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From pickled peaches to pink poodle: What do Community Cookbooks Tells us About Foodways and Urbanization at the Turn-of-the-Century in Sacramento and Stockton, California

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FROM PICKLED PEACHES TO PINK POODLE: WHAT DO COMMUNITY COOKBOOKS TELLS US ABOUT FOODWAYS AND URBANIZATION AT THE TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY IN SACRAMENTO AND STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

by

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FROM PICKLED PEACHES TO PINK POODLE: WHAT DO COMMUNITY COOKBOOKS TELL US ABOUT FOODWAYS AND URBANIZATION AT THE TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY IN SACRAMENTO AND STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

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DEDICATION

To Emilie for her patience and support.

And to my mother and father who taught me to cook.
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Thank you to Dr. Alice Mclean, Dr. Erica Peters for all their insight.
Industrialization and rapid urbanization characterized the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in many aspects of domestic life. Scholars have used community cookbooks to document changes in domestic roles at the turn of the twentieth century. This study uses community cookbooks to look beyond domestic roles and to trace changing foodways during the period from 1870 to 1930 in the northern Central Valley of California. Nine cookbooks from Sacramento, California and five cookbooks from Stockton, California reveal changes in foodways during this time. Recipes, text, and advertisements in these cookbooks show changes in the manner of home food production; a loss of pre-industrial food knowledge; increasing standardization in recipes and cooking knowledge; and an increasing reliance on commercially processed and name brand foods. These changes indicate a growing population and shifting demographics. The results provide insight into differences between urban and rural foodways as urban populations grow. The intrusion of industrialized food into rural home cooking may provide a
backdrop for contemporary understanding of urban foodways. Researchers seeking to understand how commercial foods become entrenched in modern foodways can use community cookbooks to trace back the introduction and assimilation of commercially processed foods in the past. Rewinding the process may provide insights into a variety of issues related to processed food. In addition, this study presents a method for using community cookbooks as historical documents to trace food and foodways over time including the unique role of advertising in this context.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Will’t please you taste of what is here?

--Shakespeare, The Tempest, Act 3, Scene 3

Quoted in the Westminster Church Cook Book, 1916

Like a scrapbook of antique photographs recipes in a charitable cookbook capture the life of a community in the past. The delicately aging pages of these often long-forgotten books offer a rich and colorful portrayal of the past, a history of food and foodways, of the women who made the food, and of the communities that produced the book. These books and their recipes are documents of the foodways of these communities, the social, cultural, and economic practices related to the production and consumption of food. They tell us what was eaten, by whom, how it was cooked, and how that food was viewed by the larger community. Anne Bower, one of the first modern scholars of community cookbooks says of these books that, “Along with the text itself, one must ‘read’ its [the community cookbook’s] context–a community cookbook is a subtle gap-ridden kind of artifact, that asks its reader (at least the reader who seeks more than recipes) to fill those gaps with social and culinary history, knowledge of other texts . . . and even personal knowledge.” (Bower, “Our Sisters”, 140). Teasing out the lessons that these books offer becomes a matter of seeing them in the context of their time and place and understanding that what they say is about food and much, much more. Today these cookbooks offer the researcher an opportunity to peer into the kitchens of the past and see what was cooking, on the stove and in the community. More importantly, community cookbooks as historical documents allow the researcher to view individual communities and their growth and change over time.
This study looks at charitable cookbooks from two communities in Northern California to investigate how urbanization unfolds through the lens of food. In particular, this research focuses on fourteen community cookbooks, representing a period of six decades, roughly 1870 to 1930, from Sacramento and Stockton, in the northern Central Valley of California. To uncover the impact of urbanization I looked at various features of these texts, the recipes, the advertising, and the purpose of the books’ publication. The results show that in this part of northern California, the types of food that were available, the methods for preparing food, the technology that was used, and the degree to which food was processed outside the home began to change after the Civil War, and changed with increasing rapidity, particularly in the first decade of the twentieth century. These changes occurred at a time when rapid urbanization was taking place in an area that was completely undeveloped only a few years earlier. In addition, the presence of food available outside the home, such as in restaurants, and specialty eateries, such as ice cream parlors, bakeries, and coffee houses, also increased, indicating a change in the way in which food and foodways were shared and communicated, and the degree to which the importance of home-cooking changed.

The communities of Sacramento and Stockton, and the cookbooks that were produced at the turn of the twentieth century, offer a microcosm within which to study what Ransom and Wright call, “the uncoupling of food production and processing from local communities” at the turn of the twentieth century (Ransom and Wright 685). Like the Goddess Minerva, who sprang fully formed from her father’s head, both towns appeared out of nothing at the beginning of California’s Gold Rush. Uniquely located along major waterways and with vast open space, this region experienced rapid
population growth. According to historian Steven Avella, “[t]his massive movement of people and capital literally brought the world . . . and created a center for social, commercial, and cultural exchange that exists to this day.” (ch.2) The impact of the Gold Rush led to Sacramento and Stockton being among the first, both in California and in the U.S, to develop a railroad system. The railroad system that developed was intimately entwined with the development of the agricultural system that would lead to California’s place as the sixth largest economy in the world (Forbes). On a more local level, and more important to the study of community cookbooks, are the population demographics that began with the Gold Rush and lasted well into the mid-twentieth century. Both Sacramento and Stockton experienced huge demographic shifts in a short period of time. The legacy of the Gold Rush in combination with rapid industrialization and demographic changes makes these communities an ideal choice for the study of urbanization from the perspective of food, foodways, and community cookbooks.

Foodways change in response to what is available, and what is available changes in response to larger ideas about food and cooking. National trends in food and food production (for example, an increase in canned goods) characterized by the rise of what many authors refer to as “scientific cooking” and an increased focus on food purity, provide a backdrop to the study of foodways in this period. Research using cookbooks published by single authors or commercial entities (Pillsbury, Cuisinart) has revealed a great deal about food trends and changes in society, but these books rarely portray meals eaten at home, and in fact often disclaim the difficulty of presenting such information (Neuhaus 3). Instead they are more likely to illustrate the foods we aspire to eat. The changes illustrated in commercial cookbooks and other forms of cooking literature, such
as magazines and newspapers, were filtered and edited through a lens that was often far
removed from the site of actual consumption. Community cookbooks, in contrast, were
produced locally, and, as such, can tell us more about food at the community level and
the food on people’s tables. By definition, community cookbooks were written by
members of a community. Whether we see the individual names on the recipes or an
edited text that belies the shared nature of each book, these recipes originated in the
kitchens of women whose lives were validated through the food they cooked. Recipes in
community cookbooks serve as a form of communication, revealing ideas, preferences,
and realities of the food and the foodways of the community. These recipes also
communicate a desire to turn food into something more important, a statement about
culture and society in the community where they were produced. In the nineteenth and
early twentieth century, a time when most women had no platform for communicating
their ideas, and very little experience in doing so, writing a community cookbook, a form
of domestic literature, gave everyday women a voice (Elias 18). Scholarship around
community cookbooks has traditionally focused on these voices. Earlier studies by
feminist scholars such as Anne Bower, Janet Theophano, Laura Shapiro, and Jan
Langone have established a canon of thinking with regards to what community
cookbooks can reveal about the people who wrote them. Past research has concentrated
on community cookbooks as political voice for women as mediators between home and
community. The present study will use this early scholarship as a basis for extending the
use of community cookbooks as historical documents to include the study of changes in
food and foodways as a measure of urbanization.
Taken over time, these cookbooks offer a window into how food changed at home, what foods were available, what foods were eaten, how they were cooked, and how they were thought of socially and culturally. Community cookbooks provide an intimate level of detail and insight that is not available in commercial cookbooks. The collection of charitable cookbooks used in this study paints a picture of changes in the foodways of the area as it became more populated and more urban. This project uses those cookbooks as historical documents to answer questions about how foodways changed over time. Community cookbooks from Sacramento and Stockton, California document that rapid urbanization and industrialization was taking place, as evidenced by the recipes, non-recipe textual material and advertising, which illustrate changes in the importance of home cooking, a loss of rural, pre-industrial cooking knowledge, changes in food processing, an increasing presence of commercially processed and brand name foods, and other indicators of a growing population. This research may provide insight into foodways in modern urban settings and allow us to rethink strategies for analyzing and assessing many of the issues surrounding food in urban environments. How food becomes commercialized and the interplay between the development of people’s food choices and the foods that are available informs such issues as what it means to find healthy food in an urban setting, or how we value home cooking in urban areas. In addition, the recent rebranding of Sacramento as the “Farm-to-Fork” capital of the world, is rooted in the unique confluence of factors in which the city was first established and grew.

The first section of this exploration of community cookbooks from Sacramento and Stockton begins by outlining the growth of both cities and the unique factors that
contributed to rapid expansion in the mid 1800’s. The second section reviews the literature and discusses the use of community cookbooks as historical documents. The third section reviews the methods used in this study. The fourth section discusses the findings and how they illustrate changes in food and foodways. The last section addresses the implications of this study for further research.
Chapter 2: Background

*Behind the nutty loaf is the mill wheel; behind the mill is the wheat-field; on the wheat-field rests the sunlight; above the sun is God.*

*Club House Cook Book*, 1904

The Gold Rush

Late in January of 1848, James Marshall returned to Sutter’s Fort with a small piece of gold in his pocket. Marshall worked for John Sutter, a native of Switzerland, who had acquired a land grant from the Mexican Governor. Sutter had begun building his small outpost ten years earlier in the hopes of establishing a town he would call New Helvetia, after his homeland. The fort was not defensive in nature. Rather, it was a waypoint for trappers and fur hunters headed into the Sierra, in 1848 the fort had about 100 permanent residents (Europeans), not including the Native Americans (Maidu) who lived on the periphery of the fort. The fort sat on a large, flat plain about a mile and a half from the confluence of the American and what would later be called the Sacramento River. Sutter knew that this part of California was likely to become independent from Mexico soon; and his dreams of a new city seem to be materializing. However, rather than becoming independent, on February 3, 1848, California became part of the U. S. Within a week of its discovery the little lump of gold became a catalyst for one of the largest migrations in human history.

Within months of Marshall’s discovery, the fort was swarming with people, and the landing that Sutter used to gain access to the fort had become a booming community of gold seekers. By the end of the summer of 1848, Sutter’s Fort had been overrun by prospectors and the new city along the waterfront was being forced to think about major
infrastructure like city government and municipal services. Within six months of the
discovery of gold more than 6,000 people had passed through Sacramento on their way to
the hills (Severson 20). Sutter’s “New Helvetia” went from a small fort to thousands of
people in a small but rapidly growing city called Sacramento. On February 27, 1850,
Sacramento (then “Sacramento City”) became the first, and oldest, incorporated city in
California. Shortly thereafter, Sutter, who was never good at financial management, lost
his land grant to bad debt and left Sutter’s fort for a small farm in Marysville, California.

Charles Weber (originally Karl David Weber) worked for Sutter in the early days
of Sutter’s Fort. Weber had come west from Missouri with the Bartleson-Bidwell Party
in 1841. Sutter vouched for Weber when he sought his own land grant and by 1847
Weber was living on his own land. Weber’s land grant, Ranch Campo de los Franceses,
included present day Stockton east to French Camp, the grant’s namesake. The land sat
on a large, flat plain, along the San Joaquin River. He established a “town”, originally
called “Tuleberg,” at the head of the river. On July 23, 1850, only five months after
Sacramento, the town was incorporated as Stockton, in honor of Commodore Robert F.
Stockton, whom Weber had met in his earlier travels.

Unlike Sutter, Weber remained in control of his land grant. After a short stint as a
miner Weber realized he could make a much greater fortune by supplying the miners than
he could by being one. Upon returning from the mines in 1850, he settled permanently at
his home on Weber Point in Stockton. Stockton became a major supply point for miners
headed into the foothills at French Camp and the surrounding area. Like Sacramento,
Stockton grew quickly in response to the rapid influx of fortune seekers from all over the
world.
Stockton and Sacramento have similar and closely related origins. Both developed rapidly out of nothing and both sit on major waterways that offer relatively easy access to the Pacific Ocean. On the eve of the discovery of gold, each was a tiny new settlement with a toehold on a wide-open plain that would become a major metropolitan area in the Central Valley of California. The waterways that would become known as “The Delta” gave them access to San Francisco, and beyond, and created a passageway from all points into the hills for gold. The fertile land of the Central Valley provided food and crops that would further the growth of these cities. Agriculture would create a new economic base as the lure of gold tarnished.

**Wheat**

The thousands of people who flocked to California had to be fed. Feeding and supplying the miners was both a high priority and a high profit endeavor. Initially goods were imported through San Francisco or from the east overland. Sacramento and Stockton were the closest supply points for miners headed into the Sierras. In both places early fortunes were made as much from mercantile supply businesses as from gold. Sacramento had routes into the northern Sierras around Lake Tahoe and Stockton provided access into areas further south. Two of the most important commodities were meat and wheat. Meat was readily available, as cattle had been part of the landscape along the coast since the early 1800’s. Flour was a little more problematic. When California was admitted to the union, wheat in the northern Central Valley was grown only for local consumption. Sutter had grown wheat around Sutter’s Fort and had a small grinding stone for milling that supported the small group at the fort. As the towns grew so did wheat production. By the late 1860’s in the Central Valley, “wheat growing. . .
[had] evolved from a decentralized business producing food for local consumption to a large-scale, highly structured export industry.” (Rice 255)

As wheat became a commodity, the supporting infrastructure for transporting and managing the wheat developed as well. Banking, commodity exchanges, and railroads were among the busiest and most prolific merchant operations. Sacramento and Stockton were at the center of this growing agricultural bonanza. Initially wheat production grew in response to the need to feed the slew of people coming to northern California. Sacramento grew as a mining town and then as the state capital in the late 1850’s and early 1860’s. Stockton cultivated its early role in support of mining and continued to develop technologies associated with mining, particularly with the later more high-tech hydraulic mining. As it expanded, Stockton also became the seat of early, large-scale industrial farming technology, one industry entwined in the other, both economically and technologically. As the onslaught of miners began to wane in the 1870’s and 1880’s the business of producing wheat became its own economic force, and by the late 1870’s, “California wheat growing had become the most mechanized and structured form of agriculture in the world, becoming the state’s major export industry.” (Rice, et. al. 255).

Between the discovery of gold in 1848 and the early 1880’s Sacramento and Stockton became the center of one bonanza after another, first in gold then in wheat. The growth of the wheat industry created the need for a massive transportation infrastructure. Goods for the miners were originally transported by horse drawn wagon. As the mining industry matured and the wheat bonanza blossomed, northern California needed faster and more reliable transportation.
Railroads

Railroads are intimately entwined with the early growth of California, particularly in the north where supplying miners became the paramount economic driver after 1849. Finished in 1856, California’s first railroad, The Sacramento Valley Railroad, ran for twenty-three miles along the American River from the waterfront in Sacramento to Folsom. The line was built to speed the flow of goods and supplies to miners in the Sierras south of Lake Tahoe. Five years later, the “Big Four”, Leland Stanford, Charles Crocker, Collis P. Huntington, and Mark Hopkins, formed the Central Pacific Railroad (CPR), which would quickly come to dominate the railroad industry in California and nationally.

The Civil War never reached California, but according to California historian Richard Rice, it had a direct impact on the railroads because “wartime disruptions forced Californians to rely on their own resources, accelerating development and diversification [of railroads].” (Rice, et. al., 234). After the formation of the CPR, local rail lines quickly became incorporated and the entire network grew rapidly. Dubbed “The Octopus” and spurred primarily by agricultural growth, the railroad came to dominate early California, both politically and industrially. The “Big Four” had each come to California to mine gold. In the words of historian Richard J. Orsi, they each “tried mining ‘the Golden Fleece’ but soon turned to the more reliable trade of ‘fleecing’ the miners.” (qtd. in Rice 240). The money that built the railroads had come from supplying miners early in the Gold Rush. The railroads grew in response to a growing agricultural economy. Eventually the transcontinental railroad allowed goods to be transported across
the country and Stockton became the first stop within California for people coming from the east.

**Population**

First the Gold Rush, then the “Wheat Bonanza,” left Sacramento and Stockton at the center of a population boom that continued well into the twentieth century. Most cities in the US grew during this period. The industrial revolution was a time of migration to cities and of immigration from other parts of the world. In California, this growth was initiated in 1848 and continued, exponentially, if sporadically, until 1920. Data taken from the Federal Census for each of the years between 1850 (the first federal Census in California) and 1920 shows an overall population increase of close to 1000% during this period. Throughout the 1860’s and 1870s both cities experienced repeated floods and crowded, unsanitary conditions led to a cholera epidemic that killed thousands (figure 1).
Figure 1. A graph of the population in Sacramento and Stockton from 1840 to 1920. Numbers are from U.S. Census data and were not available in California until after 1849. In 1850 Stockton did not meet the threshold for inclusion in the census, although thousands of people were passing through on a weekly basis.
Figure 2. A graph of population in four U.S. cities. Numbers are from U.S. Census data and were not available in California until after 1849. In 1850 Stockton did not meet the threshold for inclusion in the census. San Francisco had a population in 1840 and for decades prior, but the city was not part of the U.S. Census until 1850. The data point for San Francisco in 1840 is an estimate based on data from SFgenealogy.com (https://www.sfgenealogy.org/sf/history/hgpop.htm).

San Francisco had existed as a settlement for decades before the discovery of gold and became a major landing point for miners entering California by sea. San Francisco’s population grew during the same period, but at a much more linear rate. Boston is noted for comparison with an established eastern city. New York, Philadelphia, or Washington could as easily be used for comparison to show the relative size and growth of Sacramento and Stockton. At the time, Boston was the center of much contemporary discourse around food and foodways as it related to changing populations.
A Shifting Economy

The imaginary of the Gold Rush, both in 1850 and today, belies the powerful convergence of events that were brought to bear in its wake. The flood of people, the need to feed them, the growth of agriculture, and the development the railroads needed to transport agricultural harvests leapfrogged one after the other, laying the tracks for the sixth largest economy in the world. The early activity of the CPR and the first points of exchange for the majority of agricultural output in the Central Valley were in Sacramento and Stockton. Urbanization and industrialization were swift and successful. By the turn of the twentieth century the economy in the Central Valley had fully shifted from mining to agriculture. Sacramento and Stockton grew from nothing to thriving urban centers in a short period of time. As the cities grew and changed so too did their food and foodways. Food that had once been locally produced became an export commodity and both cities developed in response to their new agricultural role. Stockton grew as a center for farming equipment and technology, and Sacramento, as the new state capitol, grew as a center for political discourse and activism related to agriculture, renaming itself the Farm-to-Fork capital in 2017.
Chapter 3 Literature Review

This book is not to fill a long felt want, but to keep the want from being long felt.

The Cook’s Guide, 1903

Cookbooks allow us to trace the changes in our foodways over time. The written recipes that we find in cookbooks both commercial (one or a few authors, for profit) and compiled (multiple authors, generally for fundraising) provide insights into the food and foodways of any era (Elias 2). Cookbooks reveal what people ate, how they cooked, and the ingredients they used. Jessamyn Neuhaus, author of Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking tells us that, “As historical documents—supplying information about the publishing practices, available ingredients, food fashions, or household technology of the past—cookbooks reveal much about the societies that produce them.” (Neuhaus 1) The language and structure used in the recipes, the relationship between the author and the cook, or reader, the food choices, the technology, and the personal declarations, allow scholars to discover the purpose and values of the community involved in the production of the book (Ireland 108; Busch 23-24).

Scholarship and Community Cookbooks

Community cookbooks, the shared product of a community most often written by multiple authors, are often less sophisticated than commercial cookbooks, but reflect most closely what was eaten at home (Ireland 108). Early scholarship on community cookbooks as historical documents was grounded in feminist studies and appeared in the late 1980’s. Many of these early studies suggest that community cookbooks represent a form of political engagement for women who had no voice in the politics of their day.
The cookbooks these women produced allowed them to present themselves as members of a community, to give voice, however small, to their beliefs and desires, and most importantly to engage in a political process (Bower 31; Theophano 123). Women used their cookbooks to express views on such issues as social structure, suffrage, household management, nutrition, and many of the other ideologies that affected their social group formations (Bower, “Recipes,” 6-10; Elias 18). Cookbooks, and domestic literature, remained one of the few avenues by which women as homemakers without access to a wage, without suffrage, and without independence from their husbands could express themselves publicly, and acceptably (Theophano 6). These recipes, written by and for the women who were cooking them, provide an invaluable record of what people ate. More importantly, they allow us to revisit foodways of the past which may provide insight into contemporary food issues.

The communities that these women formed were typically a subset of larger men’s organizations. Political Scientist Kennan Ferguson, in his study of community cookbooks points out that women’s organizations are “generally seen by academic scholarship as parasitic on [men’s] social group formations.” (Ferguson 697). The authors being consigned to second-class status, their cookbooks have only recently begun to be treated as historical documents, offering a rich source of academic scholarship around food in the past. The changing value of cookbooks as historical documents has created a growing body of research in which commercial and community cookbooks became a means of understanding food and communities of the past (Bower 138; Busch, 22-23; Driver 272). These cookbooks offer the opportunity to trace food and foodways through larger periods in history, often in response to larger social change (Ransom and
Wright 685). Alternatively, research using cookbooks as historic documents allows us to see how larger social change is reflected, historically, in our food and foodways (Elias 23). In either view, cookbooks provide a means of investigating food and foodways and the relationship to larger historical developments. The early literature on community cookbooks, and much of what is present today offers only a point-in-time look at what these documents reveal. In this study, these cookbooks will be used collectively across decades to identify changes in food and foodways of the communities involved.

**Cookbooks as Text**

The term “cookbook” is defined (Webster’s) as a collection of cooking directions and recipes. In using cookbooks for scholarly research both the book and the individual recipes are sources of information about food and foodways (Driver 258-259; Busch 23). While the recipes are useful as a unit of analysis, the book itself becomes as valuable as the individual dishes by providing a framework against which the recipes may be viewed. The bibliographic and publication information indicates time, place, and often the intended audience (Busch 23; Driver, 258). In community cookbooks, non-recipe information offers a parallel medium of expression for the women involved in the publishing collective (Bower, “Our Sister’s Recipes,” 138; Kelly 35-36). Textual elements such as a preface, the Table of Contents, a dedication, or quotes provided at various points in the book are expressions of the authors’ attitudes toward the food they chronicle (Driver 260). These non-recipe elements form a backdrop against which the recipes are chosen, included, and performed. In addition, the inclusion of non-food related recipes and recipe sections, such as recipes for how to clean wood floors, or how
to whiten plaster, are indicators of available technologies and the extent to which keeping a household required more than just cooking (Shapiro 12-13; Neuhaus 12-14).

**Recipes in Community Cookbooks**

As a unit of analysis, the recipes in community cookbooks act as individual records of food that was present in the contributor’s kitchen (Ireland 108; Driver 271). The author of a recipe expects the reader to produce a specific result (Finn 505; Wharton 68). The format of the recipe, the level of detail of instruction, the type of ingredients, and the technology (including tools) that is used are all indicators of time, place, and the extent to which the reader is expected to have knowledge about cooking (Ransom and Wright 669-689). This level of expected knowledge reveals a great deal about the community in which the recipe is being used, and the book’s intended audience. Multiple recipes for the same dish, or a heavy emphasis on a type of food or dish may reveal food trends at the time, or give the researcher insight into the value that the women involved placed on individual foods (Elias 18; Ireland 110). Recipe contributions gave the contributor a certain cultural cachet that allows these contributions to be viewed in terms of their overall importance to the collection, the collective, and the larger society (Elias 18). Individual names were often attached to the recipes which had the effect of both making the recipe valuable depending on whose name was attached, and lifting the author’s status if the recipe was well received by the community. Elizabeth Driver considers these individual names “as a personal endorsement that the recipe is good.” She suggests that these names act in the same way “a provenance does for a work of art; it guarantees authenticity by tracing the recipe back to the kitchen where it was made.”
This allows the researcher to create an accurate picture of the community and its food.” (Driver 271).

**Advertising in Community Cookbooks**

One of the hallmarks of community cookbooks is the advertising that was part of the community effort (Busch 23; Kelly 32). Not part of the text of the book, these ads may appear throughout the book, at the end, and even all around the edge of each page. The authors of community cookbooks often relied on advertising to help offset printing costs. For the authors of community cookbooks, the support of advertisers validated their work. This validation furthered their entry into the public sphere (Fleitz 90). In community cookbooks, the ads are generally local or regional and correspond to the location of the publishing of the book.

The advertising in community cookbooks can be a rich source of information about the authors and publishers of the books and their communities. Advertising in older community cookbooks, whether directly related to food or not, provides social and cultural background for the recipes (Kelly 32). These ads also allow the researcher to track changes in technology, food availability, and the popularity of different types of foods and places to eat (Kelly 46; Nussel 958). In addition, advertisers often tailored their ads to the community in which they were advertising which allows the researcher to gain a sense of the moral and religious underpinnings of the community, particularly in those cookbooks that were published by religious groups (Bailey 90).

Information found in community cookbooks, in the recipes and in the non-recipe textual elements of the book, including advertising, offers a means by which to study social and cultural aspects of communities in the past. In this study, food and foodways
are traced to identify changes in patterns of consumption that may reflect the rapid urbanization that was occurring in Sacramento and Stockton at the turn of the century. Using a collection of cookbooks published over time, and tracing changes in the recipes, and the advertising, I will show how community cookbooks, as a measure of community, illustrate changes in patterns of food consumption in a rapidly growing community. This information expands existing scholarship related to community cookbooks and offers a unique approach to using advertising in the study of foodways by tracking the representation of food in individual ads over time.
Chapter 4: Methodology

“You have heard of the nectar that’s sipped by the gods:
I can tell you of something that’s best by all odds,
And far more substantial I know you’ll allow:
So listen, and how to prepare it I’ll show...”

A Practical Cook Book, 1890

Cookbooks as documents or literary endeavors are an important means of studying historic foodways. Because of their collective nature, community cookbooks are particularly informative. Community cookbooks give the researcher insight into what people ate at home, and help us understand the types of food that were both prevalent, and important. The recipes that were contributed, a source of pride to the contributor, reflect the types of food that were held in esteem. When these cookbooks and their recipes are compared over time they reveal the changing nature of foodways, and can provide insight into the rapid urbanization that took place at the turn of the nineteenth century. These insights may inform current issues such as the lack of food choices in urban environments, or the relative devaluing of home cooked food.

Recipes were the unit of analysis in this project. The analysis includes recipes from twelve cookbooks, published in Sacramento (7 books) or Stockton (5 books) between 1876 and 1930. The books were accessed primarily in digital form although several of the books were later viewed in physical form. The digital copies are available at Hathitrust.org and Archive.org. Physical copies were viewed at the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, and the California State Library, in Sacramento. Books from the private collection of Ken Albala provided primary source material that
was unavailable digitally or in library collections. Publication information was gleaned from the books themselves, and through newspapers published at the time. Newspapers were accessed through Newspapers.com and the California State Library.

**The Cookbooks**

Table 1 lists cookbooks used in this study with publishing and accession information. For this study, at least one cookbook from each decade was available in one or both cities from 1872 to 1925. Recipes were used as the unit of comparison and where the information was available comparisons were made across cities and/or within the decade.
Table 1
Cookbooks from Sacramento and Stockton, California used in the present study. The table lists title, author(s), date of publication, publisher, City of publication, and the manner of access of the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cookbook Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion</td>
<td>The Ladies of Grace Church</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Practical Cook Book</td>
<td>The Froebel Society</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookery in the Golden State</td>
<td>Ladies of the Unitarian Society</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kirmess Cook Book</td>
<td>The Women of St. Paul's Church</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club House Cook Book</td>
<td>The Tuesday Club House Association</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club House Cook Book No. 2</td>
<td>The Tuesday Club House Association</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westminster Church Cook Book</td>
<td>Westminster Church</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bride's Cook Book</td>
<td>Merchants of Sacramento</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice Recipes</td>
<td>Members of the Order of the Eastern Star</td>
<td>192X</td>
<td>Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cook's Oracle</td>
<td>The Ladies Social Union of the Central M. E. Church</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>Stockton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Methodist Cook Book</td>
<td>The Ladies Social Union of the Central M. E. Church</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Stockton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cook's Guide</td>
<td>The Semper Fidelis Circle of the First Congregational Church</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>Stockton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Key to the Kitchen Cook Book</td>
<td>The Ladies Aid Society of the First Baptist Church</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Stockton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Stockton Community Cook Book</td>
<td>The Ladies of Temple Israel</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Stockton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Recipes

The recipe analysis in this study followed the criteria presented in Table 2. These criteria were selected because they provide information about changes in foodways related to who was cooking, what kind of food was being prepared, and how that food was obtained as a commodity. The criteria are similar to those used by Ransom and Wright in their study of community cookbooks from the Upper Peninsula in Michigan.

Table 2.
Study criteria for analyzing recipes, text, and advertising in community cookbooks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reproducibility</td>
<td>the recipe can easily be made today. Reproducibility helps to identify food, techniques, and technologies that are extinct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory Engagement</td>
<td>descriptors of sight, smell, sound, taste, and feel are used in producing a finished recipe. Sensory engagement is an indicator of the level of cooking knowledge required to reproduce a recipe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic references</td>
<td>the presence of “ethnic” ingredients, terms, techniques, or non-English words used to describe the recipe process or product. This can be an indicator of the presence of ethnic groups within the community that produced the cookbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles of standardization</td>
<td>the use of modern measuring techniques, or standard quantities. Standardization in recipes provides an indication of both the cooking knowledge required to reproduce a recipe and a level of community knowledge when compared with national trends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processed food</td>
<td>food that was processed outside the home, not including ground grains. Changes in the provision of basic ingredients indicate changing value associated with certain foods as well as the timing of when certain food processing techniques become available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name Brands</td>
<td>ingredients that are listed by a commercial name. Name brands reflect commercialization of certain basic ingredients as well as loyalties to, and availability of, brands provided in a certain region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Information</td>
<td>names, exclamations, or other additions to the recipe that do not impact the quality or quantity of the food itself. Attaching a name to a recipe is a point of pride. Personal information and anecdotes can verify the importance of certain foods and recipes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These criteria were evaluated for each recipe included in the analysis. Most were simply identified as being present or absent. In the case of Brand Names, Ethnic References, and Sensory engagement, qualitative notes as to the nature of the reference were made as well. Within each cookbook, the recipes were either analyzed in total, or a subset was created when there were more than 100 recipes in the book. When a subset was used, the subset was selected by choosing every third or fourth recipe depending on the total number of recipes in the book. Roughly 100 recipes were analyzed in each cookbook that contained more than that number. The results were tabulated to identify trends through the decades.

Other Textual Information

Although recipes were the unit of analysis in this study, other textual information was analyzed to provide a full understanding of the time, place, and people involved in the publication of each book. Bibliographic information, i.e., printer, publisher, and date, were recorded and analyzed using historic documents (newspapers, county tracts, and real estate advertising). The presence of extra-textual, or non-recipe, information such as dedications, poems (common in community cookbooks), testimonials, and other literary devices were analyzed. This analysis provided information about the nature of the group compiling the book, the way the proceeds were used, and various hierarchies within the publishing organization. Tables of contents and general organization (or lack thereof) of the recipes was analyzed for trends in types of foods and categories (e.g. historically “Pudding” moves from savory to sweet, and ice cream doesn’t appear until roughly 1900).
Older cookbooks often provide household information that is not necessarily in the form of recipes per se. This information is frequently in the manner of lists, hints, or tables. Identifying the presence of household information and analyzing it for attitudes, technologies, and techniques provided insight into the time, place, and people involved in producing the cookbook when compared across time or with national trends.

**The Advertising.**

Community cookbooks often used advertising to offset the cost of publishing. As a result, the presence of advertising is unique to community cookbooks (as opposed to commercial cookbooks). The nature of the advertising, particularly ads related to food, can further inform the nature of foodways in a region. Only food advertising was analyzed. Advertising for food purveyors of all kinds, general and specialty, as well as eateries, were noted qualitatively, i.e., the name of the purveyor and the type of food. These ads were categorized as purveyors or eateries and by the type of food as general or specialty. The results were analyzed qualitatively to identify what foods were generally available as commodities or as food provided outside the home, in comparison with foods that were noted in recipes; and quantitatively to identify changes over time.
Chapter 5: Results

*We may live without poetry, music or art;*

*We may live without conscience and live without heart:*

*We may live without friends, we may live without books;*

*But civilized man cannot live without COOKS.*

Owen Meredith

*Quoted in The Cook’s Oracle, 1887*

The cookbooks analyzed in this study reveal a range of elements that point to the changing urban landscape in both Sacramento and Stockton. Elements of the recipes, of the text, and of the advertising lend a unique quality to each book. At the same time, the distinctive character of each book contributes to the collection as a whole and creates a portrait of a food landscape that was shifting and changing through the period from 1870 to 1930. At the time of their publication, each of the cookbooks in this study was a collection of recipes put together by a group of women who had the goal of not only sharing their recipes, but also of using their shared venture as a means of contributing to a larger collective, whether to raise money or simply to display their knowledge. The recipes offer a story of how food and food processing was moving out of the hands of the rural home cook and into the realm of commercial production, both locally and nationally. Each book with its various elements of text, the table of contents, the tables of information, the poetry and ancillary writing frames, the recipes within the context of their time, and the community they represent provides evidence of the changes that were
taking place. The advertising in each book further illustrates the changes that were occurring in food and foodways by marking changes in the growth of the cities over time.

This study includes a total of fourteen cookbooks; nine from Sacramento, and five from Stockton. Both quantitative and qualitative data collected from these cookbooks show changes in food and foodways and illustrate the urbanization and industrialization that was taking place in the northern central valley of California at the turn of the century. Trends in the data suggest that over time more food was being processed outside the home, that industrially produced food was becoming more common, and that the preparation of food was changing. More commercial ingredients were being included in home cooked food, and the experience level of the home cook changed as well as the people doing the cooking. These changes in food and foodways indicate the population in both cities was increasing and changing demographically. The following discussion examines elements from individual recipes and cookbooks in order to highlight the changes that were taking place and the meaning of those changes in the larger society.

Cookbooks

Poems, prayers, and promises of good food are some of the many textual non-recipe elements that give each of the cookbooks in this study its own character and provide a colorful backdrop for the recipes. What is and isn’t included in each book, its table of contents, measurement information, the introductions, the purpose of the project, personal names of the women who contributed the recipes, and the poems and words presented both by individuals and by the group distinguish each book. Like gossip at a sewing circle the non-recipe textual elements of each book reveal the character of the group that published it in a way that points to changes in the urban landscape. These
non-recipe elements create a context for the recipes and illustrate the changes that were occurring in local food and foodways over time. The table of contents in each book tells something about how people thought about food and illustrates how home management and food production changed during this period. The measurement tables that are provided hint at changes in the ways food was processed. For many of the books in this collection their very purpose of publication was a result of growth within each city. The non-recipe elements in each book reveal the changing nature of home-cooking, the increasing standardization of measurement in food and cooking, and the role that these cookbook projects played in the growing cities of Sacramento and Stockton.

The Table of Contents in each book offers an important framework for understanding how people thought about various foods and how that view changed over time. The list of contents sorts groups of foods into certain categories. These categories reveal a collective understanding of which foods are appropriate food for certain meals (breakfast or dessert), or in certain situations (luncheon dishes, large gatherings), and, in a sense, tell the community how to think about certain dishes and ingredients. For example, including a section on “Breakfast Foods” allowed the community to tell the reader (of the cookbook) what the group that compiled the recipes considered to be appropriate food for breakfast. From the point of view of an historical document, labeling these foods in a category tells the researcher what constituted breakfast at that point in time. Differences in the Table of Contents can reveal how a category, such as breakfast, changed and can reveal how urbanization and industrialization were reflected in these changes.
Except for the oldest cookbook in the collection, *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* (1877), each book contains a table of contents that varies in size, scope and position within the book. In general, these Tables of Contents grow larger over time to include more specific categories. This is true for the smaller collections within each city and for the entire collection. Figure 3 shows the Table of Contents from four of the cookbooks taken at different points in time.
Table of Contents from *A Practical Cook Book* produced by the Froebel society of Sacramento, 1890, page 4.

Table of Contents from *The Cook’s Guide* produced by the Semper Fidelis Circle of the First Congregational Church of Stockton, 1907, page 4.

Table of Contents from *Westminster Church Cook Book* produced by the ladies of the Westminster Church congregation, Sacramento, 1916, page 58.

Table of Contents from *Choice Recipes* produced by the Order of the Eastern Star, Sacramento, 192x, page 3.

Figure 3. Tables of contents from community cookbooks produced in Sacramento and Stockton, California.
Most of the cookbooks include categories for meat, fish, pastry, cakes, puddings, pickles, preserves, salads and vegetables. *The Semper Fidelis Cook Book* (1907) from Stockton is the last one to contain a section for “Medical Recipes,” sometimes labeled “Invalid Foods,” listed in the table of contents. The loss of this category signals a shift from rural or pre-industrial foodways, where food and medicine were intimately connected and caring for the sick was a function of household management. Cures for common ailments—cough, fever, sprains, boils, blisters, for example—were a common feature in early American cookbooks. These “recipes” disappeared over time and in this collection signal a shift to an environment where medical help was more easily available, and medicines, like cough syrup or fever reducers, became commercialized products that a housewife no longer had to create herself. The disappearance of medical information shared in community cookbooks is symbolic of the changing landscape of food and foodways, suggesting that this knowledge was no longer needed in a more urbanized setting.

Like “Medical Recipes” or “Invalid Cures,” “Household Hints” or “Miscellaneous” appear in many of these cookbooks. The *Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* (1872), which has no Table of Contents, does include a short “Miscellaneous” section with household hints at the very back of the book. While household hints are consistently present throughout this collection of cookbooks, the quality of the hints differs from the first to the last. In the oldest books, the hints address a variety of topics related to maintaining a household—cleaning spots from rugs, polishing floors, whitening the hands, or cleaning paint from glass, and “Soap Making”; none of which is specifically about food. In the later books these hints shift to
information that is predominantly related to food preparation, such as how to peel a tomato or how to open a can of asparagus (figure 4).

Figure 4. Household hints taken from *The Stockton Community Cook Book* p. 203.

The larger scope of knowledge that is required for maintaining a household in a less populated, less industrialized environment gives way to knowledge that focuses more narrowly on cooking in an environment where other knowledge originates outside the home. Whether they are included as their own section in the Table of Contents or simply appear embedded with other recipes, household hints establish one of the many facets of these community cookbooks that illustrate the changing urban landscape in Sacramento and Stockton.
In addition to showing changes in household management, The Table of Contents in many of the later books from Stockton and Sacramento include sections that are indicative of demographic changes associated with urbanization. Sections dedicated to immigrant groups, a symbol of the changing urban landscape, appear in the latest books from both cities as do changes in cooking and kitchen technology. Perhaps the most enigmatic and symbolic Table of Contents to appear in any of these cookbooks is in *The Club House Cook Book No. 2* (1909) from Sacramento (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Table of Contents from *The Club House Cook Book No. 2* (1909), published by The Tuesday Club of Sacramento, p. 173.
The Table of Contents from this 1909 cookbook includes various sections that, by virtue of appearing in the same text, are emblematic of the nexus between the rapid technological and urban changes that were taking place and the rural foodways in which those changes were rooted. Soap making, as a function of household management, was a rural/pre-industrial skill that was all but gone by 1909. Although these ladies may have included a soap-making section as a nod to their own perceived household management skills, the fact that they still considered soap-making important enough to include suggests the knowledge still existed within the group. In contrast, the presence of sections labeled “Spanish Dinner” and “Mexican Department” reveal the recognition of a growing community of immigrants and the changing demographics that were occurring in Sacramento at the time. The Mexican population alone quadrupled in California between 1900 and 1910 (California 4).

In addition, the section on “Fireless Cooking,” (the “Fireless Cooker” resembled a modern crock pot) presents a modern way of cooking alongside older, disappearing knowledge. The enigmatic presentation of new and old foodways together in this cookbook shows how much the Table of Contents can reveal about how food and foodways changed, the overlap of old and new foodways illustrates the pace of change that this collection reflects.

**Tables of Weights and Measures** offer another textual element in the cookbooks in this study that illustrates the process of urbanization and industrialization taking place in both cities. Including a Table of Weights and Measures in each cookbook signals a desire on the part of the women involved in the project to communicate a common definition of how to measure ingredients in each book. This common definition of
measurement may have given the women some reassurance that their recipes would be reproduced the way they intended; or it may have communicated a sense of expertise in the production of the book. Whatever the purpose of these tables, their presence offers additional insight into the foods and foodways of the communities that included them. Regardless of the actual type of measurement (measurement system) used, these tables provide information about what a home cook needed to know. They also provide “standard” measurement for certain types of food. The presence of certain foods identified in the measurement table offers a reference point for changes in foods prepared at home.

Tellingly, none of the cookbooks in this study published prior to 1900 include a reference table for weights and measures. *The Club House Cook Book* (1904) from Sacramento contains the oldest “Table of Weights and Measures” included in this collection (figure 6), which includes many non-standard measurement units.
Figure 6. Table of Weights and Measures taken from *The Club House Cook Book* (1904) published by the Tuesday Club of Sacramento, p. 95.

This measurement table gives conversions between older methods of measuring in the kitchen, such as a gill, a wine glass, or “butter the size of an egg,” and more modern, standard measures. It also illustrates the measuring of dry ingredients in units that today are reserved for liquids. From a contemporary perspective, these conversions are clearly approximations. Whether these women saw themselves as experts, took pride in their precision, or simply felt some outside pressure to be more exact is impossible to tease out. The conversions between non-standard units and more modern, standard units represents a translation of cooking knowledge. Changes in cooking knowledge accompanied the waves of immigration that took place at the turn of the century and these tables are a small marker of that change (Shapiro ch. 6-7). The women who published these books may also have felt the need to include measurement tables because the audience for their publication was growing and required more specificity in cooking instruction. Either of these pressures speaks to a growing population and indicates that
women felt compelled to include this information in a community cookbook. Figure 7 shows a later cookbook in which the non-standard units disappear. The table provides conversions between standard units of measure, much like what you might see today.

Like the earlier books, the various foods that are measured indicate those foods that held particular importance.
The Table of Weights and Measures from the *Westminster Cook Book* (1916), published in Sacramento, includes a variety of foods and measurements associated with them (figure 7). Among these is powdered sugar which indicates the presence of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversion</th>
<th>Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 teaspoonfuls of liquid equal 1 tablespoon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 tablespoonfuls of liquid equal ½ cup or ¼ gill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ cup equals 1 gill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 gills equal 1 cup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cups equal 1 pint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 pints (4 cups) equal 1 quart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 cups of flour equal 1 pound or 1 quart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cups of butter, solid, equal ¼ pound, 4 ounces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cups of granulated sugar equal 1 pound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2½ cups of powdered sugar equal 1 pound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pint of milk or water equals 1 pound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pint of chopped meat equals 1 pound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 eggs, shelled, equal 1 pound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 eggs with shells equal 1 pound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 tablespoons of butter equal 1 ounce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 tablespoons of granulated sugar equal 1 ounce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 tablespoons of Globe A-1 flour equal 1 ounce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 tablespoons of coffee equal 1 ounce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tablespoon of liquid equals ½ ounce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 tablespoonfuls of butter equal 2 ounces or ¼ cup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Always sift Globe A-1 flour before measuring. All measurements are level, unless otherwise stated in recipe.
processed foods included in the ingredients. The presence of “Globe A-1 Flour” as an ingredient that is precisely measured indicates not only loyalty within the congregation to a certain brand, but also the presence of brand name foods which represents a step in the evolution of food production that occurred at the turn of the century. As a local Sacramento brand, Globe A-1 Flour found tremendous success during the heyday of California wheat production, a period that lasted until about 1910. Brand name and processed foods become much more significant in the context of a cookbook when highlighted in a “Table of Weights and Measures” that appears at the very beginning of the book. One implication is that no kitchen is complete without this ingredient. The changes in the units that are presented in the earlier (figure 6) versus the later cookbook (figure 7) illustrate a growing need to communicate a recipe to a larger group of people. Arbitrary or non-standard units are gone and only those units that everyone knows (essentially the ones taught in school) are present. The changes in units of measure also signal a loss of both older cooking knowledge and rural foodways. Measures like “butter the size of an egg” require a knowledge of cooking that goes beyond just measuring. Intuition and experience are a large part of the knowledge of cooking. Urbanization and the “scientification” of cooking in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s replaced intuition and experience with tools and technology. The loss of this intuitive measuring, “a tumbler of milk,” illustrates the shift to a more direct, less experiential form of cooking that comes with the need to communicate cooking and recipes to a larger audience and to feed a growing population. The shifts in cooking knowledge illustrated in these Tables of Weights and Measures reflect an urban environment that was becoming more densely populated.
**Purpose of the text.** Although the opportunity to take pride in sharing knowledge about a subject may have been in the hearts of the women who produced these books, the more practical goal was to raise money. All but two of the cookbooks studied here were compiled in order to raise funds for the construction of a building, namely a church, a school, or a meeting hall for a civic organization.

*The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* (1872) and the *Westminster Church Cook Book* (1916) from Sacramento were both compiled to raise money for church buildings. The Ladies of Grace Church who published *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* were members of a congregation that went bankrupt about ten years later. The congregation became part of St Paul’s Methodist Church which was responsible for one of the later books in the collection, *The Kirmess Cook Book* (1899). This cookbook was produced as a giveaway at a “Kirmess” celebration that was a fundraiser for a new church. The one cookbook from Sacramento not published for the purpose of raising money for a new building is *The Bride’s Cook Book* (1917), published by the merchants of Sacramento and given away to new brides. The goal was to lure new brides into patronizing the businesses in town. Whether the goal was to build a new building, de facto evidence of a growing city, or to advertise the businesses in town, the books in Sacramento all have the mark of urban growth in the very purpose of their publication.

Four of the six books from Stockton were published to contribute to a new building and so, in the same way, are indicators of growth at the time of their publication.

**Recipes**

Recipes are more than just a prescription for baking a cake or cooking dinner. They likewise reflect the time in which they were written through their language, the
ingredients they include, the methods that are indicated in the recipes, and by their very inclusion in such a project as a community cookbook. The language and the style of the recipe indicates the intended audience. Ingredients may disappear over time and with them the knowledge of how to prepare those ingredients. A recipe that has ingredients, language, and a process that still works today reflects food and foodways that still exist. A cook’s knowledge, or expected knowledge, in reading a recipe can be measured by the language, the style, the ingredients, and the methods that appear in the recipe. A recipe that cannot be made in a modern kitchen, or for which modern alternatives don’t exist, tells us about food and foodways that have changed or disappeared.

Categories of analysis in this study included reproducibility, how well or easily a recipe can be made today, the style or format of the recipe (standardization), and the degree to which the recipe calls on the cook to use sensory information—a measure of cooking knowledge that reflects the intended audience. Likewise, this study includes an analysis of ethnic identifiers, as the increase in ethnic foods speaks to an urban environment that was growing and changing demographically. The presence of processed foods and brand names also present evidence of changing foodways in response to urbanization and industrialization.

**Reproducibility** of the recipes in this analysis was measured by the availability of the ingredients, the process involved in cooking, and the nature of the language in the recipe. Recipes can be shared with more people when they have complete instructions, when they include readily available ingredients, and when they use familiar methods. In a rural kitchen, food can be processed from scratch more easily. In an urban kitchen,
space becomes a consideration and foods that require unwieldy processing or long periods of time to complete become cumbersome.

A recipe that includes ingredients no longer available cannot be reproduced without substituting an alternative. Knowing about and being able to use alternative choices often requires an added level of cooking knowledge. For example, most of us know that if an old recipe says to fry something in lard, an easy alternative is vegetable oil. On the other hand, if a recipe calls for forcemeat, the cook probably needs a little experience both in the kitchen and with old recipes to understand that any combination of chopped up meat, spices, and sometimes bread, can be referred to as forcemeat. In the case of some ingredients a substitution is simply not available because the ingredient was unique to the time (Graham Flour, Germea), or the process for producing the ingredient is no longer common knowledge (curing meat, making yeast).

The cooking instructions must also be complete enough that a relatively novice cook can follow the instructions and reproduce the intended dish. More personal instructions or instructions that lack steps limit the size and scope of the audience because the reader of the recipe must have the same cooking expertise as the author. The lack of correct syntax, or convoluted instruction makes many old recipes hard to understand. As a result, the recipe becomes unreproducible, or reproducible only if the cook already has some knowledge of the food being prepared.

Based on the ingredients, the language of the recipe, the methods used, and the level of experience (the ease with which any cook can create the recipe) the two oldest cookbooks in this collection have recipes that are only about 10% reproducible. Many of the recipes in the earliest cookbooks lack cooking instructions, indicating that the
audience was familiar with cooking and, because the authors could assume this knowledge, the audience and the author were more likely to be acquainted or to be part of the same community, suggesting a smaller population. *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* (1872), the oldest in the collection, contains primarily baking recipes with a few miscellaneous savory recipes at the end. Published by “The Ladies of Grace Church,” about thirty local cooks contributed their recipes to the production of the book. The book contains a recipe “To Corn Beef” that illustrates the experience needed to reproduce a recipe at the time (38). This recipe also suggests a more rural environment because it dictates a method of preparing food that would become outdated as commercially prepared, and canned, versions grew in popularity and availability.

Commercial corned beef had been available from the 1600’s, but required access to a butcher, or later a deli, which signifies a level of urbanization (Mac Con Iomaire 13). Canned corned beef became available in the late nineteenth century.

The recipe, “To Corn Beef,” (figure 8), might seem bewildering to a modern cook. The measurements are unspecified and non-standard, and the directions are vague and contradictory. The recipe also requires tools, space, and time that would be unconventional in a contemporary kitchen.
This is a recipe for a rural kitchen where space is available for the processing of food in the actual kitchen, outdoors, and in any outbuilding (for example a smokehouse, or butchering area) that may be needed. The recipe tells me that, “There must be no salt added” and then later says that I must “dissolve the salt in a tub.” It never tells me how much salt. The entire amount of meat is never established but clearly involves multiple, large pieces of meat. Although there is no way to be sure, this recipe seems more like a recipe to be used when there is a large portion of beef (a side of beef, perhaps) to be preserved. The amount of meat placed in the barrel is the only indication of how much meat the recipe calls for. The barrel must be stored somewhere while the meat cures.

The cook producing this recipe needs some experience in the kitchen. The size and scope
of the preparation requires space, equipment, and storage that would likely be unavailable in an urban kitchen. The instructions assume some previous knowledge of the process to understand how to prepare this food. Saltpetre (aka saltpeter – potassium nitrate), a common ingredient in the 1800’s, disappeared from the average kitchen when preserved meat became widely available at the turn of the century. The recipes in *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion*, suggest that cooking and food production still had rural elements in 1872.

Compared to *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion*, the oldest cookbook in Stockton, *The Cook’s Oracle (1899)*, is a more complete cookbook and includes soups, salads, baked good, pickles and preserves, as well as a section entitled “Medical Recipes.” The recipes in the book illustrate its rural character and, like *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion*, cannot be easily reproduced. Consider this recipe for “Gems” from *The Cook’s Oracle (41)*:
This recipe is not easily reproduced because it lacks instructions for mixing and the cook/reader must know that gem pans are muffin tins, and that “Hot gem pans” means heat them before you put in the batter. The batter that is “as thick as easily dropped” also requires some experience in the kitchen to interpret. Mrs. C. C.’s recipe for Gems includes ingredients that are still available. However, anyone preparing the recipe, whether in 1899 or today, would need baking experience to be successful.

The increasing reproducibility of the recipes in the cookbooks as their publication dates advance chronologically suggests that urbanization was taking place in both communities. The earlier recipes require more cooking knowledge, evidence of a more experienced audience. Women who contribute recipes to a cookbook do so with the expectation that their recipes will be reproduced, cooked, and turned into food that will be enjoyed. If the recipe contains information that only a limited audience can recreate, the audience then, must be like-minded and competent in the kitchen. If the recipe is slim on details, or requires ingredients and/or a process that is no longer used in a home
kitchen, the recipe is reproducible only by a small number of cooks. The earliest of the
cookbooks in this study had more unreproducible recipes so likely a smaller, more
kitchen-competent audience. The cookbooks from the 1910’s and 1920’s had many more
recipes that could be easily replicated so they were potentially available to a larger
audience. The women who wrote the recipes in the later cookbooks must have thought
they needed to make them available not just to a larger audience, but to one with fewer
skills in the kitchen. Many ingredients listed in older cookbooks were no longer
commonly available by the turn of the century, and cooking processes that preclude
preparation in an urban kitchen were no longer widely known, or used. The older
cookbooks in this collection illustrate a time when the population was smaller and
cooking knowledge was both more rural and more common. Later recipes require less
cooking knowledge which makes them available to a wider audience. Changes in the
availability of ingredients, changes in the intended audience, and changes in the
knowledge required to reproduce a recipe all signal a change in the demographics and
instructional needs of the reader cooks. In combination with other elements of the
recipes in these community cookbooks, the reproducibility of the recipes indicates a
growing and changing urban environment.

**Standardization** refers to both the format of the recipe and to the measurements
used. It is intrinsically linked to how easily a recipe can be reproduced, although a
recipe’s lack of standardization does not preclude it from being reproduced. A recipe
such as the one for “Gems” above has non-standard measurements (a teacup). As a
measure of urbanization, a standardized recipe and standardized measurements suggest
changes in how food was being prepared, and, more importantly, who was doing the
Historically, the use of standardized units of measure reflects a shift from rural to urban economies (Viet). Standardized measurement in cooking makes a recipe available to a wider audience. A standardized recipe format likewise makes a recipe more available. The collection of cookbooks from both Stockton and Sacramento shows an increase in the use of standard measurements and an increasingly standardized format in the presentation of the recipes.

The recipes in the earlier cookbooks are almost entirely in paragraph format. The narrative of the recipe process does not necessarily proceed in a linear fashion and the ingredients appear as part of the narrative. In the later books the recipes appear in a mix of formats, some in the older paragraph format, but most in the more modern format that appeared in the late 1800’s. For some of the cookbooks, recipe formats vary according to the individual contributor. The use of standardized formats and measurements influence how well a recipe can be reproduced. Changes in the format of recipes and an increasing use of standardized measurements illustrate a growing need for women with no kitchen knowledge to be able to follow a recipe, an indicator of a growing population.

In the past, women wrote down their recipes in prose form – the recipe was an explanation, the ingredients listed as the recipe was written down. Sometimes ingredients were left out simply because the author knew that the reader would just “know” to add that ingredient. Flour, for example, could be left out of a pancake recipe because it was a given, or the recipe might say something like “flour enough to make a wet batter,” with no actual measurement. As a result, the details of cooking were often left up to the person reproducing the recipe, which often resulted in convoluted instructions. Recipes
in this form were originally intended for a small, limited audience, primarily younger (female) members of a family (Theophano ch. 3).

Recording and communicating recipes changed with industrialization and urbanization, in large part, because recipes needed to be followed by women who had not learned to cook at their mother’s side—women who had no experience in the kitchen (Shapiro ch. 5). Recipes in paragraph format are typically nonlinear in their presentation of cooking instructions. The steps often follow a back and forth syntax that makes them very difficult to follow. Mrs. M. H. Merrill’s recipe for “Rusks” (figure 10) from the Stockton cookbook, *The Cook’s Oracle* (1887), illustrates the non-linear nature of these paragraph formatted recipes (37).
Figure 10. A recipe for “Rusks” (a type of biscuit) from The Cook’s Oracle produced by the Ladies Social Union of the Central M. E. Church of Stockton, California, 1887, p. 37.

The first sentence includes directions that are embedded rather than explicitly stated. As the cook, I am adding to a pint of warm milk, which I had to have already heated, although that action was not included in the instruction. I then add two eggs and two cups of sugar that I have already beaten together and add butter that has been previously rubbed with flour (an unspecified amount). These directions are convoluted and difficult to follow without a working knowledge of baking. Such a recipe format also requires repeated reading. The reader/cook (then and now) must read through the recipe at least three times; once to parse a list of ingredients, a second time to put the steps in chronological order, and a third time to complete the recipe. Recipes such as these in paragraph format became outdated as more and more women needed better directions for preparing food—the result, for whatever reason, of not learning to cook as young girls.
The standard format of recipes that we are more familiar with today was introduced in the 1880’s in cooking schools in Boston and New York (Veit). The recipes in the *Boston Cooking-School Cook Book* written in this format are more linear, typically list the ingredients before the mixing steps, and include some sort of instruction about temperature and cooking. They also include standardized measurements. A cup of flour in my recipe is the same as a cup of flour in your recipe. In contrast, the teacup of flour in the “Gems” recipe mentioned earlier or the teacup of yeast in the “Rusks” recipe could vary. Fannie Farmer, the author of the second *Boston Cooking-School Cook Book* is known as “the mother of level measurement,” and it was her work that brought about the change in the way that cookbooks present recipes. Other cookbook authors going back to the mid 1800’s had written recipes in this format and suggested a standardized approach to measurement, but Fannie Farmer has typically been credited with the change. These recipes needed to be uniform so that they could be taught in a “classroom” setting. Farmer’s cooking school included both upper class women and immigrants (not at the same time) who had not learned to cook from their mothers. These women either needed to be able to run a household, if they were upper class, or needed to be employable as domestic help, if they were poor and/or immigrant women. The standardization of recipes came about as a response to a growing population, increasing urbanization, and an increasing shift from rural cooking ways to more uniform food preparation characteristic of an urban setting (Viet).

In the collection of cookbooks from Sacramento and Stockton, standardized recipes began to appear after 1910. *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* (1872), *A Practical Cook Book* (1890), *Cookery in the Golden State* (1890), and *The Kirmess*
Cook Book (1899) from Sacramento all have recipes written completely in paragraph format. The same is true for all but the last cookbook from Stockton. Recipes with the ingredients listed separately first appear in Sacramento in The Club House Cook Book in 1904. The 1909 version includes a larger number of recipes with linear instructions and a separate ingredient list. The larger Westminster Church Cook Book, which was not published until 1916, has recipes in the earlier paragraph format, but the ingredients are listed first and the directions are more linear. As a result, the Westminster Church Cook Book represents a transition in the type of format used to communicate recipes. Most of the recipes in Choice Receipts, the latest cookbook in the Sacramento collection, list ingredients first, include instructions that are easier to follow, and include cooking times. The cookbooks from Stockton were essentially all written in a paragraph format. The latest one, The Stockton Community Cookbook, printed in 1924, has multiple formats, and varying degrees of clarity in the directions for cooking. All of the cookbooks, in both cities, continued to have recipes that were in paragraph format and all continued to include non-standardized measurements well into the 1920’s. This was less common in Sacramento than in Stockton.

Differences in when the recipes in these cookbooks become standardized may reflect a difference in the rate at which each city grew. Through the historical period included in this research the city of Stockton was consistently about a third the size of the city of Sacramento. Differences in the size of each city may account for an urbanization process that took more time in Stockton than in Sacramento. Standardization of recipes in these cookbooks reflects the disparity in this process. Changes in a recipe’s format, and changes in the way that cooks measured ingredients indicate changes in the
population and the shift to urban foodways. These changes in the collection of cookbooks from Stockton and Sacramento speak to a growing population and an increasingly urbanized landscape in both places.

**Sensory Descriptors** denote the words and phrases that indicate a cook should use her senses to determine how to proceed in a recipe. Cooking creates a sensory experience. We use color to determine doneness and sound and sight to distinguish between sizzling and simmering. Recipes ask that we feel the dough, thicken the batter, and purée to a smooth consistency. Seasoned cooks know this and often use their senses without realizing that they are doing so. A woman who grows up in the kitchen following and helping her mother or grandmother learns these sensory cues like she learns to talk, by repetition and engagement. The sensory actions of cooking become intuitive. On the other hand, women who learn to cook as adults must learn the sensory cues explicitly and, much like learning a language as an adult, the process is more overt. Each sensory action has a consequence in the faithful reproduction of a recipe. The beginning cook must learn not just the recognition of a “stiff dry froth” or “flour enough to make a thin batter,” but she must also learn the consequences or outcomes of an incorrect sensory judgement, creating a batter that is too thick or egg whites that are not stiff enough.

Like standardization in recipes, the sensory cues included in recipes mark changes over time that reveal who was cooking. Sensory cues fall into two basic categories, those that require knowledge or experience, “experiential” sensory cues, and those that reveal a preference in flavor or texture, “preferential” sensory cues. Contemporary recipes still use sensory input, but they are more preferential. The experiential depth to which our
senses guide us in cooking no longer permeates a recipe the way it did before the turn of the century. These changes reflect differences in the intended audience of the recipes and in the ingredients that resulted from commercialization of various foods as urban centers grew. Population shifts and the massive immigration that characterized the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in America created cooks with different skills. Among these immigrants were women who had not grown up at their mother’s side in the kitchen. Additionally, the domestic science movement dominated cooking and domestic literature in general during this period. At the same time cooking technology and food production changed rapidly to meet the needs of growing urban centers. The confluence of these factors led to changes in the way women cooked at home. Immigrant women learned to cook at cooking schools and local demonstrations or through domestic literature. Upper class women learned domestic science as a way of managing a household—a “science” that included food preparation—so that they could employ immigrant women and keep a modern home. As more and more women learned to cook outside the home, the art and intuition of cooking gave way to science and to “level measurement.” Cooks adapted their recipes to appeal to a wider audience, one with less experience in the kitchen.

The cookbooks in the collection from Sacramento and Stockton show changes in the level of sensory input used in recipes. In my analysis, I chose to include only experiential sensory descriptors, those that required cooking knowledge to produce the desired, or intended, result. For example, statements like “add flour enough to make a thick batter” requires enough kitchen experience to know what a “thin” batter feels like when you are stirring it. Experience tells the cook when the batter is the right
consistency to produce the desired result, a fluffy pancake, or a cake with the right crumb texture. On the other hand, the statement “salt and pepper to taste” is a sensory cue that involves an individual preference. More or less salt for flavor does not require extensive experience in the kitchen, and, more importantly, does not alter the basic result of the recipe. The results of this analysis indicate that the presence of sensory cues decreases over time in this collection. The earlier cookbooks have a higher percentage of recipes with experiential sensory cues in them. Approximately 30% of the recipes in *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* (1887), Sacramento, and in *The Cook’s Oracle* (1887), Stockton, include sensory descriptors in the recipes. Later cookbooks include far fewer references. The *Westminster Church Cookbook* (1916), Sacramento, includes sensory references in only about 16% of the recipes; *Choice Recipes* (192-?) and *The Stockton Community Cookbook* (1924), from Sacramento and Stockton respectively, the last cookbooks in the collection includes sensory references in about 2% of the recipes.

*The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* contains a recipe for making “Wheat Bread” that provides an excellent illustration of the use of experiential sensory cues (Figure 11).
As instruction for homemade bread, this recipe reflects rural foodways in that it requires sensory input and experience on multiple levels. So too does the fact that it calls for homemade yeast that is measured in cups. The cook must use her senses to determine what lukewarm water feels like, and will know (or learn quickly) what happens if the water is too hot or too cold. In addition, “a pint or more” added to “the quantity of flour needed” provides no clear measure of how much water and flour to add. These directions require a sensory judgement. How wet does the cook want the dough to feel, and how much does she want to make? The cook then uses the consistency of a “thick batter” to determine if she has added the correct amount of flour and water. Whether she is mixing the dough...
the flour and water with her hands, with which she will feel the dough itself, or with a spoon, which will resist the batter as she stirs, the cook feels the dough to judge the amount of water and flour to add. When the “sponge is risen” to “make cracks in the flour over it,” the cook knows to move on to the next step. The cracks provide a visual cue and her experience will tell her when there are enough cracks or when they are large enough to indicate the sponge is ready. The next step, again, requires the cook to judge the consistency, although the recipe provides some guidance in terms of a ratio of flour to water. She must then knead “thoroughly,” another judgement by feel, and then let the bread rise “until it has become light a second time.” “Light” in this case entails both color and feel, and, again, necessitates that the cook rely on previous experience.

*Choice Recipes*, the latest of the cookbooks from Sacramento, has a recipe for making bread in which the ingredients are measured and the rising is based on volume (figure 12).
The recipe includes a commercial ingredient, Crisco, and a commercially produced yeast cake. The yeast cake is a pre-measured product that requires no interpretation. The recipe in this later cookbook provides measurements for all of the ingredients. The cook simply mixes the ingredients and lets them rise. The rising is done when the dough has doubled in bulk. Although “doubled in bulk” is a visual cue, it requires far less interpretation because it can also be measured. *Choice Recipes* contains no recipes for a larger loaf bread, neither does *The Stockton Community Cookbook* (1924), the latest book in the collection from Stockton. In fact, both cookbooks contain very few recipes for yeasted breads of any kind. The recipes they do contain are for either fancy or specialty yeasted breads, or for smaller loaves and rolls. By the 1920’s, loaf breads and sliced loaf
breads were available commercially. The average homemaker no longer needed the experience required to understand the subtle complexities of making a loaf of bread from scratch. Despite the fact that home breadmaking has witnessed a resurgence in recent years, the average household of today has no need to make bread on a regular basis. As more acceptable commercial products became available, the knowledge of bread making disappeared.

Figure 13 contains a brief list of some of the more common, albeit antiquated, sensory references that were found in this collection and indicates the recipes from which they are drawn.
This list further illustrates the extent to which cooks relied on their intuition to produce a recipe. Contemporary cookbooks use measurement tools for both the ingredients (cups, teaspoons, tablespoons) and for the process (thermometers, timers). The loss of sensory references coincides with a loss of cooking knowledge at the turn of the century; their disappearance likewise illustrates changes in how food was produced at home and in who was producing food. Cookbooks from both Sacramento and Stockton show changes during this period illustrating the rapid growth and urbanization as well as the industrialization of food.
Ethnicity, as a category in the analysis of these recipes, derives from the presence of terms that indicate an origin outside the U.S., or dishes that are generally known to originate in a culture other than white middle-class. “Spanish Beans,” “Spaghetti Italienne,” both indicate an origin in other countries or cultures. “Enchiladas” originate in a non-European culture and so are classified as ethnic in this study. Some of the cookbooks devote an entire section to one type of ethnic cooking. For example, *The Bride’s Cook Book*, *The Westminster Church Cook Book*, and *Choice Recipes* all have a section devoted to “Spanish Dishes”. *The Bride’s Cook Book* (1917) also has a section labeled “Italian Dishes”. The presence of these dishes signals a willingness, and perhaps a desire, to include the food of immigrant communities. The incorporation of immigrant foods indicates a growing population and changes in the demographics of a developing urban environment.

Throughout history, food has been used to both claim and disclaim ethnic heritage. Immigrant groups often disclaim traditional foods in lieu of foods that allow them to assimilate into a new culture. At the same time, they may fiercely claim, or hold onto, other foods that bind them as a group. Food may act as a means of blurring the lines of ethnicity, while simultaneously reinforcing those boundaries. At the turn of the twentieth century, immigration was one of the more pervasive political and social issues of the day. Growing urban areas were experiencing an influx of people from all over the world. In the relatively new state of California, immigration began in large numbers in the 1850’s and continued at a rapid rate for the next three decades. In addition, when California was admitted to The Union in 1850, Mexican citizens, who had been Spanish citizens only two decades earlier, were automatically granted U.S. citizenship. Although
not immigrants, Spaniards turned Mexicans (called Californios in California) turned U.S. citizens found themselves ethnically isolated in much the same way as immigrant groups. Tejanos (Texans), said of them, “they did not cross the border, the border crossed them…” (California 3).

The earliest ethnic references in these cookbooks are for foods that derive from Spanish/Mexican heritage and recipes signifying Chinese origins are significantly absent. Notably, this occurs at a time when the Hispanic population was decreasing and the Chinese population was growing rapidly. In the first decade following the Gold Rush the Hispanic population decreased from 20% to 2% (Walker 5). It began to climb again after 1870. The Chinese population increased steadily following the discovery of Gold. Initially Chinese nationals immigrated along with others in search of gold. About the time that productivity in the gold mines waned, Chinese immigrants found work in construction of the new railroads. Populist, anti-immigration sentiment led to the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, and Samuel Gompers published his “Meat vs. Rice” tract in 1908. None of the cookbooks from either city include recipes identified as Chinese. Chinese immigrants made up somewhere between fifteen to twenty-five percent of the population in the northern Central Valley of California and they were considered social pariahs during this period. Anti-Asian sentiment across the country was extreme and the lack of inclusion of Chinese recipes in these cookbooks reflects this prejudice. I note this because while these ladies were reaching out to immigrants in their community through inclusion in their cookbook, a very clear line of demarcation occurs when it came to Chinese immigrants.
Although the actual percentage of recipes that are counted as “Ethnic” remains about 2% - 3% throughout most of this collection of cookbooks in both cities, these percentages are deceiving. The way that the books include the recipes changes substantially over time. In the earlier cookbooks, ethnic recipes appear scattered throughout the text. Increasingly through time ethnic recipes become grouped into their own sections. *The Cook’s Oracle* (1887), from Stockton, contains a recipe for “Spanish Pickles,” the earliest recipe considered ethnic in this study. The same Stockton congregation published *The Cook’s Oracle* (1887) and *The Methodist Cook Book* (1899). Because they reflect similar communities, they offer an opportunity to look more closely at changes in the recipes that are included. The “Spanish Pickles” included in *The Cook’s Oracle* are the only recipe with any hint of origins in another culture. *The Methodist Cook Book* on the other hand, printed twelve years later, has ten recipes categorized as ethnic, along with the recipe for “Spanish Pickles.” Five are in their own small section labeled “Italian,” and two are for “Spanish Cream.” The inclusion of a small section of Italian recipes grouped together draws attention to these recipes. Similarly, chapters in the later Sacramento cookbooks titled “Spanish” or “Italian” also focus attention on specific groups of people. That focus may have arisen out of a need to acknowledge certain groups within the community or it may have arisen out of a genuine desire to include recipes that had gained some mainstream cachet for both the women who contributed them and those who could recreate them. In either event, they signal a rise in, and perhaps a growing acceptance of, immigrant groups that illustrates changes associated with the urbanization of each city.
**Processed foods and name brands** are arguably the most direct indicators of both industrialization and of urbanization. In this study, processed food denotes any food (ingredient) that comes from a box, a package, a can, or prepared outside the home for use in the home kitchen. Basic ingredients like flour, milk, cream, butter, eggs, meat, or vegetables that are fresh are generally not considered processed foods in this study. They may be pickled, canned, or in some way preserved at home, but if a recipe calls for one of these ingredients they are categorized as unprocessed. Identifying processed foods provides a means of examining how they changed both in number and type. Ingredients like sugar, molasses, and spices had been processed outside the home long before the publication of the cookbooks in this study. This study does not categorize as processed foods those ingredients available prior to the publication of these cookbooks, ingredients too ubiquitous to provide useful data. Similarly, I have not counted liquor as a processed food. Bacon and sausage may or may not have been cured at home and, as such, are difficult, if not impossible, to classify. The presence of ads for meat markets clearly indicates the processing and purchasing of meat outside the home, but this study did not parse the distinction for each cookbook. The absence of a recipe for curing meat does not necessarily imply that the meat was not cured at home, and most recipes don’t specify whether cured meat was purchased or made at home.

No study of cookbooks from the turn of the twentieth century can be complete without a discussion of the role of processed foods. The emergence and growth of processed foods in the nineteenth century is intimately connected to the shift from a rural economy to populated urban centers. Industrialized processed food is cheaper and more plentiful, a requirement for urban growth where people do not have land, or the
knowledge and skills needed to process their own food. Canned foods began appearing after the Civil War. Early canned foods included meats and fish, later vegetables, soup, and so on. Canned foods in general took some time to find acceptance among housewives because the early attempts at commercial canning were marked by all kinds of problems – tainted food, unsealed cans, or animal parts (Wallach ch. 4). Commercial processing makes more food faster, and cheaper. Home cooking changed as a result because ingredients become more, or less, available.

In the collection of cookbooks from Sacramento and Stockton processed foods are present from the beginning. Identifying and tabulating the presence of processed foods was a simple matter of counting how many recipes in each book had processed foods listed as ingredients. The same was true for tracing brand names. Although the same method was used for brand names, recipes in the later cookbooks often had multiple brand name ingredients listed. In this study, each recipe was counted if it contained a processed ingredient or a brand name food. Multiple processed or brand name foods in any one recipe did not matter. Overall, the presence of processed foods increased throughout the period included in this study. The earliest cookbooks have processed foods in about 10% of the recipes. The later cookbooks, especially in Sacramento, have processed foods in closer to 90% of the recipes. The presence of brand names increased similarly.

The use of gelatin and baking powder provide just two examples of processed foods, or ingredients, that had an enormous impact on home cooking in the 1800’s. Gelatin represents a commercialized food process, whereas baking powder represents the introduction of non-food derived chemicals into food on a large scale. Gelatin was
invented – or rather commercialized – in 1845, although gelatin has been around for centuries. Making gelatin requires a laborious process of boiling down the bones and other parts of various animals – primarily pigs. Commercial gelatin, Knox Gelatin, and Jello, appeared in 1894 and 1895 respectively. Although Cox Gelatin, from Scotland, had been around since 1845, Knox and Jello were commercially far more successful (What’s Cooking).

Commercial gelatin proved a boon to cooking. Not only was the consistency reliable, but housewives no longer had to use their time and energy to boil pigs feet for days on end. The earliest cookbook in this collection, *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* (1872) has a recipe for “Apple Float” and one for “Snow Pudding” that each call for a half box of gelatin. Cox’s gelatin first appears in a recipe for “Bird’s Nest Pudding” in the *Kirmess Cook Book* (1899) from Sacramento. Both *The Cook’s Oracle* (1887) and *The Methodist Cook Book* (1899) from Stockton contain the same recipe for “Snow Pudding” that calls for a half box of gelatin. Brand name gelatin, Knox, first appears in *A Cook’s Guide* (1907), from Stockton, in one of the three recipes for “Chocolate Pudding”. Subsequently all of the cookbooks have multiple recipes that call for gelatin, both generically and by brand. *Choice Recipes* (192-?) contains multiple recipes that call for Jello (Jell-O).

Like gelatin, baking powder (which has baking soda along with an acid ingredient like cream of tartar) first appeared in 1845 in the United States. Baking powder allows cakes (and baked goods in general) to rise faster and, generally, higher. Prior to the introduction of baking powder the choices for leavening were yeast, which takes a long time and some experience to make and use; egg whites, which take a lot of work to whip;
and baking soda (also called saleratus in old recipes), which requires an acid ingredient and has a slightly metallic taste. The introduction of baking powder met with immediate commercial success and allowed food manufacturers (and home cooks) to make leavened baked goods without the time it took to use yeast. In addition, baking powder ushered in the first wave of chemical enhancements in food (Civatello ch. 1).

In this collection baking powder is present from the beginning, but over time it becomes a much more common ingredient. The increasing use of baking powder signals the growing acceptance of industrialized food. The ease of use of baking powder as a leavening agent allowed for less experienced cooks to have success in the kitchen, and, as such, offer a marker of changes in the urban population in Sacramento and Stockton. Both gelatin and baking powder are represented by iconic brands that appeared in the 1800’s. The increasing use of these brands, along with other processed ingredients/foods, illustrate the growth of industrialized food, a shift that made urbanization possible.

The earliest cookbook in the collection includes recipes that list processed ingredients such as yeast powder, corn starch (introduced in 1840), flavorings, and chocolate. The only brand names that appear in the two oldest cookbooks are for Baker’s Chocolate (Oracle p. 103), and Cox Gelatin (Ladies 27). The lack of processed foods in the older cookbooks suggests that Sacramento and Stockton were still primarily eating foods cooked and processed at home. The foods were simple and were, as yet, unaffected by various industrialized food products that had been introduced in the prior twenty to thirty years.

Yeast, as an ingredient, becomes particularly significant when looking at the shift from rural to urban foodways. Natural yeast is made by fermenting different fruits,
vegetables, or grains (depending on the type and flavor desired). The introduction of yeast powder in recipes marks the beginning of a transition from natural yeast to commercially processed yeast. In older cookbooks yeast added by the cupful signals the older, made-at-home, variety. *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* includes primarily the older, homemade, kind of yeast. *The Cook’s Oracle* includes both kinds of yeast as an ingredient, though not in the same recipe. *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* (1872) includes a recipe for making yeast, the only one in the collection from Sacramento. The others all have recipes that use yeast cakes and yeast powder. The *Westminster Church Cook Book* (1916) names a brand of yeast (Fleischmann’s) that appears in many of its recipes for baked goods. In the Stockton cookbooks, the last recipe for making yeast appears in *The Cook’s Guide*, published in 1907. The process of making yeast takes time, knowledge, and the space to store enough quantity of yeast “starter” to last a week or two. The introduction of powdered, caked, and instant yeast varieties allowed leavened baked goods to be made more quickly in a smaller space. The presence of commercial yeast also signals the beginning of a loss of the knowledge required to make yeast at home. The loss of cooking knowledge related to yeast and the shift to a commercially produced yeast illustrate changes in home cooking. These changes reveal a growing urban environment.

The wealth of processed ingredients in the later cookbooks, specifically *Choice Recipes* (192-?) and *The Stockton Community Cookbook* (1924), render a very different picture of the food landscape in Sacramento and Stockton when compared to the earliest cookbooks. Beyond yeast, baking soda, and gelatin, a growing cadre of processed ingredients made its way into recipes that were contributed by the women who wrote
these books. Karo syrup, marshmallows; Wesson oil, Mazola oil and other local oils; Carnation (evaporated milk); Borden (sweetened condensed milk); Campbell’s Soup; and Jell-O all appear more than once. The introduction of these brand name foods signals the transition to commercial, industrially processed foods. Industrialized food production signifies a growing and changing urban environment and the intrusion of industrialization more broadly.

Advertising

The women who wrote community cookbooks typically used advertising to defray some of the costs of publication. Patronage by local women rewarded the advertisers. By placing these ads in their cookbooks, the ladies who worked on each project were no doubt giving, at least tacit, approval to whatever business or commodity placed an ad. The contract of sponsorship, in part, provides encouragement to women to patronize these businesses. I chose to analyze the advertising because, like the recipes, the advertisements that appear show changes that were occurring in the local landscape. The advertisements, like the recipes and other textual elements, illustrate a growing population and changing foodways. Phone numbers and addresses quite literally illustrate changes in the physical landscape. Phone numbers become longer, indicating a growing population, and physical addresses printed in the ads show an expanding city in both Sacramento and Stockton. My analysis is not about advertising methods (psychology, bias, target audience, etc.) but rather looks at advertised food and for foodways reflected in the presence of the ads.

I analyzed the advertisements in these books for the information they might provide related to how food and foodways appear in ads and how the quantity of various
types of ads changed. In general, the number of food ads ranged between 20 to 30% of the total number of ads in each book with a very slight increase over time (figure 14).

Figure 14. This graph shows the percent of all advertising in each cookbook that is for food. Although the trend line shows a slight increase the average is about 30%.

I categorized the ads by type of business or commodity – single food, purveyor, and eateries. Single food ads are those that advertise one particular food or food type, for example Phoenix Flour, or Campbell’s Soup. An increase in the number of these ads
shows an increase in the industrialized foods that were present. Purveyors include both specialty foods and general purveyors like a grocery store. The balance of the two types shifts towards an increase in specialty purveyors over time. This shift to more specialty foods in the marketplace indicates an increase in the population supporting the number of businesses and changes in which, and in how many, foods were purchased outside the home. I use the term eateries as a more general term for restaurants. This third category included both eateries that served a specialty type of food, like an ice cream shop, and those that served a meal, termed restaurants. More specifically, the term “restaurant” divided the category of eatery. In the absence of the actual term “restaurant,” the term “menu” indicated a full restaurant as well. Differentiating between an eatery and a specialty food purveyor presented a challenge in a couple of places. Ice cream shops, for example, could be a place where you bought ice cream and took it home or a place where you sat and ate in the shop. If the ad did not specifically say it was a place to sit and eat, then it was categorized as a specialty purveyor. No food ads were left out because of ambiguities, but given a lack of information about the nature of the business, I categorized these ads according to the information presented in the ad itself. A similar lack of information characterized certain brands. All of the mills in the early cookbooks advertised a brand name of flour. If the ad only advertised the flour then I considered it a single food (brand name food) ad. If the ad included other mill products or multiple types of flour then I categorized it as a specialty purveyor even if it was for the same company. I did not count any ad twice, so as not to inflate the number of food ads.

I did not analyze the quality of the individual advertisements, but instead looked at how advertising shows changes in foods that were being consumed and in foodways
over the years included. Research on advertising generally focuses on the images or the wording in ads. In this study, I simply looked at the number of each type of ad present as a quantifiable measure of change. Qualitatively the types of purveyors and the brands change, and I noted these changes. The changes in advertisement in these cookbooks show an increase in ads for commercial and brand name foods and an increase in the availability of food, including meals, eaten outside of the home. These changes reflect both a growing population, one that included individuals who did not prepare meals at home, and an increase in the industrialization of food.

**Purveyors.** The entire collection of cookbooks shows a general decrease in the number of ads for purveyors, both general and specialty. The graph of advertisements for purveyors of all kinds, (figure 15), decreases from 100% in the oldest cookbook to around 70% in the latest cookbook. The earlier cookbooks contained advertising contributions from businesses that were only, or mostly, purveyors of food, primarily general purveyors.
Later cookbooks contain ads distributed among all three categories. Of the three advertising categories, purveyors remain the bulk of the ads throughout the entire collection. In the period reflected in the early cookbooks (1880’s and 1890’s) the food businesses in both cities that were available, or willing, to sponsor these projects were primarily food purveyors. The earliest three cookbooks from both cities contain only one ad for something in the other categories. The specialty purveyors that appear in the earlier cookbooks are butchers, dairies, and commission merchants. Commission merchants were the businesses who supplied food, primarily staples, to miners and then later to railroad construction camps mostly in the foothills and Sierras. The presence of
dairies and butcher shops in the earlier cookbooks indicates that these types of food processing had moved out of the home and had become commercialized on a scale large enough to supply a small, but growing population. Owning a cow and processing one’s own meat disappeared as a household necessity by the late 1870’s, only twenty-five years after these cities were founded. In later cookbooks, multiple ads for dairies and butcher shops appear side by side indicating that more than one of these businesses was, or could be, supported by the population at the time.

Later cookbooks include ads for many more specialty purveyors. Increasing instances of multiple businesses specializing in the same food, such as dairies and mills, within the same cookbook’s ads, and an increase in the variety of foods represented in the ads marks an increase in specialty purveyors. Both the increase and the variety of these elements speak to a growing population. Bakeries, ice cream shops, and candy stores dominate the specialty foods, although wine and coffee merchants also show a significant presence.

**Brand name food ads** first appear as early as 1897 in *The Cooks Oracle* (1887) from Stockton. A total of eight food ads are present. Of these, two represent local brand name foods, both are flour, Sperry Flour and Crown Mills Flour (figure 16). Ads for Sperry Flour appear in all the cookbooks from Stockton except *The Key to the Kitchen* (1908). Some of these are for the flour itself and some are for the flour mill. Phoenix Flour and Pioneer Flour are the first brand names to appear in a Sacramento cookbook in *Cookery in the Golden State* (1890). The presence of these flour companies as some of the earliest brand names in this collection represents the early importance and success of the wheat industry in the Central Valley, an important and growing industry that
supported a growing population. Flour advertisements are very much a hallmark throughout the entire collection.

Figure 16. Flour ads from (Left to Right) *The Cook’s Oracle* (1887), Stockton, p. 15; *The Methodist Cook Book* (1899), Stockton, p. 8; *Cookery in the Golden State* (1890), Sacramento, p. v.

Flour ads in the early cookbooks give way to numerous other local brand names in the cookbooks produced after 1900. The *Club House Cook Book* (1904) contains ads for two different local brands of olive oil along with local flour ads. The first national brand name appears in *The Methodist Cook Book* (1899) in an ad for Schilling’s Best spices. A. Schilling produced coffee, tea, spices, and baking powder until the 1990’s. The last four cookbooks in both cities contain ads for multiple brand names including Carnation, Campbell’s soup, Shasta, Ideal Not-a-Seed Raisins, and Manischewitz Matzo Meal, all of which represent funding from sources that went beyond just local merchants.
However this funding was secured, the presence of national name brands signals a transition from a local, rural economy to one that includes participation by national commercial enterprises.

**Restaurants** appear in the advertising in all but three of the oldest cookbooks. *The Sacramento Ladies Kitchen Companion* (1872) and *The Cook’s Oracle* (1887), the two oldest cookbooks from Sacramento and Stockton respectively, and *A Practical Cook Book* (1890) from Sacramento, each has no ads for restaurants (figure 17). *Cookery in the Golden State*, from Sacramento, which was also published in 1890, has one ad for an ice cream shop. All the other cookbooks have an increasing number of ads for restaurants over time.
The increasing number of restaurant ads that appear in these cookbooks suggests that restaurants were not only becoming more plentiful, but that they were a socially acceptable way to obtain a meal. There are no ads in any of the cookbooks for bars, saloons, or pool halls. Breweries, all of which served meals, represent a small number of the restaurant ads. Because these cookbooks were produced by, and largely for, women, the presence of ads for restaurants suggests that these restaurants were an acceptable place for women to be seen, as opposed to a saloon, a bar, or a pool hall which would not have been acceptable for a lady and do not show up in any of the ads. In the early days of the Gold Rush most eating establishments were not a place for a proper lady.
One of the earliest restaurant ads is for “The Elite Tamale Café” (figure 18). The ad appears in *A Practical Cookbook* (1890), Sacramento. Other “tamale cafes” are present in later books. Notably, this ad not only represents one of the first restaurants present in these cookbooks, but also the first ethnic restaurant. The presence of the ad indicates that the women who published this book not only sanctioned patronage of the restaurant, but were also giving their blessing to the incorporation of ethnic food into the foodways of their community. The presence of the ad, evidence of an ethnic minority, immigrant or not, in the city indicates a growing and changing population.

![Image](image.png)

Figure 18. Ad for a tamale café from the *Club House Cook Book* (1904), Sacramento, p. 103.
Legacy

As Sacramento and Stockton became urbanized centers in northern California, the food and foodways of the area changed. The changes within the community cookbooks of these two cities present an initial foodscape that was tied to rural ways of processing and consuming food, one that quickly gave way to the urban development that began with the Gold Rush. Both the quantitative data and the qualitative data show changes associated with the way food was processed and cooked at home, the increasing use of brand name and commercial foods in home cooking, and changes in who was doing the cooking and the cook’s level of experience. Beginning in the 1870’s, these changes coincided with population growth that began at the time of the Gold Rush and were spurred by the development of vast tracts of prime agricultural land that was available in the valley. The legacy of this rapid population growth and of the unique agricultural heritage that belongs to California’s Central Valley are documented by these cookbooks—in the recipe narratives and ingredients lists, in the types of recipes included, and in the advertising, that supported each project. As documents of historical change, these cookbooks provide a window onto the epic changes that were taking place at the turn of the century as the business of mining gave way to the business of agriculture. Agriculture would come to dominate the area and the area has become a dominant force in the business of agriculture.
Chapter 6: Conclusion

_Good cookery is the foundation of good digestion, and good digestion the first factor toward sound thinking._

_Cookery in the Golden State, 1890._

The women of Stockton and Sacramento produced a rich collection of community cookbooks in the decades between 1870 and 1930. This collection allows scholars to peer through the kitchen window to see how cooks, food, and cooking changed at the turn of the twentieth century. These community cookbooks connect the dual forces of urbanization and industrialization to changes in what people ate. Following the Gold Rush and then the Civil War, the need to provide food for a growing population altered the way people viewed food. The community cookbooks in this collection chronicle these changes. Signs of these changes are embedded within these cookbooks, housed within their poems, quotes, prayers, recipes, and advertisements. These cookbooks record the foodways of the era and offer a unique glimpse into the ways in which urbanization and industrialization played out in the home kitchen as food became more commercialized and food production moved further and further from the home hearth.

The cookbooks from Sacramento and Stockton reveal shifting foodways, charting the introduction of new ingredients into home cooking and the loss of others as their production was taken over by commercial enterprise. The earliest cookbooks provide instruction on how to prepare foods like homemade yeast or how to cure meat. Later cookbooks in the collection include recipes that rely on commercial versions of the same foods. Both the recipes and the non-recipe texts include references to foods that were new and to foods that represented the region’s expanding agricultural industry. At the
same time, these cookbooks also trace the disappearance of pre-industrial foodways. By the early twentieth century women no longer baked their own bread, and the introduction of ingredients like baking powder and gelatin made quick work of many labor-intensive kitchen chores. By-products of rural domestic food production, such as soap and gelatin, and non-food products such as medicines, also disappeared with the introduction of commercial alternatives. At the same time, cooking shifted away from the hegemony of the household kitchen and began to find a place in newly minted restaurants that opened their doors to everyone. New ingredients, introduced by waves of immigrants with a demography unique to California, became more common. Tomatoes, peppers, nuts, and oils were among the foods that grew, quite literally, into commodities during this period. Agro-industrialization provided a reason for many of these changes.

The community cookbooks in this collection also document the introduction of commercial and brand name foods as they insinuated themselves into both regional and national diets during this period. Flour, an economically important commodity at the turn of the century, assumed various local brand names, some of which developed a national identity, in step with the development of agriculture in the area. Local and national brands of commercial oil appropriated the role of fats such as butter and lard. Karo Syrup, Jello, Baker’s Chocolate, Crisco, Wesson oil, shortening, and powdered sugar opened the door to myriad recipes that did not exist twenty years earlier. Other ingredients that sweetened, smoothed, thickened, and softened food became household staples hand in hand with recipes that used these new foods. A growing body of recipes that called for these ingredients guaranteed the successful intrusion of commercial products into home cooking, altering the landscape of food that was placed on the table.
Perhaps most importantly, these cookbooks document a change in cooking knowledge that may have provided the space for the inclusion of more industrial foods. Pre-industrial rural foodways necessitated an understanding of where food came from as well as how it was produced. Knowledge of how to cure, dry, preserve, and butcher and how to turn basic (whole) ingredients into food disappeared from the home kitchen at the turn of the century. A confluence of factors, including the domestic science movement and a growing pantry of commercialized staples, acted to shift household knowledge away from how to process food at home to the far simpler act of preparing food. Rather than knowing how to butcher and process a whole hog’s carcass, home cooks began needing instruction to perform such simple acts as opening a box or can and adding heat. No longer did a woman need to know by feel whether her dough was ready or when her roast “looked” done. She didn’t need to feel how much flour she was adding or cool her scalded milk to “blood warm.” Newer recipes told her how long to do something and what temperature to use, leading to a decreased understanding of why food works the way it does. Left behind with the spider pans and pudding bags was an intuitive knowledge of food and its relationship to survival. As cooking became more measured, prescriptive, and packaged, women lost knowledge about how food was produced, a loss that effectively and metaphorically increased their distance from the fire.

Studying the collection of community cookbooks from Sacramento and Stockton provides many insights into how and why local food and foodways changed at the turn of the century. This study looks at the advertising in community cookbooks as a means of understanding foodways. Further study might include identifying mapping techniques to understand how local advertising in community cookbooks can reveal changes in the
physical landscape as urbanization progresses. Using these texts to track the introduction of commercial foods and the loss of cooking knowledge offers an opportunity to understand how industrialized food colonized home cooking at the turn of the century. By tracing the penetration of commercial foods into the world of home cooking and the subsequent disruption of women’s cooking knowledge, further research might provide insight into modern patterns of urban consumption. Alternately this information may provide a path to understanding, and to undoing, our overly heavy reliance on processed food by reconstructing the intuitive knowledge of food that women maintained before the turn of the century. The women who wrote these cookbooks understood the importance of food in their community, and their texts offer more than just recipes for cooking. Their books offer a way to understand the effects of urbanization and industrialization on a community and the changes associated with its foodways. When we can understand and internalize the value and inherent satisfaction of knowing how we are connected to our food and how our food is connected to our “selves,” we can begin to understand the deeper context in which food provides physical, cultural, and spiritual fulfillment.
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