



WHAT DOES THE FOOD WE EAT MADE SAY ABOUT HISTORY

A 15-MINUTE PRESENTATION BY CALEB REES

WHEN PUTTING THIS QUESTION TOGETHER I HAD TO ANSWER FOUR QUESTIONS.

Out of all of history what period do I look at?

What was the goal for these bakers/cooks when crafting these recipes?

What food or type of food do I study?

What role did this food play in their diet and survival?

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WHAT PERIOD DO I WRITE MY REPORT ON?

WHEN DECIDING THESE THINGS ONE PIECE
OF TEXT STOOD OUT TO ME IN PARTICULAR.

Although it is a review on economic history and does not list any recipes. The book places a heavy focus on what sailors and slaves ate on their way back from taking part in the trans Atlantic slave trade and it has a major focus on what the sailors and slaves ate.

Slave ship provisioning in the long 18th century. A boost to West African commercial agriculture?

Angus Dalrymple-smith, Ewout Frankema *European Review of Economic History*, Volume 21, Issue 2, May 2017, Pages 185–

235

WHAT DID A SAILORS MEAL LOOK LIKE?

- ALTHOUGH THIS WAS BY NO MEANS WHAT EVERY SINGLE SAILOR ATE EVERY TIME THEY SET SAIL, THE GENERAL LIST OF FOOD
- HAD A FEW STAPLES SUCH AS WHAT (IN THE FORM OF A BISCUIT, PEAS, RICE, BEANS, AND BARLEY. THERE WOULD ALSO BE FOODS
- OF LUXURY PROVIDED SUCH AS SALTED MEATS, CHEESE BUTTER OR SUET(FRANKEMA 2017)



SHIPS BISCUITS

SHIPS BISCUITS OR ALSO KNOWN AS HARDTACK ARE AN IMMENSELY DENSE BISCUIT THAT WAS USED AS A RATION IN THE 18TH TO 19TH CENTURY.



WHAT WAS THE GOAL WHEN MAKING HARDTACK/SHIPS BISCUIT

To facilitate trade within the 18th and 19th century food sources of nutritional quality and long-lasting characteristics had to be created.

This need for nutrient dense carbohydrate food led to the implementation of ships biscuit that existed within the common sailor's diet.

If you get passed the weevils and the maggots that are known to button inside these biscuits.

What was the process.



First flower and water is mixed to make a basic dough.

And is kneaded for 10 minutes or more.

Salt can and was added to the dough to further drain moisture but there are conflicting sources on how prevalent this method was.





Unlike normal bread or biscuits, the dough is not actually meant to rise

Then there the dough is cut up into roughly palm sized biscuit plates

The biscuit would have been smaller and more rectangular for storage purposes but there is not a standard rule for this.



The biscuits are then placed in the oven at a lower heat and then baked for 8 hours

This was done from the hours of 10:00 pm to 06:00 am

Small holes were pierced into the biscuits in order to extract more moisture

Why do this

My main goal in making these biscuits was to get an idea on what its like to create something that is purely functional and whether it evoked the same feeling that assembling an appliance or cooking a meal would have.

This paired with a diary documenting the process of research baking testing and other experiences along with this project will provide hopefully provide me an idea on exactly what this food says about humanity and its rich history.

Experimental archaeology and (re)-experiencing the senses of the medieval world

Oniell Brendan

Lauren Alex O'Hagan (07 May 2024): The semiotic remediation of hardtack biscuits during World War One, *Visual Studies*

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