

Register of the

Battle Creek Sanitarium

Recipe Cards, 1930s to 1950s

Collection 360

Center for Adventist Research
James White Library
Andrews University
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Scope

Battle Creek Sanitarium, founded in 1866 as the Western Health Reform Institute, grew to be a world famous health restoration facility located in Battle Creek, Michigan. It's founders intended it to bring about health reform to aid the human body to be in better physical and mental health which would lead to better spiritual health. John Harvey Kellogg became the medical director in the 1880s and lead the Sanitarium to its greatest days. He remained in this position until shortly before his death in 1943.

A large part of the Sanitarium health plan was a more healthful diet than was typical in its day. This diet was a vegetarian one with no flesh food of any kind, including seafood. It was all plant based and dairy. It is what today would be commonly termed a lacto-ovo vegetarian diet.

Through the years the fortunes of the Battle Creek Sanitarium waxed and waned. Founded in the 1860s by the Seventh-day Adventist church, the health reform concept grew and developed into a very large facility by the end of the 19th century. In 1902, the main building burned to be replaced by an even larger edifice that can still be seen today in Battle Creek. In the first decade of the 20th century, Dr. Kellogg wrested control of the Sanitarium away from the Adventist church and charted his own course. By the end of the 1920s, the institution reached the zenith of its size and influence with the completion of the tower addition. Almost immediately after the addition, the Great Depression hit which ultimately led the Sanitarium to declare bankruptcy in the early 1930s and the building was eventually purchased by the United States government in 1942 and served as a military hospital. The building continues today in the service of the United States government.

The health work in Battle Creek continued up the street at the Sanitarium Annex, formerly the Phelps Sanitarium, otherwise known as the Fieldstone building. Battle Creek Sanitarium added Hospital to its name in due course until eventually it was sold to another health system.

The Sanitarium system was one focused on lifestyle changes. If you got exercise, ate right, and slept well, then the mind would be in good shape as well. Checking into the Sanitarium was like checking into a spa today. There would be lectures to attend, exercise sessions in the outdoor air, formal meals, and evening entertainment. The typical American diet in those days was not conducive to good health. After a couple of weeks on Dr. Kellogg's vegetarian diet guests would feel much better and could return home feeling invigorated.

According to William Iles, Dr. Kellogg would come into the Sanitarium kitchen, don an apron and work with Bill Snyder “to develop new ways of preparing food for the benefit and delight of his guests.” Food, proper food, was a significant part of Kellogg’s “Sanitarium System.”

William Snyder worked his way up to being Head Chef. He began working there in 1920 and devoted nearly 40 years to this work. The recipe cards came from Leslie Iles, a relative of Snyder’s, who served as a cooks assistant. When Mr. Snyder left the Sanitarium, Mr. Iles took the recipes with him. Iles did some quantity cooking over the following years, but he apparently had no real need for the recipes as he was an accountant.

The recipes in this collection likely date from at least the 1920s, the highpoint of the Sanitarium’s fame, and into the Annex era of the 1950s. A few recipes have dates, most do not. The recipes are on two sizes of cards. There is no indication of whether one predates the other. More information about the cards may be found in the “Arrangement” portion of this register.

Also included are menus from 1938 to 1952. They are primarily from holidays. Some are quite ornate. The menu listed inside shows the extent and perhaps extravagance of what the Sanitarium provided through these years. There is no way of knowing from this collection how many of these recipes go back to the John Kellogg era and reflect the food he would have approved. If one were to find names of dishes from the Kellogg era they may be represented here.

There are a few documents on William Snyder and on the Battle Creek Sanitarium.

Arrangement

The inventory portion of this register shows the arrangement of the recipe cards by major category—desserts, entrees, etc. Many of the categories have large cards and small cards. These have been kept separate and not merged. In a cursory manner, it appears there are some duplication within the large and small cards. Some categories, souffles, for example, have only one size of card.

The size of card may indicate a different person or a different time when the cards were made. There is no information on how to approach this possibility.

Within food categories—desserts, entrees, etc—some effort was made to alphabetize, by the name on the card. If a recipe card was wildly out of place, i.e. donuts in the vegetables, this was corrected. More subtle misplacements were likely

left where they are. There may be some cards not alphabetized correctly. Look around where the recipe should be. Bear in mind also the possibility that a recipe may have been removed years ago and never replaced. During organization, no recipes were removed, even known duplicates.

The current organization is how the cards came to the Center. An alternative organization would be to group by name of food or major component of the recipe—carrot, lettuce, gluten steak, etc. This would have required a change from the way the cards were organized when received as well as the problem of what was the major component of a recipe. While some would have been obvious, others not so much. This type of organization would likely make the recipes easier to access, but it was not how the user of the recipes organized them.

Provenance

The families of William O. Snyder and W. Leslie Iles donated this collection to the Andrews University Center for Adventist Research. The physical transfer, however, came from Erik and Christine Vetne of Collegedale, Tennessee, in 2018. Leslie Iles was Christine's father. The collection was handed down through the Snyder and Iles families.

Extent

8 boxes [8.0 linear feet]

Use

All users of this collection will complete the "Application to Use Unpublished Records," and observe the regulation specified in the "Patron's Agreement" and "Researcher's Code of Conduct." All records in this collection are open and available for research. Suggested citation for this collection:

Box ____, Fld ____, Battle Creek Sanitarium Recipe Collection (Collection 360),
Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University,
Berrien Springs, MI.

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INVENTORY

- Box 1 Fld 1a Biographical information about William Snyder and information about the Battle Creek Sanitarium system and food.
- Menus from the Battle Creek Sanitarium, usually holidays, 1938-1952
Box 1 Fld 1 1938 to 1945
Box 1 Fld 2 1946 to 1947
Box 1 Fld 3 1948 to 1952
- Box 1 Fld 4 Recipe books from various manufactures of food products or equipment. Mostly under 50 pages, and featuring their products.
- Box 1 Fld 5 Booklet: *The Use and Care of Miracle Maid Cook-Ware*. 1936 and 1947 editions.
- Box 1 Fld 6 Brochures from Miracle Maid. Combination of advertising of their products and recipes. 5 different.
- Box 1 Fld 7 Series of manuals published by the Home Economics Department of Procter & Gamble. #1, 5, 6, 8, and 11.
- Box 2 Fld 1 Binder with typed recipes, multiple ones on a page.
- Box 2 Fld 2 Miscellaneous handwritten recipes in a "Scribble Book" plus three other typed recipes.
- Box 2 Fld 3 Recipe cards taken from a pocket binder entitled, "My Favorite Recipes."

Recipe Cards

Box 3	Beverages Breads/Pastries Breakfast and Cereals Desserts (large cards)	A to M
Box 4	Desserts (large cards) Desserts (small cards)	N to Z A to P
Box 5	Desserts (small cards) Entrees, Gravy, and Sauces (large cards)	Q to Z A to R
Box 6	Entrees, Gravy, and Sauces (large cards) Entrees, Gravy, and Sauces (small cards) Salads and Relishes (large cards)	S to Z A to M
Box 7	Salads and Relishes (large cards) Salads and Relishes (small cards) Sandwiches (large cards) Sandwiches (small cards) Souffles Soups (large cards)	N to Z A to L
Box 8	Soups (large cards) Soups (small cards) Vegetables (large cards) Vegetables (small cards) Unorganized clippings and notes	M to Z

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