

Folger Receipt Books,

c1575-1800
from the Folger Shakespeare Library



upon them god fornes ther
77: To make a
hot cream and sett it on
with a little mace & nutmeg
from sack & sweeten it
y^e cream is boyld & stir
ther put in y^e jache, hout

JANE, wife of this John Blome was borne the 18 th day of February 1634. She died the 6 th day of March 1694 of a palsey being 63 years of age.
WILLIAM, BLOME was borne on Tuesday the 15 th day of September anno 1663. He died the 10 th day of December 1688 of a conju tion being of the age of 25 years.
JOHN, BLOME was borne on Wednesday the 20 th day of September anno 1663. He died the 3 rd day of August 1695 of a feaver being of the age of 30 years.
CHARLES, BLOME was borne on Saturday the 19 th day of December 1668. He died the 19 th day of February 1695 of the gout or rheumatism aged 27 years.

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Adam Matthew Publications

"Created by men and women throughout the early modern period, these texts demonstrate the types of practical knowledge which were essential for the day-to-day running of a household. They also highlight the enthusiasm and need which drove the recipe gathering and exchange. Finally, the varied appearance and content of these texts are revealing of early modern attitudes towards circulating information and compilation practices".

Dr. Elaine Leong, Lecturer in Early Modern Cultural History
University of Leicester

What was it like to sit at table in a Tudor household? Or at a great feast? To toil in the garden? Or to be ill with toothache? Receipt Books opens up daily life in Tudor and Stuart England.

If you want to see into the kitchens, gardens, butteries and bedchambers of Tudor and Stuart England, then Receipt Books provides a most valuable guide. Far from offering advice purely relating to cookery, these manuscripts offer insights into topics such as:

- The control of vermin
- Perfumes and cosmetics
- The cultivation of fruit and vegetables
- The role of women
- Household accounts
- Conception and childbirth
- Cures for common ailments
- Diet and the importance of seasoning and alcohol
- Food in Shakespeare's England
- The cleaning of clothes

This project brings together over 80 manuscripts from the holdings of the Folger Shakespeare Library dating from 1575 to the end of the 18th century. Such receipt books preserved family traditions and passed on common wisdom.

They show how diet changed over this period and explain methods of baking bread, preserving meat and mixing pottage. They reflect developments in agriculture and the importation of new foodstuffs. They show the impact of new seasonings and a shift in taste from sweet to salty.



They show how herbs and medicinal plants were used and how these relate to the humoral theory of Hippocrates - where each person has a dominant humour, be it Bile, Blood, Choler or Melancholy, which needs to be carefully managed. They describe methods of coping with minor ailments, such as bee-stings and headaches, as well as considering more serious issues such as childbirth and cancer.

"An ointment to take the spotts out of the face after the small Poxe:

Take an ounce of deeres suet cut it small & put it into a pipkin with 1/2 an ounce of camphire; melt them together and take of sulphur vivum 2 penny worth, beat it very small and sift it, and put it in when the other is almost cold."

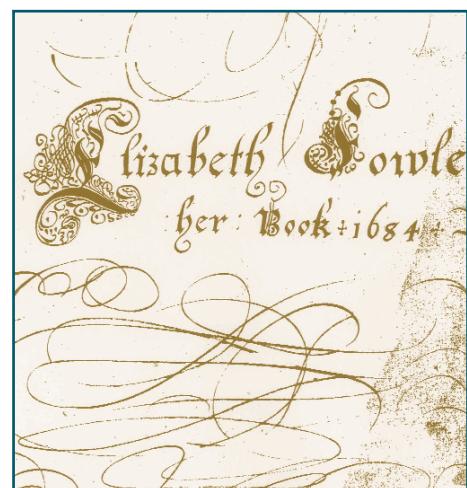
Some also include details of other pursuits including washing, dyeing, horticulture, viticulture and animal husbandry.

Sarah Longe's Receipt Books of c1610 is a typical example. There are sections on 'preserves & conserves', 'Cokery' and 'Physicke & Chirurgery.' Alongside

recipes for gooseberry foole and rice pudding are instructions to stop bleeding and remedies for miscarriage.

Many of the volumes also contain other 'commonplaces' such as quotations from famous authors, snatches of verse and song (even some lute tablature) and accounts.

It is clear that those who wrote these volumes (mostly women) were more than cooks and servants within their households. They often managed the family budget, and were responsible for the fecundity of the land as much as the well-being of the family. These sources will enable us to better understand domestic life in Early Modern England.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Unique, previously unpublished manuscript material.
- Rare insights into domestic life during the Elizabethan, Stuart and Queen Anne eras.