

PLEASANT HOMES

by Elizabeth MacRea Boykin

EAT, DRINK AND BE ELEGANT

Marguerita Mergentine, Designer of the Most Exciting Informal Linens on the Market Tells in an Interview About Dining Customs of the Last Century.

Marguerita Mergentime is a bright young designer of bright young table linens . . . even if she is the mother of a pair of pretty college-age daughters. We called on her at her home the other day and found her looking very trim, slim and smart against the background of a modern apartment.

It seemed paradoxical that she should be the authority on dining in the nineteenth century but she is just that, having done a great deal of research into the modes and manners of our ancestors.

"Really it's quite a logical study for me to make," she explained. "It gives me a background for understanding the taste of the present.

"Oh, those Victorian times were the days of eat, drink and be elegant," she continued. "But goodness, elegance, in 1856, was very uncomfortable. Female elegance meant tight-lacing, skirts verging on the hoop, six petticoats (one horsehair, two flannel, two plain, and one cambric), and perfection in the ar of fainting. The gay male vests and stove-pipe hats were a little more roomy, but tobacco chewing and accurate expectoration went with them. Both sexes considered the behavior of the previous decades when ladies actually used to laugh aloud and show their ankles to be quite vulgar. The elegant fifties were above such exhibitionism and knew better than to allow books by male and female authors to stand next to one another on the library shelves.

"The hazards of manoeuvering in a well-filled reception room among ladies whose nether circumferences measured some fourteen feet around made a dinner party a very exciting occasion. The dining room of the 1850's was dazzling with gas chandeliers and the glitter of silver, porcelain, and napery. course candles were kept in readiness in phia found their places set with white table at the same time or be served branch candelabras of bronze for any dinner plates, since the vogue for plain after the soup. 'Fish is generally servemergency in the gas supply, and the white ware was creating a stir in fash- ed upon a napkin, the corners of which magnificance of the display could not ionable circles to last for two decades. are either turned in or thrown over hide the ubiquitous spittoons). A con- Guests at more suburban houses still the fish or upon a piece of simple nettemporary said that a dinner at the dined upon blue Staffordshire plates ting, which is turned in all around; Russian Minister's made him feel as from which views of the Baltimore and but we recommend our readers to use though he were 'dining in a gold Ohio Railroad, the Boston Almshouse, the elegant serviette, as being more

mine.' gravy might fall. Fashion permitted | sideboard pieces in the States. mats of crochet or coloured braid, one at the height of the mode.

"The napkins, too, were fine white other bowl-shaped on short bases." linen damask. Americans secure in the 1850's could afford to laugh at the story Expecting to make an extended tour brought a dozen napkins in her baggage, only to find napkins already in means a universal amenity.

mather-of-pearl and silver napkin rings and Tyler too. dissipated in napkin folding. Female suggested by a popular ladies' magazine course came liquers. guests pinned their napkins firmly to of the day for a wedding breakfast will . "The diner had not yet reached his their skirts-no lady could risk attend- be some indication of the hospitality surfeit, though he had come so long

Bohemian glass, the epergnes (multi- and a brown, a mild and a high season- in its crocheted cloth. layered salvers) of silver or glass. The ed soup flanked the centrepiece, and that which President James Monroe men had brought in France for 5000 francs and for which he was roundly berated by the Democrats of the day. It was thirteen and a half feet long and two feet wide, 'Based upon oblong plate glass mirrow, each about three feet in length, (the separate pieces) stretched down the middle of the table, end to end, a perfect riot of festooned railing and fraceful figures upholding crystal vases. There are large gilded candelabra, centre vases, and fruit dishes to match.

"Plated bread baskets with a crocheted cloth wrapped around the dinner rolls or bread an inch thick were a la mode, as well as cut glass cruets for condiments, a cut glass cranberry dish, salt boats, pickle leaves, and celery

"All were within reach of the diners, since an excess of servants was known to restrain conversation. President Jefferson it was who invented an elaborate system to ensure the privacy of his guests-it being his opinion that much of the social, and even public discord that existed in society, was produced by the mutilated and misrepresented conversations, repeated by these mute but attentive listeners.' He had placed a dumb waiter at the chair of each guest with extra plates, knives and forks, finger bowls and other necessary articles. In addition he had installed a machine of circular revolving shelves, constructed in the wall, by which the dinner and its appurtenances could be introduced into and carried cut of the room, without the opening | or shutting of doors.

"By the 1850's, however, servants were again performing these duties. They stood at attention by the sideboard, in white gloves and white ties, with their right hands upon the covers of dishes while grace was being said.

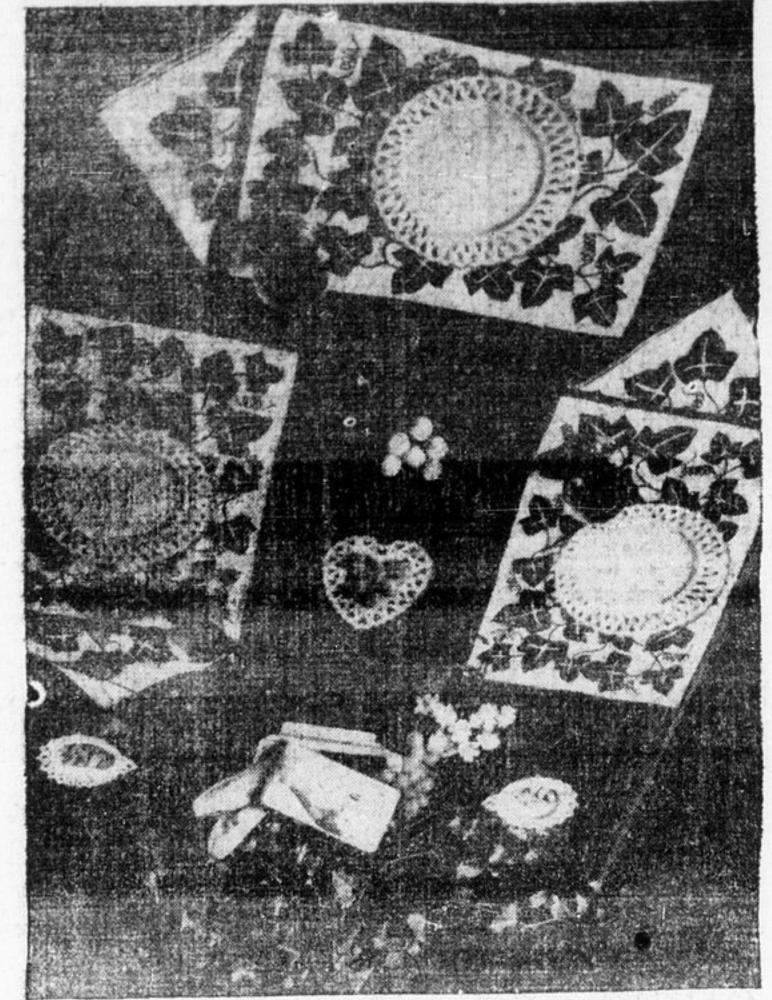


Table mats in an ivy leaf pattern are here used to set a charming table. With them a very simple inexpensive centrepiece can be arranged with ivy sprays.

and the State Insane Asylum or Mas- stylish, wrote one who knew. "The mid-century table was laid with sachusetts looked up at them from flor- Following upon the fish course were

hostesses' guide even suggesting a was to be found at the left of the din- curries, ragouts, fricassees, stews, pal patchwork cloth, but white damask was ner plate. To the right were three or ates, etc. Symmetry was the rule to sure to be the table covering in houses four wine glasses of blue, red, or green be remembered by those waiting upon

"The cutlery on the table was of in- be near the same part of the table. of Fanny Elssier some years before. handled knives were in vogue. Native the dish, a silver potato ring or a wall of the United States, the dancer wood might be used on knives and tree. This main course was served on use here. They were, however, by no er were in evidence. It was the magni- salvers, but the ladies present had early "The napkins on the dinner table held against President Martin Van two glasses. The consumption of the were folded in an intricate pattern Buren in the campaign of 1840 and gentlemen was unlimited by custom. that would defy description. Happily which led to his defeat by Tippecance The third course, served on the

"The table linen was weighed down poised servants raised their right hands a glass bowl, with slied cucumbers, orwith flower vases, epergnes and a to uncover the soup. Two or four namental butter, salad, and cheese on

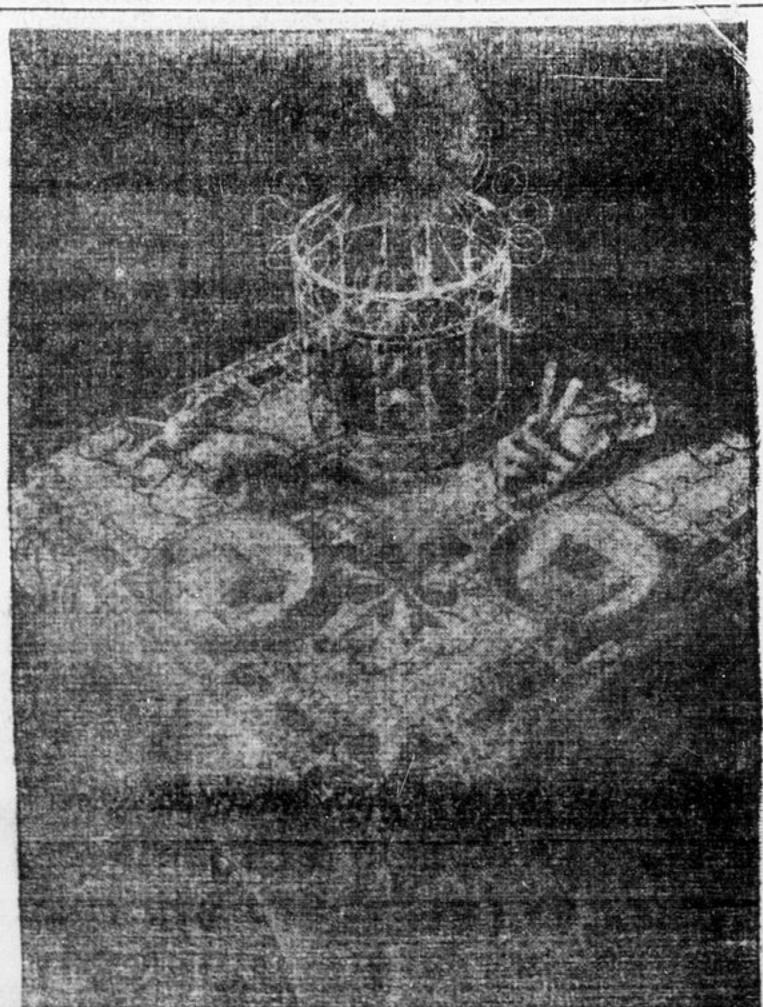
"The fish course might occupy the so that the delicious coolness of the

a snowy damask tablecloth over a scar- al borders. The gilded china and roasts (brown and white) and stews for let felt cloth. Then several smaller Sevres designs which were at their the top and bottom of the table; turkey cloths were laid over the ends where height in Europe were rarely more than or fcwls, ham garnished, or tongue for the sides, with small made-dishes for "Usually a napkin enclosing a roll corners, served in covered dishes, as glass, some with lovely slender stems, table, with the further axiom that no two dishes resembling each other should

> tricate workmanship. Ivery and pearl "Lest the gravy slop over the edge of designs of corn or wheat carved in of mashed potatoes enclosed the encheese scoops, and silver salts, marrow the large dinner plates. At this juncspoons, salad scissors, and plate warm- ture, the champagne was passed on ficence of his table-service which was learned never to attempt more than

plate next smaller, ranged from game were also a common style, or else a "The dinner to be eaten off the table macaroni, vegetables, and salads to great proportion of American energy thus elegantly laid was of suitable puddings, jellies, pastries, preserved in the mid-century would have been length and lavishness. (The menu fruit, and confectioneries. With this

"Ices and wafer biscuits were offered most famous surtout of the era was the ladies were served before the gentle- next, in glass dishes, followed by preserved ginger to stimulate the palate, R. J. Jemmett said that he could not



This delightful tablecloth looks as if it were cut from a piece of 1890 lingerie "Diners in New York and Philadel- out of Godey's Lady's Book. Perfect for a sophisticated luncheon or bridge



W. P. Noals of the General Passenger Department, Canadian National Railways, Toronto, who has been appointed Travelling Passenger Agent for Northern Ontario, with headquarters at North Bay. Mr. succeeds Frank Baker, who has been transferred to a similar position in the territory East of Toronto.

such dishes.

"Just before the finger bowl ceremony one day recently." and the return of the ladies, the guests were subjected to the last word in repasts, the zests or savory. Nuts on the epergnes also claimed the attention of chairman of the public works committhe diners extant at this stage of the

"Some two or three hours after dintogether with bread, biscuits, and cake. Were Justice Joseph Story or Senator they would have sipped their tea from

co chewing to which the gentlemen re-

dining the more Mrs. Mergentime turns | built of North Land lumber and coverto gayly informal moods for her own ed all over with spruce boughs. It is a tablecloth designs. The kind that can handsome and complete piece of good be used for simple amusing parties where good conversation is as import-

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Twenty Years Ago From The Porcupine Advance Fyles

Ratepayers' Association, held in the figures are in for the work." town hall on Friday evening, March 21st, 1919, the members present went on record in favour of an early start that year in the construction of sewers, | Closed on Account of "Flu" as well as the waterworks extensions planned. The president, J. P. Partleman, occupied the chair. Dr. J. A. Mc- last week resulted in the closing of the Innis, mayor, said he believed the peo- school at that town. One of the teachple of the town wanted the waterworks ers was ill with the disease while over extensions and also desired the instal- 60 of the pupils also had the disease. lation of sewers in Timmins. Health The school will remain closed until safety required a sewerage system, he after Easter, when it is expected that said. Financial conditions had held the epidemic will be over. The disease back the council in past years, but he is fortunately of mild type at Larder thought something should be done now. Lake, as at other places in the North. ing a dinner party without a few pins. expected). After grace, the carefully a way. Now the celery was served in He thought there would be little diffi- Apart from the school children it is culty in financing the sewerage system said that about 300 adults have had on the local improvement plan. He the disease in recent weeks. surtout de table. The vases were of scups made a good beginning. A white a cheese cloth. The bread reappeared pointed out the saving that would be made by putting in waterworks ex- Toronto Telegram-The woman who tensions and sewers at one time, the is as pretty as a peach is the one who one trench accommodating both. Mr. can upset the apple cart. find legal support for the common idea that a municipality could not exceed 25 mills on the dollar for general purposes and debentures. He thought the people wanted both waterworks extensions and sewers and would be ready to pay for both. Councillor E. L. Longmore reviewed the finances of the town and showed the narrow margin there was to pay on without increasing taxation beyond the point he thought the law allowed. He emphasized the fact that he was not throwing cold water on the sewerage system plan, but was simply outlining the financial position as it appeared to him. He advised "The making of haste slowly," in the matter. Councillor Brazeau gave an outline of the proposed plans for the sewerage system and the waterworks extensions. Councillor Longmore said that his understanding of the law was that the town could not exceed 25 mills



ing the general rate and for debentures) except for school purposes and for works under the Local Improvement Act. The Advance concluded its report of the meeting with this paragraph:-"There was considerable discussion as to whether the 25 mills restriction

would apply, and those on both sides of the argument were unconvinced. Eventually, it was decided to test the opinion of the meeting as to whether there was a general desire to proceed this year with both the sewerage and waterworks extensions. On motion o Messrs R. J. Jemmet and D. Laprairie it was resolved to be the opinion of the meeting that both works should be gone on with at once, and on the counting of the vote, it was found that eleven

Twenty years ago The Advance gave a truthful reference to a matter that years later may have formed the basis for a very untruthful and ridiculous sensation yarn about another and younger man. Some may recall the wild stories of a son of a Hudson Bay factor who was supposed to make his wines may be appreciated. Still later first trip to Toronto some five or six came frosted fruit on lace paper and years ago by way of the columns of a glass dishes, preserved fruit, and fresh | daily paper in the City of the Good. fruit on leaves and moss. Lucky the Here is the truthful item that holds lady who knew her way through this much interest while still keeping to maze of dessert and had been warned the past of fact: "Mr. Gillies, of the against pitfalls. Concerning cherry Hudson post at Moose Factory, came pits, one widely read authority taught down to this part of the world for his that once in they must come out, but first visit into settled Canada. He was I advise the well-bred lady to avoid born at Fort George, his father being confidence of those who worked under the Hudson Bay factor there. While "This dessert course introduced a new he has made several trips to Soctland plate, knife, fork, spoon, d'oyley, and with his parents, he was never south napkin apiece to the table. The dessert of James Bay in Canada until last to his particular work. He could, when napkin was unbleached damask or col- week. He had his first sight of a Canoured cotton, plaid or striped, to adian railway train at Cochrane when camouflage the wine and fruit stains. | the National came in from the West

Several did not vote."

March 26th, 1919, will be of general in- start those who erred back on the way terest:-"Councillor John W. Fogg, of rectitude and upright citizenship. gratulated for the magnificent arch of welcome to returning soldiers erected ner, when the gentlemen had rejoined at the Marshall-Eccleston corner of the ladies, tea and coffee were served Third avenue. Under the direction of in a new set of china on sliver salvers. Mr. Fogg the arch has materialized into something much more attractive and imposing than expected by the Daniel Webster among those present, town council. It is generally considered to have any similar arch in the North the saucer, but the custom of drinking Country beaten seven ways for apfrom cups was gaining wide acceptance. pearance and construction. It runs "Considering the tight-lacing which right across the street with broad pilthe ladies were enduring and the tobac- lars on large arches over the road and bears the inscription on each side, turned immediately after dinner, can "Welcome Home." The one face of the we doubt that a good time was had by arch looks directly at the exit from the depot and the other faces down In short, the more she learns about Third avenue. The structure is solidly werkmanship. The work was done under the supervision of Mr. Fogg by ant as good food to the success of the Contractor D. St. Onge. The arch is lighted at night by electric lights. The work was commenced on Wednesday night of last week and everything was j completed within a week from the time of starting. The resolution of the council suggested that the total cost of the arch be kept within \$150.00 if pos-| sible, but it was recognized that \$200.00 | would be nearer the probably cost. It ! is likely, however, that even the latter At a regular meeting of the Timmins figure will be exceeded when all the

School at Larder Lake

An influenza epidemic at Larder Lake

on the dollar for all purposes (includ- | Tribute Paid to Wilfred Perrault at Noranda, Que.

reference to the resignation of Wilfrid Perrault as chief of police at Noranda | \$1.00: \$2.00 sizes. (Medium and strong). -a position he had held for nine years with satisfaction to the public and high credit to himself. Mr. Ferrault who spent six years on the Timmins police force, has wide circles of friends here who are interested in his progress in life. They will be interested to note that he is entering business for himself, going into partnership in a firm of monument designers and makers in Northwestern Quebec. Friends also will be interested in the following tribute paid to Mr. Perrault in the editorial columns of last week's Rouyn-Norvoted for this motion and six against anda Press:—

> "The town of Noranda will lose a competent and efficient police officer when the resignation of Chief Wilfric Perrault, announced this week, takes effect on April 15th. Chief Perrault has given nine years of faithful service as head of the police department. Splendid equipped physically for the duties of a police officer, he had six years of good training in Timmins before coming to Noranda. Fearless in the discharge of his responsibilities, he was also a strict disciplinarian, but by his unfailing good nature and his own readiness at all times to take his full share of police duty he has enjoyed unroughout the years he served as chief the good-will and support and

"Seldom have we known a chief of police with a personality better suited occasion required, be severe and adamant, or at other times, when conditions called for more moderate measures, he could deal with the situation tactfully The following from The Advance of and with a smile and kindly advice

"Chief Perrault has been a good offitee, is being generally praised and con- cer, has done his work faithfully and well, and in retiring will have the good wishes, not only of the members of the council, but of the citizens at large in embarking on a new line of business.

FOR SKIN DISEASES

In Monday's Advance there was a A Quick-Healing Salve for Cyanide Rash Eczema, Psoriasis, Impetico, Salt Rheum, Itch, Chaps, and most skin ailments. 50c.; At all Timmins, Schumacher and South

> He leaves the police department with an excellent record and the knowledge that under his regime the town has enoyed an excellent reputation fer law bservance and law enforcement."

LETTER PERFECT

(From Blairmore Enterprise) The shepherd and the old cowman were discussing the new squire, and the conversation was as follows:-

Shepherd: "I C E B A O B E." Cowman: "E B, B E?" Shepherd: "I. E. B." Cowman: "YBEAOBE?" Shepherd: "Y, E B A M P, U C." Cowman: "O I I C."

Sudbury Star-It is given to few people, says a writer, to wake up and find themselves famous. Most people find themselves famous and then wake

Home

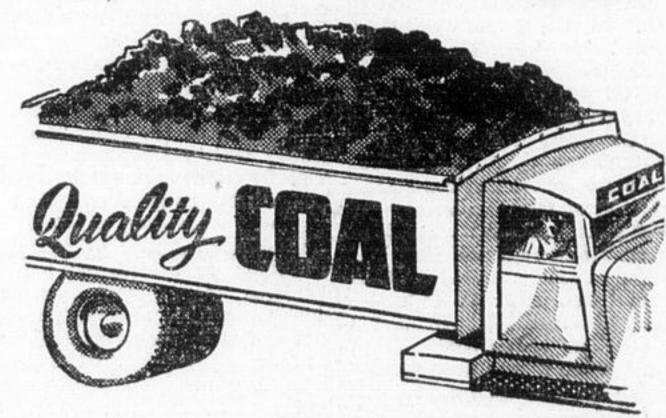
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