

2018

Food in the Early 1900s

FCS 3784

Follow this and additional works at: https://thekeep.eiu.edu/lib_exhibits_flu_cafe_documents



Part of the [Food Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

FCS 3784, "Food in the Early 1900s" (2018). *1918 menu at The Café Documents*. 1.
https://thekeep.eiu.edu/lib_exhibits_flu_cafe_documents/1

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the 1918 menu at The Café at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in 1918 menu at The Café Documents by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

Food in the Early 1900s

The period between the turn of the century and the end of WWI brought many changes in home food preparation. Concerned by exposes in popular magazines like *The Ladies Home Journal* and books like *The Jungle* (1906), home cooks began to equate safety with light colored or clear foods. Spicy or flavorful food was thought to be doctored to cover the taste of rancid or spoiled ingredients. The impacts of the 1906 Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act were not yet widespread. Schremp described a “*white food mania not satisfied by white bread, white rice, and white sugar. In a perfect meal, everything must be the color of snow, smothered by sauce and bland to the point of flavorlessness.*”

Electricity brought some convenience to those homes that had access to it, and could afford it. Homes without refrigeration utilized dry and canned goods extensively (canned shrimp, chicken, tuna, peas, and mushrooms were popular items).

1908 – first electric coffee percolator

1909 – first electric toaster (with exposed wires and coils); those with covered coils came a couple of years later

1910 - about this time a pilot light was introduced as a safety feature for gas stoves

1911 – first electric fry pan developed by Westinghouse (it was 6 inches across)

1913 – first electric refrigerator

1915 – first thermostat controlled gas stove

During this time many homes still grew vegetables and raised some animals, but the development of self-serve grocery stores provided homes with products not available before. In 1916 the Piggy Wiggly opened in Memphis, and is considered the first grocery store as we know them today. Food items introduced in the time period include:

1903 – Iceberg lettuce developed

1911 – Campbell’s canned soup, Kellogg’s Corn Flakes, Crisco shortening which was not popular at first because it was made by Proctor & Gamble, a soap company

1912 – Oreo cookies, Morton’s table salt

1913 – Quaker Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat, Peppermint Life Savers

1916 – Kraft processed cheese

1917 – Clark Bars, Moon Pies

1919 – Hostess Cupcakes

During WWI food supplies became scarce as the country fed the soldiers and parts of Europe. Citizens were encouraged to grow food in Victory Gardens, preserve food, and limit food waste. Mondays and Wednesdays were designated as “wheatless days,” Tuesday was “meatless,” and Thursday and Saturday was “porkless.” Students were told that food would win the war if they practiced the gospel of the clean plate.

Today's Menu

Serving items popular in the early 1900s

Corn Chowder

Corn and potatoes in a creamy broth

Chicken a la King

Diced chicken breast and vegetables in a creamy sauce
served over a biscuit

Tangy Tomato Aspic

Gelatin with tomato juice and vegetables

Waldorf Salad

Fresh apples, celery, and mayonnaise

Pumpkin Mousse

Slightly sweet mousse with a hint of pumpkin and spice