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**Rebeckah Winche’s Receipt Book Indices[[1]](#footnote-1)**

What types of knowledge can be found inside a typical recipe book? A few types may come to mind--knowledge of available ingredients, an understanding of flavor, cooking techniques, and means of preserving foods like fruits to meats. Recipe books can also tell us even more about their compilers, including personal and family stories as well as local customs and cultures. They serve up ideas for meals and a bit of history.

 Scholars of early modern English women’s writing have long valued the treasure trove of historical insight contained in these books. These handwritten texts help us understand which recipes women wanted to record, how they classified and organized knowledge about food when organized intentionally (which many cooks today know is not always the case when putting your recipe book together), and the networks the writers were tapped into (evidenced in attributions to another individual).

 Recipe books in early modern England often were in a hybrid form called receipt books. Receipt books were very similar in style to recipe books but included medical recipes, as well. In *The Receipt booke of Rebeckah Winche* (featured below), for example, the author provides treatments for everything from a headache or stomach ache to jaundice and the plague. The receipt books show how women participated in the circulation and assessment of medical knowledge.

The indices are divided according to the categories found in the original manuscript. The left-hand column contains the text collectively transcribed by scholars and published by the Folger Shakespeare Library. The right-hand column contains my modernized spellings and definitions of terms that may be unfamiliar to many students.

# Table of Contents:

**Coockery Cookery**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| To Marinat fish: 101 | To marinade fish |
| a sheepes head puden: 102 | A sheepshead pudding |
| a custerd puden - . 102 | A custard pudding |
| stewd brest of ueall: 103 | Stewed breast of veal |
| a sack poset - : 103 | A sack [wine] posset [drink usually made with milk] |
| to stew pippins: 104 | To stew pippins [apples] |
| Pan cakes - - 104 | Pancakes |
| Mead - - - 105 | Mead  |
| Cock ale -- 105 | Cock ale  |
| Almond Iumbulls 106 | Almond  |
| bisket - - 106 | Biscuit |
| Chees [C] cakes - 107 | Cheesecake |
| fresh cheese - 10[8]7 | Fresh cheese |
| Collerd beefe: 108 | Collared beef [thinly cut beef] |
| a Barly puden: 109 | A barley pudding |
| to make sausages.: 109 | To make sausages |
| to make wafors: .110. | To make wafers |
| a poset withoutmilke -- }.110. | A posset without milk |
| lemon cream -butrmilk cream }111 | Lemon cream- buttermilk cream |
| to make a caudle - 1[2]12 | To make a caudle [warm drink] |
| Quince pudin 112 | Quince pudding |
| suger wafers 113 | Sugar wafers |
| pickeld coucombers 115 | Pickled cucumbers |
| pickeld turups 115 | Pickled turnips |
| pickeld walnuts 116 | Pickled walnuts |
| to stew a hare -:039 | To stew a hare |
| to make Almond buter: 040 | To make Almond butter |
| to make Branbread - .40 | To make Branbread |
| to make a carawaycake - } 41 | To make a caraway cake |
| to make bisket: 156 | To make biscuit |
| to make Vineger 124 | To make vinegar |
| to stew Pigons 122 | To stew Pigeons |
| Chocolet - 123 | Chocolate |

**Preserues Preserves**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| to preserue Goosberys 151. | To preserve Gooseberries |
| preserue grapes greene 151. | Preserve grapes green |
| to drie figgs -- 152. | To dry figs |
| to makeChes cakes)} - 42 | To make Cheesecakes |
| to drie beef - 43 | To dry beef |
| pan cakes -- 80 | Pancakes  |

**Sirups & conserues Syrups and Conserves**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Sirup of Elder berrys: 203 | Syrup of Elderberries |
| Sirup of Lemons - - 203 | Syrup of Lemons |
| conserue of roses - - 203 | Conserve of roses |
| a sirup for a cough 204 | A syrup for a cough |
| Conserue of Cowslips - 204 | Conserve of cowslips |
| the samesirup of Elders the beter way 03[3]7 | The same syrup of Elders [Elderberries] the better way |

**Waters & Cordiall Waters and Cordial**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a drink for the scurvie: 20 | A drink for the scurvy |
| the Lady Hewets water: 21 | The Lady Hewets water |
| for a woman newlydeliuerd - - } 22 | For a woman newly delivered [delivered a child] |
| to cause easy deliuery 22 | To cause easy delivery [childbirth] |
| Goosbery wine -- 23 | Gooseberry wine |
| Apricock wine -- 23 | Apricot wine |
| a water for thestone } 25 | A water for the stone [kidney stones] |
| lambatiue fora cough - } - 24 | Lambative for a cough |
| an excellent remedyfor a sore throte } 25 | An excellent remedy for a sore throat |
| a drink for the stone: 25 | A drink for the stone [kidney stones] |
| a Ptisan drinke: - :26 | A Ptisan drink [barley tea] |
| a Gargle - -: 26 | A Garggle |
| Feuor water - 70 | Fever water |
| Elder bery water: 37 | Elderberry water |
| Milke snail water: 118 | Milk snail water |
| a drinke for the:seatica or any paine } 038 | A drink for the sciatica or any pain |
| in the limbsfor. the Rickets: 073for. the same - 074for: the same - 074 | In the limbs:For the RicketsFor the sameFor the same |
| the harts horne drink- - - 76 | The hartshorn [antler] drink |
| Calibeat sirup - 77 | Calibeat syrup |
| a broth - - 77 | A broth |
| the toothache 78 | The toothache |
| an ague - 78 | An ague [fever] |
| to sweeten theBlood - }79 | To sweeten the Blood |
| the Essenc of sirupfor uapors - } 127 | The Essence of syrup for vapors |
| the bitter drink: 127 | The bitter drink |
| the wound drink - : 129 | The wound drink |
| for vapors - :[to make chocolet]swallow water - 29 | For vapors-: [to make chocolate] swallow water |
| for the Gripes 131 | For the Gripes |
| for a cough - 099 | For a cough |
| an Elixor forthe Colick: 48 | An Elixir for the Colic  |
| a pouder forthe wormes - 80 | A Powder for the worms |
| a strengthinIelly for ioynt } 35 | A strengthen jelly for joint |
| for kings euellswelins in the lips } 135 | For King’s Evil [scrofula] swellings in the lips |
| for an agu - 134 | For an ague |
| for the Coleck - 131 | For the Colic |

**Pouders Powders**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lady Kints poudr 31 | Lady Kent’s powder |
| Gascon pouder 31 | Gascon powder |
| a purging pouder forthe stone } 33 | A purging powder for the stone |
| a pouder for a cap 32 | A powder for a cap |
| for the yelow Iaundes 33 | For the yellow Jaundice |
| a pouder for a cough 34 | A powder for a cough |
| for Convulsie fits - 34 | For Convulsive fits |
| for stopage of Vrin 34 | For stoppage of Urine |
| for Convultions 134 | For Convulsions |
| an easy remedy forconvultions - } 135 | An easy remedy for Convulsions |
| a Ptisan for a CoughRatafied -- 136 | A Ptisan for a Cough Ratified |
| to dr[e]ie musherum 136 | To dry mushroom |

1. Melissa Bryant, “The Winche Project,” *Emroc* (blog), accessed March 2, 2022, <https://emroc.hypotheses.org/ongoing-projects/the-winche-project>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)