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1949

### Letter From H. Wayne Gruber to Alfred L. Shoemaker, 1949

H. Wayne Gruber

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Reading, Pa., 16, 1949.

Dr. Alfred L. Shoemaker,  
F. and M. College,  
Lancaster, Pa.

Dear Sir;

When reading your article about saffron I thought I might as well give you what I remember about its uses.

Saffron was used by many housewives in preparing chickens, pot-pie and boiled potatoes to color them yellow many years ago, but for the last forty years I have not partaken of any meal in which it had been used.

At home on the farm my parents had a patch of saffron about four feet square in their garden which they raised for only one purpose. When any of their horses got an attack of colic a pinch of saffron was put in a heavy greenish colored bottle of about a pint size (called a porter bottle) and scalding water poured in it. After this was cooled enough it was given to the horse by pulling up the horse's head with a strap fastened to the bit and pouring this brew into the mouth and at the same time work on the horse's throat so it would swallow it, and then mount the horse and ride it in a slow trot until it had worked through and the horse was relieved and soon well. The only part of saffron taken was the center stems, or pistil. I have in my possession some of that saffron which I had picked in that garden. It occurs to me as if some people used saffron to color Easter Eggs. My parents have passed away 40 & 45 years ago.

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About the left-over-pie-dough I do not know any name for it just in that state, but after it had been baked there are many names for it depending how it was prepared and who the family had been, as mostly every individual family had their own name.

My mother had different ways to prepare that dough by rolling it out, place in a pie (patty) pan and----

- 1.--put in an efficient layer of apple-butter, lay strips of dough crosswise over it, adding a little cinnamon.
- 2.--put in a little butter, ~~XXXXXX~~ sugar, flour and milk.
- 3.--or add to the above some spices.

The following names were used--Ladwaerik, Tsukker udder Millich Kuche, but in general they were named "Slap-jack".

In Schuylkill Co. near the border of Berks Co. it was the custom to put any kind of fruit, preferably apples, on one half of the dough, then lap over the other half and bake. These were called "Buuve Schengel". From what source this name was derived I could not tell as no one is here to tell.

*and pinch the dough short*

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As to what Mr. Deisher of Kutztown related about the town and country folks fighting and insulting among them, I remember about the scraps happening in Womelsdorf. I was too young as then and was not with them, and after I had grown up it seems as if they had understood each other better.

The town folks used to call the farmers--Buschgnippl--Kiidrek ~~xxx~~ dreeder--Buschwakker or Country Jakes. The town folks were called Schdatschisser--Hochmiediche~~x~~--Allischlupper or city or town ~~slickers~~ slickers.

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I knew that Mr. Henry Deisher of Kutztown well but have not seen him for at least 50 years.

*H. Wayne Grover*