



Directions for Cooking by Troops, in Camp and Hospital (American Antiquarian Cookbook Collection)

Florence Nightingale

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During the Civil War, this edition of Florence Nightingale's classic volume on nutrition for the military was published by the Army of Virginia, but the book was also published in the North by order of the surgeon general. The introduction of nutrition into American military food prevented some losses from malnutrition and poor sanitation and could have saved more if Nightingale's recommendations had been more widely implemented. Her book contains recipes to maintain health and to feed hospital patients suffering from scarlet fever, typhoid, dysentery, and many medical conditions. It was based on her experience with soldiers in the Crimean War. Her attention to food as being linked to particular ailments and conditions was not a completely new idea, but in the armies, doctors usually assumed that invalids could eat the same ration given to men in the field. A healthy soldier could barely chew the hardtack supplied to troops, so it was impossible for a man suffering from a jaw wound. Nightingale's recipes took this distinction into account, and they were designed to include specific nutrients she had come to recognize as important during her earlier wartime experiences, emphasizing meat and milk (for protein) and whole grains, fruits, and vegetables (for carbohydrates). Thirty-five years later, essentially similar recommendations would emerge in the first *U.S. Family Food Guide* (1916).

This edition of *Directions for Cooking by Troops, in Camp and Hospital* was reproduced by permission from the volume in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts. Founded in 1812 by Isaiah Thomas, a Revolutionary War patriot and successful printer and publisher, the society is a research library documenting the lives of Americans from the colonial era through 1876. The society collects, preserves, and makes available as complete a record as possible of the printed materials from the early American experience. The cookbook collection comprises approximately 1,100 volumes.

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