

PEACE ... PUDDING

by Joan Black

Some like it hot, some like it cold, but most would rather have a ham sandwich. The Carlin or yellow pea has been around for centuries and was first brought to England by William and his Merry Band of Conquerors. It is said that an army marches on its stomach, so I ask you, what chance did the British serfs have against an enemy whose bellies were fortified with Pease Pudding?

Although the Pudding was never nominated 'flavor of the month' back in 1066, it did become a staple because it was easy to grow and simple to cook. Just toss a bucketful of dried yellow peas into a pot, cover with water, set over a fire and boil the bejeebers out of them. In good times a carrot, onion or turnip could be added to the mix to enhance the flavor, and then it could be called 'Pottage de Jour' instead of plain old Pease Pudding.

With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, an enterprising entrepreneur started a factory, just over the border between England and Scotland, to mass produce the Pease Pudding – it is a well known fact that the Scots will eat anything (think Haggis!).

To promote the product, a much ballyhooed advertising campaign boasted the addition of a "closely guarded secret ingredient" which was variously claimed to be peanut butter or grits or petrol or scotch whiskey and/or crack cocaine.

A few years ago the American food giant KRAFT carried a new advertising slogan: "You-all eat this stuff so we don't have to" and they signed a profitable contract with the US Government to supplement the menu at Guantanamo as a means of extracting confessions from uncooperative inmates.

Nine days is considered the limit to leave the Pease in the pot. After that it may be used to fill pot-holes or repair leaks in the roof.

Like all beans, lentils and peas, the yellow Carlin is considered a great source of protein and low in calories and fat, but it is edible only if served with whipped cream and chocolate sauce.