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by Lydia Lovell

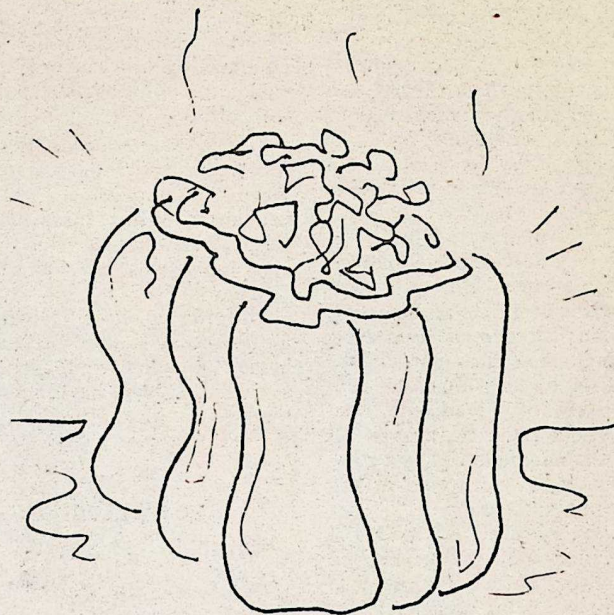
Inviting friends to drop in for a cocktail has become so much a part of our social pattern we tend to forget there was a period in the lives of an earlier generation when, for more than a decade, manufacturing, transporting, and selling alcoholic beverages were prohibited by law. As a result, some people who had never before used intoxicating liquors defied the law in defense of personal freedom; others, in most instances those who had taken for granted occasional use of wines and spirits, quietly made their own supply for private consumption. And some people, perhaps out of respect for the law, perhaps on moral grounds, used no alcohol during prohibition.

A moderate man, Uncle Henry belonged to the middle-of-the-roads. As a prudent person, he dealt with no rum-runners or bootleggers, and as far as I know, he purchased no contraband. On the other hand, on special occasions he never failed to produce the makings of a drink except when his guests were those he knew for certain were teetotalers. And Aunt Olivia, when she expected company who would probably accept Uncle Henry's offer of a cocktail or high ball, prepared a tray with crackers and cheese and a plate of hot appetizers. At hand on her pantry shelf she kept a pint-sized crock used only for serving **Gouda Cheese Spread**.

1 8-oz. pkg. Gouda Cheese 2 T. grated onion
3/4 C. blue cheese, crumbled 1 clove garlic, crushed
1 C. sour cream 1/8 t. cayenne
4 T. butter

In a small saucepan, combine all ingredients. Heat slowly over a low fire, stirring constantly until well-blended. Pour into a pint-sized crock, cover with foil or plastic wrap, and chill overnight in refrigerator. Serve with crisp crackers.

Whenever Aunt Olivia told Uncle Henry she needed some bourbon for **Hot Dog Appetizers**, he teased her, saying such a purpose was a waste of fine liquor. But he always provided enough. Aunt Olivia used ordinary hot dogs just as they came from her butcher and, while those are satisfactory, you may prefer to lay in a few cans of Vienna sausages for a more



elegant touch.

1 lb. hot dogs
3/4 C. bourbon
1-1/2 C. ketchup

1-1/2 C. brown sugar
1 T. grated onions

Rinse hot dogs and wipe with a paper towel. Cut in 1/2 lengths. Combine all ingredients in a medium saucepan. Simmer over low heat, covered, for an hour, stirring occasionally. Serve piping hot, pierced with toothpicks. Make them a day ahead and reheat just before serving. These are particularly effective served in a chafing dish if you happen to have one.

When the last lingering cocktail-party guest had said his farewells and departed, the family (including my parents and brother and me) went right to work tidying up the living room while Aunt Olivia set the dining table and finished preparations for dinner. No sooner were we ready to eat than she was ready to serve. A main course on such an occasion might be **Stuffed Bell Peppers**.

8 large green peppers, seeded 1 t. salt
2 lb. ground beef 2/3 C. raw brown rice
2 medium onions, chopped 1 12-oz. can tomato sauce
4 T. Worcestershire sauce 1/4 C. Parmesan cheese
1/2 t. each: garlic powder, oregano, celery salt, black pepper

In a large saucepan, parboil the peppers in a half-inch of water for three minutes. Remove and drain peppers; discard cooking water. In the same saucepan, lightly brown meat, stirring to break into small pieces. Add seasonings, onion, rice, and two-thirds of tomato sauce. Mix thoroughly. Fill the peppers with the meat mixture and top with remaining tomato sauce. Sprinkle with cheese. Arrange peppers in a shallow baking pan so they will support each other. Pour enough water into pan so it is half-an-inch deep. Bake, uncovered, for one hour at 350°. Serves six to eight.

Delicious and a real time-saver on a busy day, is **Nine-Layer Salad**. Sometimes it became **Ten-Layer Salad** if fresh mushrooms happened to be available for slicing. Aunt Olivia made hers this way.

1 head of Iceberg lettuce 1 16-oz. jar mayonnaise
1/2 C. chopped celery 2 T. sugar
1 large red onion, thin sliced 2 C. sharp Cheddar cheese
1 10-oz. pkg. frozen peas (unthawed) 1/4 C. green peppers, chopped
1 8-oz. can water chestnuts (drained) 1/2 lb. fresh mushrooms
3 T. lemon

In a shallow serving dish approximately 12 inches square, spread lettuce chunks, after washing, drying thoroughly, discarding any rusted portions, and cutting into bite-size portions. Layer chopped celery and onion rings over lettuce. Then sprinkle with frozen peas. (Or use canned peas if you prefer. Aunt Olivia used canned ones for years before frozen vegetables were available. Just drain off the juice and scatter.) After adding the water chestnuts, spoon the mayonnaise into the dish in dollops. Sprinkle with sugar and grated cheese. Toss chopped green peppers and sliced mushrooms in lemon juice and scatter over surface. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. This salad is ready to be served whenever you are ready to eat. Tomatoes are a nice garnish.

A dessert we all looked forward to was one Aunt Olivia mixed and baked the morning of the party, then returned to the hot oven (which she turned off when she removed the Stuffed Peppers) to warm while we ate. This recipe resembles one Mrs. Bessie Truman used long before her husband, Harry, became President of the United States; we called her recipe **Truman Pie**. In Aunt Olivia's file, however, it is **Connecticut Yankee Apple Torte**.

2/3 C. sugar 1 C. apples, peeled and diced
1 egg 1 t. vanilla
1 t. baking powder 1/2 C. chopped walnuts
1/8 t. salt

Beat sugar and egg together. Add flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir in apples, vanilla, and nuts. Bake in a greased 9" pie plate at 350° for 25-30 minutes. Top with vanilla ice cream if desired.

An alternative richer and more elaborate choice of dessert might be one Aunt Olivia usually baked only on a bitterly cold winter's day when she had a hot fire burning in her black castiron kitchen stove to help keep the house warm. While there are some dishes that bake beautifully in the small portable oven I use on my woodstove, this is not among them. **Brown Baggle Pie** calls for a hot oven of ample area.

Begin by removing all but the bottom rack from your oven and place that rack in its lowest position. Preheat oven to 425°.

1 9" unbaked pie shell 1/2 t. cinnamon
8 large cooking apples 1/2 t. nutmeg
2 T. lemon juice 1/2 C. flour
1 C. sugar (divided) 1 stick of butter
2 T. flour

Peel, quarter, and slice apples into a bowl. Sprinkle them with lemon juice; transfer apples to pie shell. Mix 1/2 cup sugar, 2 T. flour, cinnamon, and nutmeg together. Sprinkle over apples. Combine 1/2 cup flour and remaining sugar; cut in butter with two knives or a pastry blender until like coarse meal. Scatter evenly over top of pie. Place a large brown paper grocery bag on a cookie sheet and put the pie in the bag. Seal bag shut with paper clips. When putting in oven, make sure bag does not touch any part of the oven. Bake on cookie sheet at 425° for one hour.

Some Americans believe they can't fully appreciate apple pie unless a big scoop of vanilla ice cream is plopped on top of it, but in the Lovell family a wedge of golden Cheddar cheese, the sharp variety, is considered the perfect accompaniment for apple pie. Try it. I think you'll like it.

Bon appetit.