

FOOD

Leech, Samuel¹

Their “fare” “was composed of hard sea biscuit, fresh beef while in port, but salt pork and salt beef at sea, pea soup and burgoo...or, as it was sportively called, skillagallee, was oatmeal boiled in water to the consistency of hasty pudding. Sometimes we had cocoa instead of burgoo. Once a week we had flour and raisins served out, with which we made ‘duff’ or pudding. To prepare these articles, each mess had its cook, who drew the provisions, made the duff, washed the mess kids, &c.

Samuel Leech: Born 1798. British seaman. Volunteered for Royal Navy aboard HMS *Macedonian*. Captured by USS *United States* on 25 October 1812. Joined American Navy and served aboard USS *Syren*. The *Syren* was captured off the African coast by HMS *Medway* on 12 July 1814. Prisoner at Cape Town, South Africa. Died 1848.

The Recipe for “Plum Duff”²

4 pounds of flour,
2 pounds of grated pork fatt*,
(*Beef suet was substituted for pork)
1 cup sugar,
1 quart water,
1 1/2 cups raisins

Mix all ingredience together and knead thoroughly to make a stiff dough. Divide into 8 equal portions and tie each snugly into a floured pudding bag or cloth.

Put the bags in the coppers with the salt meat and boil for 4-5 hours.

Dried Peas with Lumps of Pork³

2 pounds of lean salt pork
2 cups whole dried peas
1 medium onion, peeled (optional)
salt and pepper

Soak the pork and the peas separately, in cold water to cover, for at least 12 hours.

Put the pork and the peas in a pot with 1 & 1/2 cups of water.

Bring to a boil, reduce heat, simmer covered, stirring occasionally for 5 & 1/2 hours.

Add the onion during the last hour and salt and pepper to taste.

Ship’s Biscuit ⁴(Bread)

4parts flour: 1 to 1 ½ parts water
knead ½ hour, bake at 325° 1 hour

Baked ashore, placed in bags and shipped in barrels.

The objective was to bake out those “nooks and crannies” that allow moisture/mold to collect.

High carbs. (carbohydrates) providing quick energy

Incidents of weevils probably exaggerated (Brenckle)

Broken into bits and softened in juice from boiled meat, dipped in water, placed in mouth until softened by saliva?

¹ Samuel Leech, *Thirty Years from Home or A Voice From the Main Deck* (Boston: Tappan & Dennet, 1843), p. 46.

² Grossman, Anne C. and Thomas, *Lobscouse & Spotted Dog* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), p. 105*

³ Ibid, p. 99

⁴ Ibid, p. 102