

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 1 – July 2020 Edited by Anne Taylor

Welcome to Upper Eden History Society's first monthly newsletter. Several members have research to report and, if you have material that would fit this format, 400 to 500 words, please let me know by email: at241@cam.ac.uk or by phone: 017683 71518 – the more contributions the better. We shall continue to produce these newsletters until we can meet again in person.

Anne Taylor, UEHS Chairman and Editor



CARLIN PEAS

from Anne Taylor and Margaret Gowling

Carlin or Carling Sunday is a local name for Passion Sunday, local that is to parts of northern England and southern Scotland. An Internet search provides information from many sources, including Beamish Museum and a company called Hodmedod's that sells British dried peas and beans. Peter Brears has written extensively about traditional foods of Cumbria, Northumbria and Yorkshire and mentions carlin peas, as does Jane Grigson in her 'Vegetable Book'.

What are carlin peas? And what is the tradition? UEHS member Margaret Gowling comes from a Northumbrian family so she has first-hand knowledge. She remembers the traditional story of the timely Tyneside arrival of a ship with a cargo of carlins, saving the local people from starvation at a time, in Lent, when there were severe food shortages. Various years are mentioned on websites: 1644 when Royalist Newcastle was under siege or the 1327 siege by Robert the Bruce. Brears quotes the peas being cooked in Siddick near Workington, and Grigson mentions Thornaby and Stockton-on-Tees.

The various Sundays in Lent were remembered by a skipping rhyme, beginning: *Tid, Mid, Misere, Carlin, Palm, Pace-Egg Day*. The origins of this are uncertain. Some sources suggest *Tid, Mid* and *Misere* refer to the first words of the Lenten collects (in Latin, so could be pre-Reformation) for the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays, respectively, *Carlin* (*Carlin Peas Day*) the 5th Sunday, and *Pace-Egg Day* was Easter Sunday when decorated *Pace* or *Pasche* eggs were distributed.

Other sources suggest Anglo-Saxon origins, *Tid* being related to the first ten days of Lent, *Mid* because it is the mid Sunday, and *Carlin* coming

from *caru* meaning grief or pain i.e. Care or Passion Sunday.

Peas and beans have long been principal foods for the Lenten fast period. Records from the mid-14th century onwards show they were doled out by charitable benefactors to the poor.

Carlins were also known as maple peas, pigeon peas, grey peas or black badgers, and sold as dried peas – to be soaked overnight, boiled in water, lightly fried in a small amount of beef dripping or butter, then seasoned with salt, pepper and vinegar.

When *Jane Grigson's Vegetable Book* was first published in 1978, carlin peas were still being sold and eaten in the northeast – she quotes several tons being sold annually by Amos Hinton & Sons of Teeside.

A Kirkby Stephen resident, who used to live in Rochdale, remembers black pigeon peas were a speciality there in November, around the time of Bonfire Night. A man went round the local houses selling the hot peas from an insulated carrier at the front of his bicycle. Householders came out with their own containers to be filled and, as in Northumberland, they were seasoned with vinegar.

A Wigan source remembers these hot peas were often sold at the fair, eaten from a cup with salt and vinegar. Searching Wikipedia again it seems that in parts of Lancashire these were called *Parched Peas*.

More research on the Internet reveals that carlins are having a revival – Hodmedod's have recipes for their use in chocolate cakes, and traders in London's Borough Market are selling them, as a British version of chick peas and an excellent source of protein for vegans and vegetarians – no longer just food for the poor.

SOURCES

Brears, Peter 2013. *Traditional Food in Northumbria*
Brears, Peter, 2017. *Traditional Food in Cumbria*
Grigson, Jane 1978. *Jane Grigson's Vegetable Book*
Hutton, Ronald 1996. *The Stations of the Sun*
Websites: Black Peas, and the rhyme at Wikipedia; Carlin Peas at Borough Market; Black Badger Peas at Hodmedod's



18th CENTURY LOCAL REMEDIES (for rickets and worms) from Margaret Gowling

To keep your eyes (and ears) attuned to local history, here are two remedies from a farmer's notebook. It would, however, be unwise to go the full length of trying these out for the purposes of research. The remedies come from a hand-written poket book [sic] begun by Jeremiah Jackson of Park House, Brough in 1718. A copy is in UEHS archives, original spellings, punctuation and layout as shown. Transcribed by Ron Jackson and Vivienne Gates, reproduced here with permission.

To cure rickats in Chillerin

take one handfull of Read
mint; one handfull of Tance
one handfull of Easop; and two
handfull of Liverwort and
boyle ym in two quarts
of black Cows milch until
their be but one quart of
ye Liquer Lefft then ad
to It as much heart Shuger
as make it sweet and give
ye Child to drink morning
and Evening or any time
when thirsty and now and
then a glass of sack.

To destroy wormes in Children

take a handfull of wromwood
a handfull of moalts
Chopet and friet in
butter and applyed to ye
Navell and Stomick pla:
ster wisse, and for their
Lickor to drinke take
Rosemary Lickoras and
figgs of each an Equale
Quantety boyled in Spring
watter and strained forth
agin; and ye Lickor Sweetind
with heart Suger and given to
drink when thirsty.

Try translating from Westmorland dialect. Just one hint: the black cows were from the Scottish drovers and quite distinct from the local stock.



More dialect, this time collected by Anne Taylor – from Thomas Gibson's book *Legends & Historical Notes of North Westmorland* published in 1887. He reproduces a dialogue between two farmers, Anthony and John, who were making observations and complaints familiar to us today (pp 200-203):

A – They say theve gitten watter works et Kirkby, becos t'watter they hed was'nt varra gud? I niver saw nout et aill when I was thear; did ye?

J – I niver drinch mich watter be't sell. I allus like a sup o' gin in't. It's nobbut a cald thing et'sell isn't watter, I think.

A – Our Betty says et furs kettle sumtimes. Et's limestane watter, but it's nut bad fer folk, is t'watter. Al niver tak much hurt frate watter.

Later on they talk about food and the rising prices of beef, mutton, butter and milk:

A – Whya, tu sees, folk eats mair flesh meat now en fatty cakes, cos addlings better, en you can hardly tell t' common folk fra t' gentry now, if they keep thir mun shut [...] Whya, when I was yung yan thow't yansell varra weel off if yan gat anes poddige twice a day, en stirabout en lobsouse fur dinner. Now ther's terrible wark o'up en down wi' tea parties and picnics, sec dancing and fleeing about owt et duar, oft draggled wi' wet claes, en gits thir deeth o' coad [...] But folks was harder lang sen; we hedn't sea many doctors knockin' about, unless t' lyins-in, an' them's things et mun happen, or t' world would sune be at an end.

Thomas Gibson (1834–1887) may have smiled a little ruefully as he recorded that last sentence. He was Kirkby Stephen's doctor for many years and both his sons, Thomas Horatio and Robert Wilson, became doctors too. In the 1871 Census the family is living at Croft House. Later he retired to Orton, where he published his book only a few months before his death. In the Preface he acknowledges the sketches made by his friend Mr Thomas Fawcett and by his son Robert W Gibson, sketches that were used by the publisher as the basis for the copper-plate illustrations. Probably the same Thomas Fawcett (1812–1891), Painter & Glazier, we know from reproductions of his sketch book of Kirkby Stephen, dated 1876. Many of the houses were drawn from his childhood memories of the town.



Keeping to the theme of farming and local dialect here are some questions from a quiz, originally set by Cumbria Local History Federation (answers in Newsletter 2, Aug 2020):

1. Identify the farm animals described as:
 - a) *stot*; *why*; *tip*
 - b) *gimmer*; *hogg*; *twinter*
2. Identify the trees described in dialect as:
aik; *birk*; *eller*; *hollin*; *burtree*
3. Identify the wildlife described in dialect as:
brock; *mowdiwarp*; *paddock*.