

PHEBE MENDALL
A Maker of Wedding Cakes in Old Dartmouth

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PAPER READ AT MEETING OF THE
OLD DARTMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NOVEMBER 30, 1938



OLD DARTMOUTH
HISTORICAL SKETCHES

No. 71
In the Series of Sketches
of New Bedford's Early History

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ABOUT twenty-five years ago, my mother and I were spending a few weeks in Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. We were staying at the home of the president of Storer College who lived in one of the great square brick government houses built when the United States arsenal was in this easily fortified hillside town at the junction of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers.

We had been out that afternoon gathering two-toned bird's foot violets, Dutchmen's breeches, lungwort and other wild flowers unfamiliar to friends "back home" and had them in great bowls of water on a table in the cool hall outside our bedroom, waiting to be packed.

A knock came on our door and opening it we found a sweet faced elderly guest who wondered if we could spare a few of the flowers for her to send to a sister up north.

"Yes, indeed," my mother answered, "we are sending ours north, too — to New Bedford, Massachusetts."

"New Bedford!" — the woman's face lighted "I was married in New Bedford — in a house on Seventh Street."

"Well," laughed my mother, "I wasn't married on Seventh Street, but my wedding cake was made by a woman whose home was on Seventh Street."

"Was it Phebe Mendall?" and as my mother nodded "Yes" "She made mine, too."

So I was introduced to the name Phebe Mendall, and after we returned home my mother gave me her treasured copy of Phebe Mendall's cook book which had belonged to my grandmother who knew Phebe very well. It was many years later however that I collected the facts hereafter related.

Phebe Hart Mendall was 6th in direct descent from John Cooke and Sarah Warren, whose fathers, Francis Cooke and Richard Warren were Mayflower passengers; John Cooke owning all the land from the head of the Acushnet River to the end of Scoticut Neck at one time.

Like all Mayflower descendants that I have ever known, Phebe Mendall was not only proud of her own ancestry but was interested in all genealogy and in fact was such an authority

walked way out to Chace Road and there inquired from house to house whether they would take her in. But everybody was afraid of whooping cough and regretfully turned her away. Finally tired out, she sank down on a woodpile at the home of a Joseph Baker, utter despair in her heart. Joseph Baker however, was a merciful man. He brought out food and drink to them all and then saddled two horses, and carried them to someone called Aunt Jerusha Wood who said she would have taken them in, even if they had had the small pox.

Phebe grew up with several brothers and sisters. One sister, Eunice, was the wife of Uncle Peleg (Crowell) of whom Mrs. Nelson speaks in her reminiscences, as the aunt who was blind for the last ten years of her life, but whose sweetness and bravery during this time, made her a source of inspiration. Another sister, Jerusha, married Captain John Arnold Macomber and they were the progenitors of some of the finest of our New Bedford and Fairhaven residents. Two brothers were lost at sea, a phrase tragically common in early whaling days. Two sisters remained unmarried, expert at sewing and carpet making, and Phebe Hart herself married October 24, 1824 when she was 23.

Phebe's husband was Elihu Mendall of Rochester, Massachusetts, the son of Ebenezer and Lois Mendall. They were married in Dartmouth — were very happy and had two children — John Thornton Mendall and Mary Smith Mendall, — and lived in a small house at 37 Seventh Street in New Bedford — the yard backing up to the property of the stone house on County Street long known as the Homer house. Phebe Mendall's home has been described as quaint. A picketfence along the street sheltered masses of fragrant English violets, a walk on the south side led to a vestibule at the front door and a long passage way carried one to the kitchen in the ell of the house — a spot later to prove very popular. This house has now been torn down.

About 1836, some twelve years after their marriage, Phebe's husband was drowned at sea and nothing was ever known of the circumstances relating to this disaster. In a government whaling fishery report of that year it records the loss of a brig Caduceus of 109 tons under Captain Southworth and owned by Joseph Meigs of Rochester, Massachusetts, sailing April 30, 1836, which supposedly foundered in the Atlantic with all hands on board. In all probability Phebe's husband, a Rochester seaman was on this vessel.

The next years were troubled ones for the young widow with her two small children to bring up. But Phebe Mendall laid aside grief and turned to work for solace and support. She was a wonderful cook and so she began to make cake to sell, and being of the Friends' faith, she found a quick market for everything she made, for Quakers always help each other in such cases, and her friends did everything they could for her now, in her time of need.

A few years later her little daughter died at 12 years of age and this was a terrible sorrow. She also worried about her son who since he was twelve had evinced a great desire to go to sea and she had been afraid he would run away to get there. So, because she could not endure the thought of losing any more of her loved ones through the cruel whims of storm and ocean, she had sent her son to Reverend Ira Leland's boarding school on Long Plain Road, Rochester, Massachusetts. The Reverend Mr. Leland was a retired Baptist minister and he promised to try to interest young John in his studies and keep him close home. But the sea was in the little boy's veins and he did run away in spite of everything, and the first thing his mother knew, he had signed up as cabin boy for the cruellest captain that ever sailed out of our port. This she couldn't stand and she pleaded and pleaded with him and finally promised him that he could ship, as soon as she could find a kind, just captain to take him, if he would only give up this voyage. Her son was persuaded and stayed at home until he was 13. The official document that every sailor had to have in those days called the "Protection of American Seaman" describes young John Mendall as being at that time four feet eleven inches high. Do you wonder his mother dreaded to have him go on a three years' whaling voyage full of hardships? So until he was twenty and became first mate on a whaler, and then for five years more while he succumbed to the fever of the forty-niners and dug gold in California — it was a desperately lonely and anxious time for Phebe Mendall. But patient resignation in the two greatest tragedies of her life — the loss of husband and daughter — she had learned in her Quaker faith, and she had held fast to this faith through all these worried years, and ever after.

Always on Thursdays, the household tasks were set aside and she attended the Fifth Day meetings at the Friends' Meeting House, corner of Spring and Seventh Streets and regularly on Sundays, she attended First Day services. Her love of good

on the subject that if any question came up as to "who was who" in New Bedford, the matter was generally settled by asking Phebe Mendall for "she would know".

When she was eighty-two she wrote a brief account of her own ancestors which is most entertaining.

Phebe Hart Mendall was born in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, February 11, 1801, the daughter of Joseph and Mary Hart. Her grand daughter, Mrs. Maud M. Nelson, (late of 665 St. Mark's Avenue, Brooklyn, New York) wrote me that Phebe's family was of more than ordinary intellectual ability. Her father was very well educated, particularly in ancient and modern history and mathematics, and he had a brother, Stephen Hart, who wrote and published a book of poems. Furthermore Phebe used to tell that her grandfather Hart was seldom seen without a book and that she had never heard him say "I don't know" when asked a question — As both of Phebe's grand daughters wrote, I believe, and the next generation also has literary talent, I agree with Mrs. Nelson about the intellectual ability of Phebe's people.

Phebe's father had been the eldest of twelve children and being born under British rule — as eldest son, he fared the best of all. After receiving what local education he could, he was sent to study with the brilliant minister at Acushnet, Massachusetts, Dr. Samuel West, and when as a young man he married, the father turned over to him, his farm and house and his business as tanner and currier, and besides attending to these, Joseph Hart taught school in Dartmouth, winters, until he was sixty years old.

Phebe's mother was a daughter of Lemuel Smith, a master mariner, who was seized in 1778 by the British and incarcerated in Jersey prison where he suffered everything but death and later he was lost at sea when, against his judgment, he was forced by the owners, to set sail the day before a great September gale, and his vessel was swamped so near home, that bits of its wreckage piled up on Martha's Vineyard.

I think Phebe's unusual fortitude must have come down from this grandfather and his wife, Jerusha, who lived with her father, Benjamin Akin, in what is now New Bedford while her husband was in prison, and with her, were her three children (one of them Phebe's mother). When the British landed, as Jerusha was fearful of what the soldiers would do since her father was a known rebel, she took these children (the eldest was only five and they were all ill with whooping cough) and

literature helped her too. Whittier was her favorite poet. As soon as his poems were published she would cut them out of papers and save them and she bought one of the first editions of his printed works. Scott's novels were also purchased and read as soon as they were printed. Among Phebe Mendall's papers was the following poem which she had copied. The author is unknown but knowing of her life, it seems as if it must have been written just for her — and meant for just this time.

FEAR NOT

Though the dull days come again
Though the clouds are dripping rain
Tho' the winds in sighs complain,
Fear not,

For the Summer will be cheery,
And the days no longer dreary,
And thy heart less often weary,
And the sorrows all forgot.

Though the Spring of life be shaded,
And the first sweet flowers have faded,
And thy heart is tired and jaded,
Trust and sing;

Hawthorn hedges shall be white,
And the roses sweet and bright.
God shall make thy summer light,
Believe and sing.

Though some pleasant things have fled,
Though some friends beloved, are dead,
Though life's golden days have sped,
Be not sad.

Thy best pleasures yet remain
And the dead shall rise again,
Heaven's day dawns when earth hours wane,
Oh be glad!

Tho' the difficulties throng,
And the struggle may be long
And the powers of evil strong,
Hope on;

For to patient brave endeavor
Cometh utter failure never;
And the crown at last forever
Shall be won.

After his gold mining years young John Mendall turned again to the sea and became captain of a merchant ship, the John Jay, plying between New York and China and many were the treasures he brought home to his mother, from the Orient. Probably the next years held a greater measure of happiness for her though she was beginning to tire. She had been tremendously successful in her cake making, selling hundreds a year. She generally had help in her kitchen — sometimes ebony hued Betsey Blackburn, — but she always measured out the ingredients and directed the mixing and baking herself and her cakes were famous all over this section of the country. Nobody's wedding for miles around was a real wedding without Phebe Mendall's wedding cake, and years and years afterward when she grew unable to make them I know of one family on the hill who advertised in the paper when their daughter was to be married, "Wedding cake solicited" for no one knew which way to turn when Phebe's skill was no longer available.

Of course the women of the town were all good cooks and the wealthiest families all had in their employ cooks and servants galore, but if there was to be company at dinner or tea; a party or a wedding — cake must be ordered at once from Phebe Mendall to make the success of the occasion assured and the late Miss Julia Rodman remembered how, with a little basket with snow white napkin in it, hung over her arm, in her best dress, she walked importantly down to Phebe's to get the cake baked for the tea to which the new minister had been invited — and Mrs. William C. Parker told me she, too, used to go with a basket to "fetch" back from Phebe's the pound cake for her Grandmother Tallman's birthday supper.

"Were they expensive?" I asked.

"Probably," she replied, "Nothing but the best went into Phebe's cookery — the freshest of eggs, the sweetest of butter, the finest of flour" — but doubtless the money to pay for the cake was carefully wrapped in a piece of paper and the sum

would not be known to the young bearer.* Miss Helen Seabury and her sister used to go to Phebe's for yeast and for the pound cakes or rounds, when unexpected guests arrived — as did many others: and little boys, as well as little girls went, too. One of the former — now a white haired and dignified man whom I recently saw adding the notes of a flute to a musical ensemble remembers when he was quite young, impatiently waiting till it was time to go to Phebe's to get his birthday cake — a delectable small pound cake on whose snowy frosting she had written his name or initials with a small brush dipped in water. Over this she had scattered red granulated sugar and the magic lettering, all a-glitter and a-glow was never forgotten by the children who beheld it. Moreover the cake tasted even better than it looked, which cannot always be said of modern concoctions.

I think the esteemed president of your society also knew the way to Phebe Mendall's kitchen. In fact there was scarcely a family — who did not many times purchase some of her sponge, pound, or fruit cakes, at her door. People even came from Boston too — and if one could but get hold of Phebe's order book for almost fifty years beginning in the 1830's one would truly have a directory of the people who led the community. From stories here and there I have gained several mental pictures of Phebe H. Mendall. I can see her in her immaculate kitchen wearing the simple dress of the Friends — of quiet grays or browns, with a lace cap on her head and a dazzling white kerchief about her neck, fastened and held in place by a small gold pin, her only ornament. Her complexion was white and very fair and her features were regular, betokening refinement as did everything else about her. And I know she moved quietly and efficiently about the room as all Quaker women did in that age.

I see her in my mind again as she was towards the end of her era of cake making when, frail in health, still Quaker garbed and wearing a starched white apron tied about her waist, a little old lady, she would sit in a chair before the cookstove while her serving woman added a few more pieces of charcoal or another stick of wood to the fire at her direction. In those days when there were no gas or electric stoves and no oven con-

*The Rev. Alfred R. Hussey, grandson of Charles W. Morgan remembers going to Phebe Mendall's for cake many times. He went in at the side gate, he says, and was admitted at the side door by the slight, elderly woman in dark dress and cap, and waited in a shaded room until the cake was brought to him, and he remembers the particular shallow, flat-bottomed basket which his mother used for this purpose for years.

trols, the baking of a cake was a very exacting piece of work: the mixing of a cake was important, but the baking of it properly, was absolutely vital to its success.

I have another mental picture of this sweet, retiring Quakeress since I heard that Mrs. Robert Snow had learned how to make Parker House Rolls from one of a group of little girls who went to Phebe's for cooking lessons. I think I like this picture best of all as I know Phebe loved little girls — and at this time she practically had two of her own, since her son who during the Civil War became acting ensign in the U. S. Navy and afterwards settled down to merchant life in New York, had married and had two daughters — Maud, who later married Clarence Nelson and Mary, who became Mrs. Charles P. White, and these grand daughters were the joy of Phebe's life and like her own little girls, for the schools were far from their home in New York, so their early years were spent at their grandmother's in pleasant New Bedford. Here they went first to the widow Gerrish's private school on Seventh Street when they were tots of four, each with a primer and a bag of patchwork pieces to sew, — and then to the old Bush Street and William Street schools till after 1870 when they moved to New York to live, but returned to their grandmother for summer vacations until after they were twenty-one — they loved her so much.

Phebe Mendall's son died in 1873 and then her health became more and more delicate so that in 1881 she gave up her house and boarded with friends. Five years later when she was 86 years old she went to New York to be with her son's family and there she died a few years afterwards, and was buried as she desired, at her son's side in Greenwich Cemetery.

But even after her death, her granddaughters made pilgrimages to New Bedford, visiting old scenes and friends (especially Miss Mary B. Leonard of Seventh Street) and Maud Mendall Nelson in 1914 published a charming booklet entitled "New Bedford Fifty Years Ago" which contained cherished memories of the days when she had lived there and the people she knew — especially recalling her grandmother.

In one place she describes the peaceful little sitting room in Phebe Mendall's house "where the August sunshine pouring into the room was tempered by dark green Venetian blinds". She speaks of the "prim, cool cane-seated chairs set stiffly against the walls, the carpet of ingrain in subdued brown shades, the polished half-circular mahogany table on which stood boxes

of richest Chinese lacquered ware, tortoise shell ornaments, and curious flowers made from dainty colored sea shells, and kept from dust under a glass globe" — gifts from son John. On the walls were at least two pictures by the old New Bedford artist William A. Wall — one being of Phebe's own son when a little boy rescuing his small sister Mary from the bay at Naushon when she had tried to get some red apples in a row boat a bit beyond her reach.

It was always easy to get the grandmother to talk of this well loved son here; and in this room too, if one of her granddaughters had done something she did not like, she would correct her. She would never raise her voice or scold a child but sit alongside and taking the little girl's hand, say in low gentle tones in the plain speech of the Friends, "I wish thee to understand why thee ought not to do thus and so".

Mrs. Nelson's description of her grandmother's sitting room made me feel that I knew about what Phebe Mendall's kitchen looked like, so I wrote to Mrs. Nelson what I imagined it to be, and found I had described it almost exactly as it was. I am going to write it down for you, knowing that similar kitchens will come before your eyes as you hear of this one.

In the first place there was no clutter in Phebe Mendall's kitchen. In a sea faring community, homes were kept as ship shape as a vessel's decks at sea. After each breakfast a kitchen was cleaned up and it stayed clean for the rest of the day and it was spic and span. The ceiling was white washed often, the walls surely nicely painted a light buff or putty color with the woodwork a darker shade, grained and varnished; and Phebe's kitchen floor was painted pumpkin yellow though others I knew were dark green or gray brown spattered with ivory. Braided mats were on the floor and a few plants might be at the windows, perhaps a Fayal fern or a rose geranium, a fragrant leaf of which was occasionally snipped off, to flavor a batch of apple jelly. Crisp white muslin curtains might be at the windows too. For furniture — plain wooden chairs — possibly one cushioned wooden rocker, a kitchen table at times homey with a spotless tablecloth; and in Phebe's a box shaped iron cookstove which burned charcoal, wood or coal, and on which a big iron teakettle steamed and sang. This stove was so clean that bits of bread dough to make dough cakes for small children could be dropped on the hot lids and baked. Beside the stove there might be a lidded or open wood box — above which hung dust pan and

turkey wing. Over the stove was a mantel, in the center of which might tick a small gothic or oblong shaped mahogany clock. At the end of the mantel was a tin box to hold red sulphurous tipped card matches and beside it a vase of spills, slim twisted lengths of pieces of newspaper which were touched to burning coals, and used to light kerosene or whale oil lamps, or spermacetti candles. On the other end of the mantel the cheerful earthen ware teapot and a tin coffee pot stood beside a pile of takers.

At Phebe's, opening-out from the kitchen was a sink room with its pump, above which hung a cocoanut dipper with a rosewood and ivory handle made at sea. Beside the sink was a dresser on which much of the cake mixing was done. Barrels of sugar and flour stood near by and close at hand was the pantry — which always had a cool outside wall and a window. My pantry description included cannipails which pleased Mrs. Nelson because she had only heard of them once since she left here, but a complete description of a pantry would take too much time for this paper. I will just speak of the aforementioned cannipails — wooden buckets with lids and bails — and the little round wooden boxes, — both in all sizes and generally painted or varnished and used to contain rye or graham flour; Rhode Island (then called Indian) meal; beans; rice from the Carolina's brought back in coasting vessels that had carried down salt manufactured on Old Dartmouth shores; tapioca — not the modern minute variety — and other commodities. There were tin boxes with spices in them, not ground and in boxes as we have them from the store but more in their natural form — stick cinnamon, whole cloves, mace, all spice, cassia buds, pepper corns, and nutmegs — and beside the spice cannisters was the mortar and pestle of lignum vitae wood in which all but the nutmegs were pounded to powder for use. A little grater lay beside the nutmeg box and children were allowed to grate a bit of the oval fragrant nuts on squash pies and custards. There was a chest of tea and sometimes a sack of coffee and a small coffee mill, — for seafaring New Bedford folk of that day knew what good coffee and tea were, and if sea-faring relatives did not bring them to you, you purchased them at the old time grocery stores — oolong, formosa or what you liked; and you mixed your own coffee beans — 4 ounces of java, 4 ounces of maleberry and 8 ounces of mocha was our blend. In Old Dartmouth pantries there were currants and figs and dates, cluster raisins, almonds, walnuts — grapes packed in cork, Messina oranges and lemons,

and sweet oil when brought by clipper captain relations who sailed to the Mediterranean. There was guava jelly, and also in season pineapples and cocoanuts from merchant men who went to the West Indies; and chutney, curry and preserved ginger and tamarinds from the East Indies. The city of whalers knew many luxuries. There were wines and liquors from all over the world for much was used in cooking — white and red wine, claret, port, sherry, madeira and brandy are called for in Phebe's recipes. Vanilla beans in the pod were bottled in alcohol; dried orange and lemon peel and preserved citron were in small jars; and there was brown sugar, and white loaf sugar which had to be pounded fine and rubbed through a muslin cloth in a sieve to take the place of our modern confectioners sugar in frostings. There were very hard crackers, and home made bread and cake in tin cake and bread boxes with lids and shelves. There was a tub of lard and pails of rendered fat; there were crocks containing pats of butter and pot cheese; there were tall crocks of doughnuts and cookies, pickles and fat pork. There was a basket of eggs; there was saleratus and cream of tartar but no baking powder; there was salt from nearby salt works, mustard seed and dried herbs (thyme, marjoram, sage and savory) and dried sweet peppers from the garden and caraway seeds for cookies. There was sea moss, and isinglass (or gelatine), molasses, cider vinegar, salt peter and other things used in cooking. Strings of dried apples hung there; and fruit preserved in much sugar or brandy, green huckleberries and barberries stewed in molasses, jams and jellies, — all in a little cupboard; and anything else you wanted to use in preparing a meal, was either up attic or down in the cellar or was brought by the country man who furnished everything from milk that was poured into a pitcher or can, set out on the steps, to whortle berries (or blueberries) in summer or a spray of holly for the pudding (boiled in a bag) at Christmas time.

1858 Phebe Mendall who was beginning to feel the strain of over 20 years of making cakes — published the cook book of which I spoke at the beginning of the paper* Ours was a thin

*The little book was well received and several editions followed. A copy published in 1859 — speaks of its being entered according to Act of Congress the previous year and names E. Anthony, Standard Office as printer. This was retailed by Charles Taber and Co. and its cover was of blackish brown cloth with an impressed design. Mrs. Arthur L. Tucker's copy had the price mark of 50c in it.

I have seen another edition also published by Charles Taber & Co. that appeared in 1862. This had a light buff or brown cover of pasteboard and I have seen another paste board covered edition, dull green in hue which came out in 1870. This later edition was in finer type than the 1859 one and was printed by E. Anthony and Sons of New Bedford for Robert B. Taber (youngest son of Wm. C. Taber) at 49 Union St.

little book with green pasteboard covers and was published and copy righted for Robert B. Taber (son of William C. Taber) at 49 Union Street. The book was very well received and a second and third edition at least followed.* Her granddaughter's copy was a third edition put out in 1870 by E. Anthony & Sons of New Bedford.

The cover has the title:

The
New Bedford
Practical Receipt Book
by
P. H. Mendall.

and the index is enough to make any one wish for the good old days when people ate well and accomplished much. How to fix all types of meat — pounding some with a pestle till tender and rubbing others gently with salt petre, — is taught here along with rules for cooking fish. Phebe tells one how to make dozens of kinds of cakes, puddings, preserves, jellies, pickles and sauces, breads and wine, soups and dumplings — everything painstakingly described and many of the receipts valuable to-day. Sometimes the recipes call for large quantities of ingredients. People cooked for big families in those days. I knew an old lady who had 75 first cousins living near when she was a girl. Think what you would have to cook for that family reunion! There were quarterly meetings to be prepared for, funerals, to which all the family came — eating before and after — meals for threshers, and always regular meals three or four times a day. Therefore when you read the rule for "lemon custards" and are told to take the yolks of 18 eggs — or are told in making "a la mode beef" to take a round of beef that weighs twenty pounds, you know the reason why that was a practical receipt in those days.

A rich loaf cake takes 12 lbs. of flour, 6 lbs. of butter, 7 lbs. of sugar, 1 qt. of wine, a qt. of yeast, and a pt. of water, 40 eggs, 8 lbs. of currants and 4 oz. of spice (mace, clove and nutmeg).

On the other hand a recipe for poor man's cake is one cup sugar, one cup milk, one tablespoon butter, one teaspoon dry cream of tartar, one-half a teaspoon of soda dissolved in the

milk, one egg, a little cinnamon and flour to make it as stiff as a pound cake, and this would appeal to the very much financially deflated New Bedford citizen of to-day.

Pearlash is a new ingredient in recipes to me and I was rather surprised to find rules for salad dressing and ice cream.

There is also a way given for cooking terrapin which would not seem very much needed but my Grandfather Dexter who bought in 1856 a summer place on the shores of the Weantic River in Marion, Massachusetts, used to see vessels go up past his house to an inlet called Jenney's Reach, load up with small turtles and return to New York to satisfy a terrapin craving public, so they were plentiful hereabouts.

Many receipts are exactly as I use them to-day such as how to boil salt meat and cook codfish and fish balls. Each receipt has such priceless advice in it, as for example, in baking pork and beans Phebe says, after preparing the beans as for bean soup, "parboil a piece of pork and take off the rind carefully so as not to waste any".

Her rules for cake making are so excellent that a cooking school lecturer on reading them exclaimed, "There, that is what I am trying to make my pupils understand to-day". This teacher (Miss Ruth Chambers) who collects old cook books as a hobby said Phebe Mendall's was one of the most interesting she had ever seen.

The receipt for chicken pie in this book is my Grandmother Durfee's and I happen to have the leaf and rose cutters that cut out the decoration for the top crust, the jaggig wheel with which the rim was primped and the rosewood, ebony and ivory rolling pin, made at sea by an admirer on one of her brother's ships — with which the pastry was rolled out.

In Phebe Mendall's time there were no measuring cups used — materials were weighed by the ounce or pound in old fashioned grocery scales, a scoop on one side and iron weights to balance on the other; or by quart, pint and gill. A coffee cup, tea cup, or wine glass; heaping full, level or scant; a teaspoon or tablespoonful; or things the size of a walnut or hen's egg, were the common units of measure.

There were no egg beaters in those days and whites beaten with a two or three tine fork or with a salad spoon took time and energy. There were no flour sifters and material was rubbed through a wire or hair sieve or collander.

A few of Phebe's receipts you might be unable to follow now. For griddle cakes she mixed up new warm milk, flour and sweet yeast at night, adding butter and eggs in the morning.

Opening the book at page 68 three receipts each called "Another" attract attention and you turn back to page 67 to find they are all about doughnuts.

Receipts entitled Fayal and Naples biscuit remind you of the captains' wives who sailed to foreign ports with their husbands and brought back cookery secrets from other lands even as do Kenneth and Ruth Wakefield of Tollhouse fame to-day.

On page 67, too, there is a rule for ginger cakes that would keep a year and on page 13 is a rule for scalloped fish which Phebe says is excellent for breakfast and which we used to have at home very often in the days beyond recall, when beefsteak, chops and such, for the day's first meal were an ordinary occurrence.

There are many tempting dishes and many quaint ones in this cook book that produced for its author much revenue beyond that which she received from selling her cakes. Her grand daughter wrote me that her income from these sources always enabled her to live comfortably and to help others for she was always sympathetic to the needy.

In conclusion I will quote what Phebe Mendall herself says at the end of her 90 page cook book:

"If there is anything in the preceding pages that has been published before, I am not aware of it. Very many of them are Practical Receipts, some have been furnished by kind friends and highly recommended and others copied from the best of written Receipt Books. I do not pretend to say that they are all practical but I think so many of them are, that I may safely call this a Practical Receipt Book. I am told (and I question not the truth of the assertion) that there are some excellent receipts in the printed books but I am confident that most of these, if not all, will prove very different from what have been hitherto published; perhaps some better, others not so good. There are quite a number of old-fashioned receipts, and I have often heard people regret that there was not more of that good cooking in the present day. I have not published anything that I have not supposed to be useful. The delicate state of my health has prevented my doing as well as I might, had it been otherwise.

May heaven's choicest blessings descend and rest on those who have assisted me in my feeble undertaking."

So with her words will I end this attempt of mine to describe the life of one of the sweetest and most interesting characters of Old Dartmouth and New Bedford — Phebe Hart Mendall, and I am grateful too, to those who have assisted me in getting my information—to the Misses Howland of William Street, Fairhaven, who put me on the trail to Phebe's relations, to Mrs. T. Wilson Williamson who gave me great help, as did Mr. Thomas B. Akin and other members of the family, and to others who knew life in New Bedford in its early days, and most of all to Mrs. Maud Mendall Nelson, who recently "passed away", whose correspondence was such a delight.

Marion Hicks Campbell

November 30, 1938