oyster Chafing Dishes.	
	No.	1 1/2
	With Agate Covers, per doz.....	18.00
	Each.....	1.50
D—60 1/2.	"Case Lots," 1 doz.	

**Figure 4.** Agate Oyster Chafing Dish. From Lalance & Grosjean Mfg. Co., Lalance & Grosjean M'F'G Co. (N.Y.: The Company, 1885), 114. Courtesy, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library.

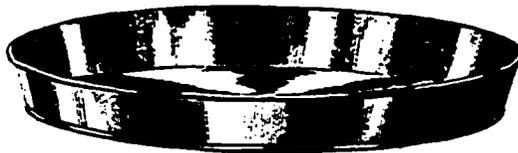
## Oval Chafing Dish Plates.



A-5.

Inches.	10	12	14
Planished, each,	.75	1.00	1.25
Inches.	16	18	20
Planished, each,	1.50	2.00	2.50
Inches.	22	24	
Planished, each,	3.25	4.25	

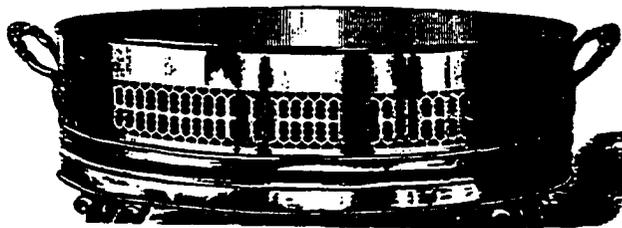
## Oval Chafing Dish Water Pans.



A-6.

Inches.	10	12	14
Planished, each,	.40	.55	.75
Inches.	16	18	20
Planished, each,	.95	1.10	1.25
Inches.	22	24	
Planished, each,	1.50	1.65	

## Oval Chafing Dish Stands and Lamps.



Inches.	10	12	14
Planished, each,	1.10	1.30	1.60
Inches.	16	18	20
Planished, each,	2.00	2.40	3.00
Inches.	22	24	

**Figure 5.** Oval Chafing Dish Plate, Pan, and Stand. From Lalance & Grosjean Mfg. Co. *Lalance & Grosjean M'F'G Co.* (N.Y.: The Company, 1885), 20. Courtesy, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library.

**No. 1010**

Capacity, 3 pints. Fitted with Ventilated Asbestos Burner and extra Hot-water Pan; trimmed with Non-heating Ebonized Handles and Knob.  
Nickel-plate or Copper \$5.65

**No. 1008**

Capacity, 2 pints; otherwise the same as No. 1010.  
\$4.60

**No. 1016**

Capacity, 5 pints; otherwise the same as No. 1010.  
\$10.00

**No. 160**

Round Tray, 12 inches in diameter.  
Nickel-plate or Copper \$2.00

**No. 1148**

Capacity, 3 pints. Fitted with Ventilated Asbestos Burner and extra Hot-water Pan; trimmed with Non-heating Ebonized Handles and Knob.  
Nickel-plate . . . . . \$7.50

**No. 1147**

Capacity, 2 pints; otherwise the same as No. 1148.  
Nickel-plate . . . . . \$6.90

**No. 160**

Round Tray, 12 inches in diameter.  
Nickel-plate . . . . . \$2.00



**Figure 6. Chafing Dishes.** From S. Sternau & Co., S. Sternau & Co., Makers of Sternaaware (N.Y.: The Company, 1909), 53. Courtesy, the Winterthur Library: Printed Book and Periodicals Collection.

Means **MB** Best

## Manning-Bowman

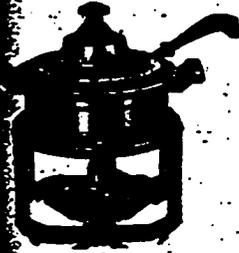
### Percolators

Whether heated by electricity, alcohol or on the kitchen range the principle is the same. The same Manning-Bowman assures you of a beautiful, delicious cup of coffee, because the Manning-Bowman method extracts all the flavor of the coffee without boiling. The valve pumps so quickly that the shortest time possible is consumed in making coffee. Beautiful designs of pot and urn styles in nickel, silver plate, copper and aluminum.



Pot Percolator  
Manning Style  
No. 2224

Pot Percolator  
Electric Style  
No. 11574



### Chafing Dishes

The same Manning-Bowman is almost unconsciously associated with Chafing Dishes. The "Alcoholic Burner" gave our alcohol chafing dish practically the utility of a gas range. Where electricity is used, our Electric Chafing Dishes are preferred for their rapid action, low current consumption and long life of heating unit. A wide range from which to select is alcohol and electric designs.

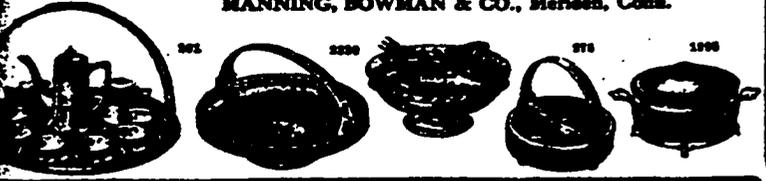
### Bread Makers

You can accomplish better results in three minutes with the Manning-Bowman "Eclipse" Bread Maker than you can in thirty minutes by the laborious hand kneading methods. The "Eclipse" does its work quickly and easily—requires no skill or experience. You will have light, fine-grained bread the first time you use it. Hands never touch it. Makes from one to eight loaves.



### Table Ware

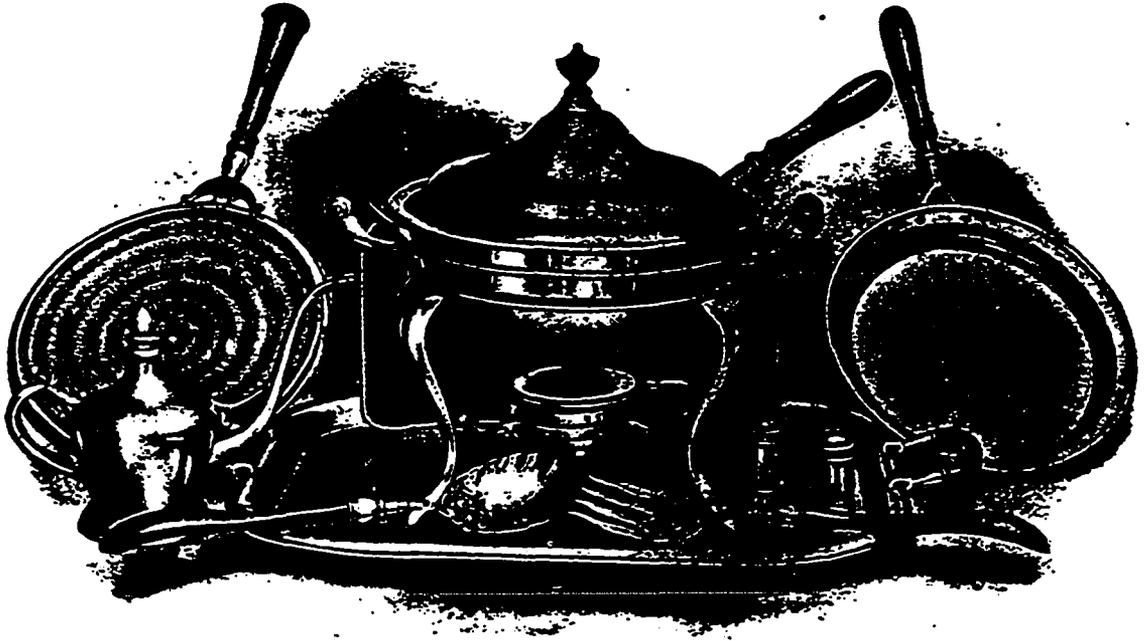
Any woman who prides herself on the attractiveness of her table appointments should examine the line of Manning-Bowman Quality Ware on sale at jewelry, hardware, housewarming and department stores. Beautiful designs and highest quality of material and workmanship combine to offer the most advantageous selections of Cake Baskets, Salad Sets, Dessert Sets, Sandwich Trays, Casseroles, Crumb Sets, etc. Special booklet, describing any article, sent on request. For free book of Chafing Dish recipes write for Catalogue D-41. Address



**MANNING, BOWMAN & CO., Meriden, Conn.**

Figure 7. Manning-Bowman Advertisement. From The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, April 1915, 275.

## "Rochester" Chafing Dish Set



### No. 793 CHAFING DISH SET

CONSISTING OF

No. 772	Nickel Plated Copper Chafing Dish	No. 0709	Silver Plated Fork
No. 3065	" " " Salt and Pepper Set	No. 0710	" " Spoon
No. 0702	Silver Plated Toaster	No. 0705	Nickel Plated Brass Flagon
No. 0703	Nickel Plated Copper Cutlet Tray	No. 010338	" " " Tray, Size 17½ x 13¾ in.
No. 0721	" " " Wind Shield		

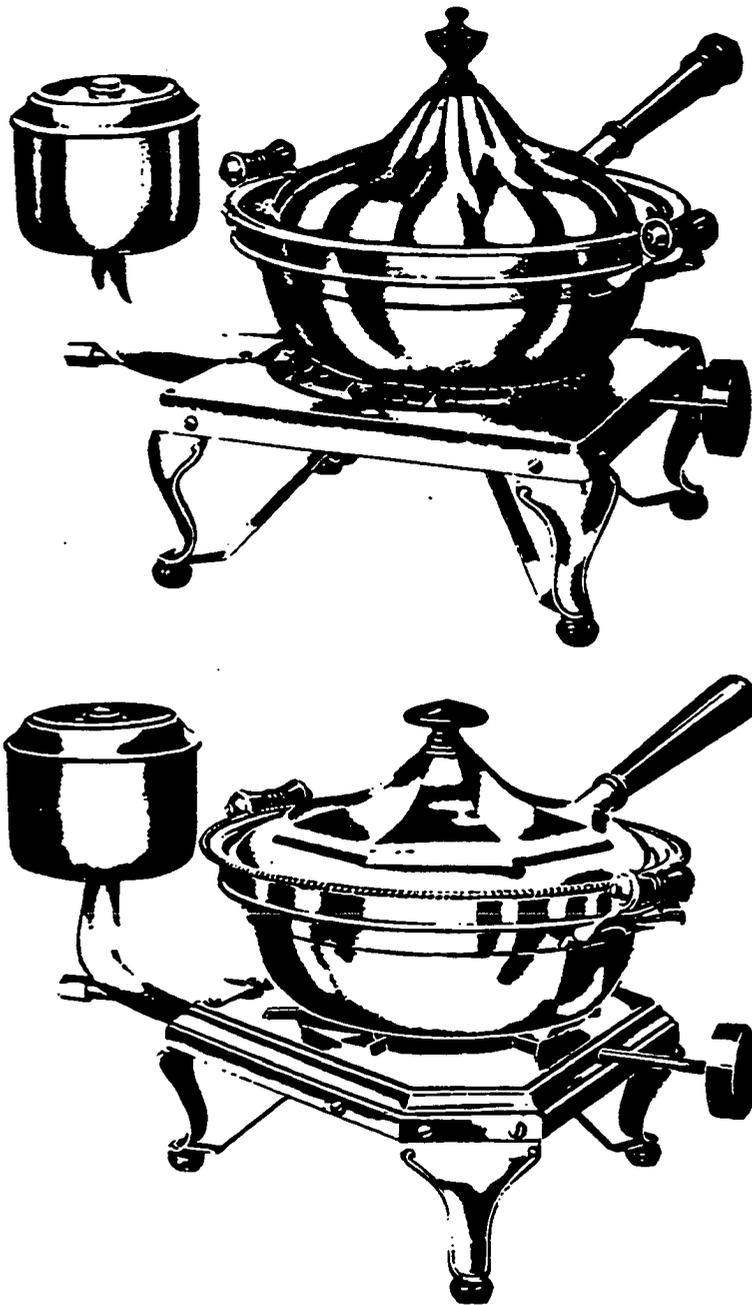
10

**Figure 8.** Chafing Dish Set. From Rochester Stamping Co., Catalogue "L" (Rochester; N.Y.: The Company, ca. 1907), 10. Courtesy, the Winterthur Library: Printed Book and Periodicals Collection.

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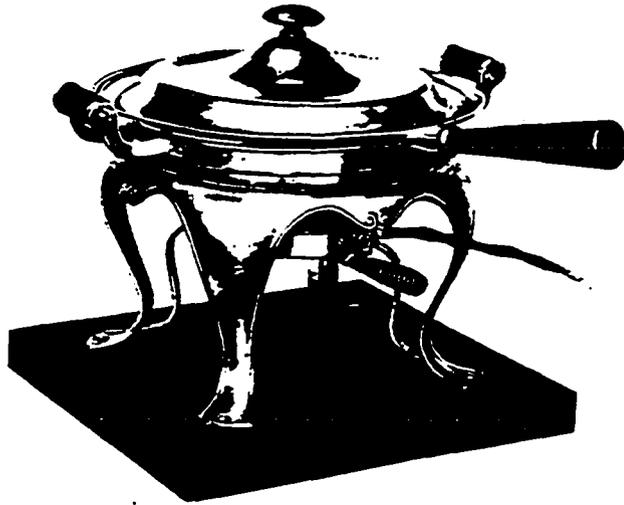


**Figure 10.** Alcohol Stoves with Chafing Dishes. From S. Sternau & Co., S. Sternau & Co., Makers of Sternauware (N.Y.: The Company, 1909), 16. Courtesy, the Winterthur Library: Printed Book and Periodicals Collection.

## No. 9703

Capacity, 3 pints. Fitted with Non-Heating Ebonized Handles and Knobs, extra Hot-Water Pan, and Electric Heating Unit having Cord and Plug.

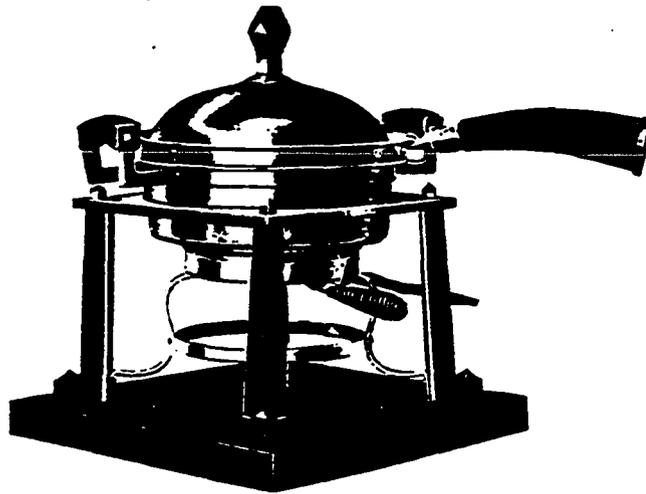
Copper or Nickel-plate \$33.35  
Silver-plate . . . . . 50.06



## No. 9704

Capacity, 3 pints. Fitted with Non-Heating Ebonized Handles and Knobs, extra Hot-Water Pan, and Electric Heating Unit having Cord and Plug.

Copper or Nickel-plate \$51.00  
Silver-plate . . . . . 76.50



**Figure 11.** Electric Chafing Dishes. From S. Sternau & Co., S. Sternau & Co., Makers of Sternauware (N.Y.: The Company, 1909), 129. Courtesy, the Winterthur Library: Printed Book and Periodicals Collection.

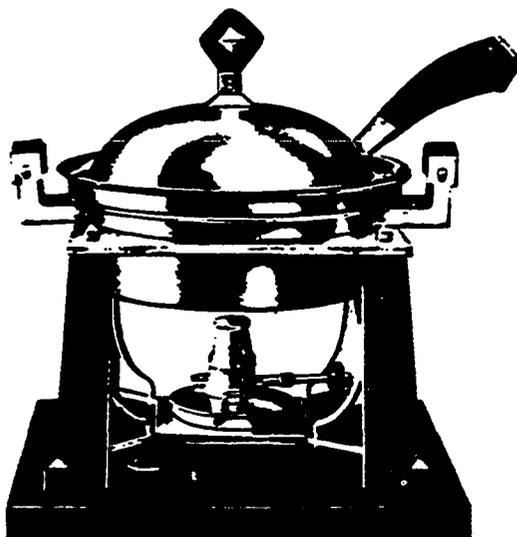
## Mission-Style Chafing-Dishes



No. 1181

Capacity, 3 pints. Fitted with Sterno-Inferno Burner and extra Hot-water Pan; trimmed with Non-heating Ebonized Handles, Knobs and Base.

Copper or Nickel-plate \$24.50  
Silver-plate . . . . . 40.00



No. 1179

Capacity, 3 pints. Fitted with Sterno-Inferno Burner and extra Hot-water Pan; trimmed with Non-heating Ebonized Handles, Knobs and Base.

Copper or Nickel-plate \$26.75  
Silver-plate . . . . . 45.00

No. 1187

Without the Base; otherwise the same as No. 1179.

Copper or Nickel-plate \$24.25  
Silver-plate . . . . . 42.50

**Figure 12.** Mission-Style Chafing Dish. From S. Sternau & Co., S. Sternau & Co., Makers of Sternauware (N.Y.: The Company, 1909), 74. Courtesy, the Winterthur Library: Printed Book and Periodicals Collection.



**For Chafing Dish Successes—Use**  
**STICKNEY & POOR'S**  
**Pure Mustards and Spices**

They are always reliable, full strength and fine flavored, thereby adding zest and relish to your cooking. More economical too, because less Stickney & Poor's Mustard and Spices are required in seasoning than when other less reliable condiments are used. For your own satisfaction, be sure to say Stickney & Poor's when you order Mustards and Spices at your grocers.

Your co-operating servant,  
**MUSTARDPOT.**

---

**STICKNEY & POOR SPICE COMPANY**  
 1815—Century Old—Century Honored—1919  
 Mustard—Spices BOSTON, MASS. Seasonings—Flavorings  
**THE NATIONAL MUSTARD POT**

Figure 13. Stickney & Poor's Pure Mustard and Spices Advertisement.  
 From The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, May 1919, 777.



## Always ready for your Chafing Dish

You pride yourself on the delicious things you can prepare quickly in your chafing dish — creamed chicken, creamed sweetbreads, creamed mushrooms, welsh rarebit, creamed oysters, and the like — and many a time you cannot entertain your guests that way because it is too late to get milk or cream. But you will always be prepared when your pantry has a good supply of

# Carnation Milk

*Clean—Sweet—Pure From Contented Cows*

If you never have tried Carnation Milk in your chafing dish, do so now. It is just pure, sweet, cows' milk, evaporated to the consistency of cream, hermetically sealed and sterilized so that it is always safe and of the same high quality.

It imparts a delightful flavor to chafing dish specialties, and to everything else cooked or baked with it. Order it of your grocer — "The Carnation Milkman."

Use coupon below to secure our new cook book which includes many exceptionally fine chafing dish recipes.

### Pacific Coast Condensed Milk Co.

434 Stuart Bldg., SEATTLE, WASH., U. S. A.

Please send me your new cook book, filled with special evaporated milk recipes and containing "The Story of Carnation Milk," as it is demonstrated at the San Francisco Exposition.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 14. Carnation Milk Advertisement. From The Boston Cooking-School Magazine, December 1915, 399.



Silver Courtesy the Gorham Co

TABLE LAID WITH DERRYVALE LINEN SET READY FOR SUNDAY NIGHT SUPPER IN MRS. ALLEN'S SCHOOL OF GOOD COOKERY.

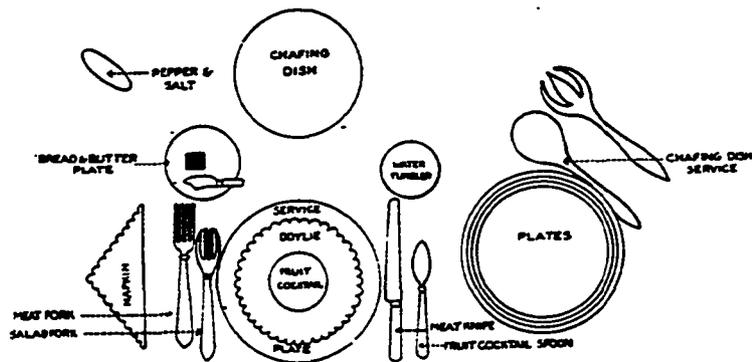


Figure 15. Table Laid...for Sunday Night Supper. From Sarah Swain Adams, How to Set the Table for Every Occasion (N.Y.: Derrydale Linen Co., 1921), 44.

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