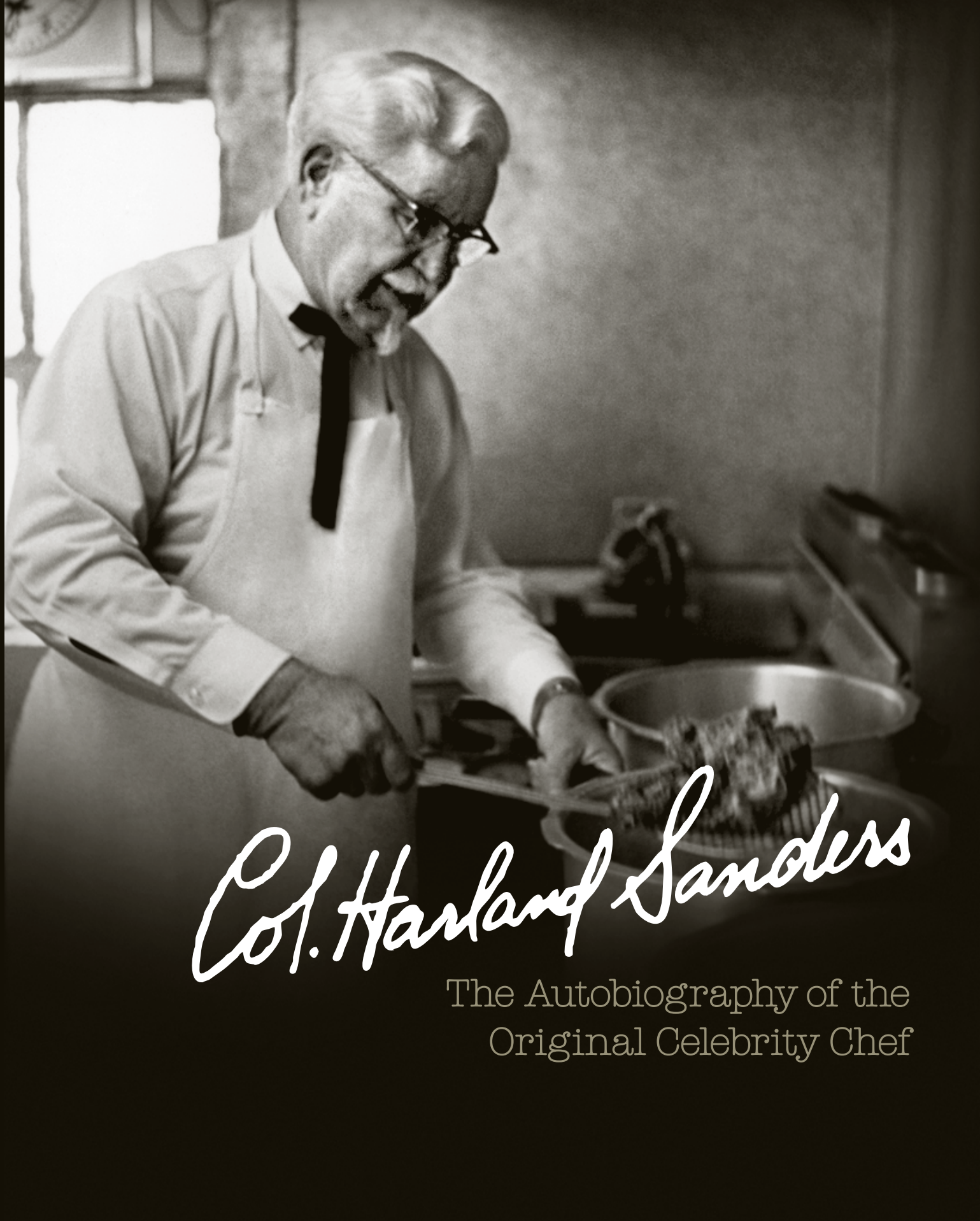

Col. Harland Sanders

The Autobiography of the Original Celebrity Chef

Harland Sanders seven months.

The Colonel greets well-wishers during his 90th birthday party in September 1980.

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Original Celebrity Chef

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FOREWORD BY PETE HARMAN

On September 9, 1890, a legend was born in Henryville, Indiana. His name was Harland Sanders, but for those of us that knew him, and for the millions around the world that know of him, he's simply, the Colonel. His humble beginnings and varied career path laid the foundation for a life that symbolizes the American Dream.

The Colonel's life was a life of ups and downs, and probably more downs than ups in his earlier years. His dream of success, like most great entrepreneurs, centered around the values of hard work, honesty, loyalty, recognition, giving back, and most of all, passion. He was passionate about hospitality, he was passionate about delicious home-cooked meals, and more than anything he was passionate about his Original Recipe, the secret blend of 11 herbs and spices.

The Colonel perfected his secret recipe in 1939, and his restaurant in Corbin, Kentucky, became known as the place to stop for a great, home-cooked meal. In 1952, I was fortunate to become his first franchisee. What I thought was a business deal turned out to be a lifelong friendship. It started with the Colonel insisting that he prepare a chicken dinner for my wife and me in our Salt Lake City restaurant. Of course, the dinner was fabulous! His passion for both hospitality and his recipe led us to paint our windows the next day with signs that read, "Now serving Kentucky Fried Chicken." That was the beginning of a 60-plus year campaign to spread his brand so that everyone in the country, and later the world, could enjoy his recipe. It was also the beginning of what he taught me about the restaurant industry.

KFC continued to grow over the years, and at the age of 74 the Colonel realized that in order to spread his recipe around the world, it was time to let others take his business to the next level. He sold his Company to a group that shared his passion for growing the business, but he remained an active spokesperson for many years after. I know the Colonel would be proud to know that today, KFC is the world's largest chicken restaurant company with 17,000 restaurants that are still preparing delicious chicken by hand in the kitchen, just the way he did decades ago.

Sadly for all of us, the Colonel passed away on December 16, 1980 at the age of 90. We lost a great leader, a great visionary, an American success story, and I lost a great friend. But we all have something to learn from his life and lessons. While his secret recipe for preparing chicken is locked up in a vault, his recipe for success is right here in this book for all to see. His legacy continues.

The Story...

INTRODUCTION

A Life in Recipes

This book, written in 1966, is about a man's life and the food he's cooked, eaten and served. That man is me. The food I've liked, the work I've done and the way I think are all the same things. It's not such a farfetched idea. A lot of learned men think people really are the food they've eaten.

I've read hundreds of cookbooks. Most of those cookbooks don't even tell you how to get a steak ready, how to bake biscuits or an apple pie. The food I've liked in my time is American country cookin'. But in this book I'm going to try something new. I'm going to tell how I grew up and at the same time tell you how you can have the kind of food I grew up on.

When I tell you how to get food ready for eating, I won't use just a cold mathematical formula to help you put it on your table. I'll be telling you how to prepare it like a man who's talking to you right over your kitchen stove. My list of American country food you won't find in fancy cookbooks.

I've dug into my own favorite recipes and I've also come up with a few of the most delicious dishes this country has ever invented – after I've figured them out in my own way. There won't be hundreds of them, but even a few are worth more than all the imported recipes with unpronounceable names put together.

For some reason, unless a dish is all dolled up with sauces and has a fancy name, most cooks won't give it a second look. I'm making room in these pages for real old-time American country and farm cooking before it's forgotten.

You won't find sherried quail or Charlotte Russe in these pages. But there will be cornbread stuffing, light bread, hot biscuits with honey butter, chicken pot pie, hushpuppies, fried tomatoes, potato pancakes, pecan pie (and the flaky crust that goes with it), baked apple dumplings and a whole lot of other just plain American country cooking.

I was a farm boy myself, so I lean toward farm cooking. I've built a multimillion-dollar business with my food. To me, my recipes are priceless.

This is a new kind of book. It's the story of a man's life and the story of the food he's cooked and eaten running right along with it.

In my life story, I may tell you roughly how to make a certain dish and why I've liked it; but somewhere in the recipes I've included, you'll find exact instructions about how to prepare that food.

The way I see it, if you've bought this book, you've bought yourself a bargain – my food, seasoned with the stories from a lifetime.

Col. Harland Sanders

CHAPTER 1

The Rising: Baking Bread and Beyond

The best way to begin is by telling how I made my first loaf of light bread. Papa died when I was five years old. My little brother was three. Sister was born three months after Papa died in 1895. Mama sewed for the neighbors for our cash money. That left me to do the cookin' for three children. When I was seven, I got so I could make light bread. I made the yeast, set the sponge, made the dough, baked off the bread. When I was done I had the prettiest loaf of light bread you ever saw.

Lots of people have never heard of light bread. Homemade light bread is kind of hard to explain. First of all, it's kneaded bread. You start with yeast. Then you make that yeast into a sponge of very thin dough. You work that dough into your flour. Then you proof it and you punch it down once and let it come back up again. On the second comeback you make it into a loaf and let it rise in the pan. After that you bake it.

The length of time it takes that uncooked loaf to rise depends on the temperature of your room. In winter, we would put it behind the kitchen stove. Even with the aid of that warmth it might take half a day to rise. Usually we started the dough first thing in the morning. We were ready to bake it by nightfall.

I've sat up many a night until 11 or 11:30 so I could get the heel of the loaf for my share. To me, that was my favorite part of the loaf.

I've smelled a lot of fancy smells since, many a memorable aroma, but the smell of homemade light bread while it's being baked is still tops in my memory. Mama would cut the heel off the loaf and butter it. When I had nice buttered hot bread – well, that was living.

The year I baked my first light bread, Mama worked in Henryville for a while. Henryville was about three miles from our farm. She went to work there Mondays peeling tomatoes. She stayed with her brother in town while we three kids waited for her back on the farm. She came back Saturdays and spent the weekend with us.

One day while Mama was away I thought I'd try making light bread the way I'd seen her make it lots of times. When I was done baking it I thought it was beautiful. I'd never seen a loaf that Mama baked look any better.

I grabbed up that loaf and with my five-year-old brother and my little two-year-old sister, we trudged three miles across the fields to the highway to reach Henryville so I could show Mama my wonderful loaf of bread. My brother and I took turns carrying our sister piggyback. One of us would carry her part way while the other carried my loaf of fresh baked bread; then we'd switch and the other would carry the bread instead of our baby sister. It felt like she weighed a ton but somehow we made it.

When we reached the peelers' line where all the women were sitting there peeling tomatoes, I got more kisses on account of my loaf of bread than any seven-year-old kid has ever gotten before or since.

I learned to make bread by watching Mama as she boiled potatoes. She'd take some of the potato water and mash up one of the potatoes in it real fine. That was her first step. Then she'd put some of the liquid she'd saved from her previous batch of light bread sponge (that was the yeast) into that.

When it got to working and bubbling so it looked alive, she'd work that into what she called "the sponge." She always had a little liquid yeast left over from her previous batch. Nevertheless, she always boiled a fresh potato again every time she did it. That was her "starter."

When she had her sponge, she'd work the sponge into the dough. Then she proofed the dough and punched it down and made it into loaves. After it rose the second time, she'd put that into the pan. After that, it was ready to bake. She did her baking in an old wood-burning stove. We called it a range.

In those days children did a lot of things youngsters don't do anymore. Take thrashing, for example. When the boys were thrashing wheat, we carried 160-pound sacks from the thrashing machine to the stock pile with our teeth. When I tell people that today, I can see that they don't believe me.

But it's the truth. I guess it's because I carried wheat like that, that I have such a strong neck right now.

But as I say, country boys dealt with a whole lot of things then that city boys never knew anything about. We had to cut the wood for our kitchen stove ourselves. About 40 acres of our farm was in a wooded lot, so we had plenty of wood to cut.

And even when she wasn't away peeling tomatoes, she was away doing sewing. Only yesterday I passed the house where she did that.

The family she sewed for had eight or nine girls and each fall they all had to have four or five school dresses made. So Mama would sew over there for three or four weeks – sometimes more than a month. She also made boys' suits by hand. I never owned a store-bought suit until I was 13 or 14. She used a foot-pedal sewing machine. That was the main way she made her money.

***

Papa died when he was 29. I can hardly remember him. I recall only a couple of things. I'd hand up lathes to him when he was building our house there on the farm while he was getting the wall ready to plaster.

One day, Papa came home in the middle of the day and went to bed. Mama told us children to be quiet, that Papa wasn't feeling well. For what seemed like a long time, Papa had a fever. The doctor came twice. Then one day the doctor took Mama into the kitchen and talked quietly. I got scared because Mama started to cry and I'd never seen her cry. We lost Papa that day.
I got my first job when I was ten years old. I was hired by Charlie Norris, a farmer. His place was about two miles cross country from where I lived. I was to be paid two dollars a month plus board.

Although I was only ten, I was a pretty big chunk of a boy. When I went to work, Charlie Norris put me in his wood lot clearing new ground for him with an axe and a saw. There were bluebirds and red squirrels and other things that attracted a boy's interest and I didn't clear as much ground as I ought to have cleared.

At the end of that first month Charlie Norris fired me. I went home, gave Mama my two dollars and I told her what had happened.

She really lit into me. I'll never forget the lecture she gave me. She asked me what I was ever going to amount to. "Here you are, my oldest son," she said. "Your father's dead and you're the only one I can look to for help with the other children. And you're no account. You can't even hold a job at two dollars a month."

I didn't cry. I just felt confounded, small and full of remorse that I had done such a thing and that I had disappointed her. Right then and there I made up my mind that if I ever got a job again, I'd put in enough hours and do enough work to give anybody who hired me satisfaction. Like I say, I was only 10, but Mama pounded it into my head. The only way, she said, I could get work and hang onto it was by giving the best there was in me. After that I never shirked a day in my life.

Next summer, I went to work for Henry Monk. He lived six or eight miles from us. Henry was a German farmer. I had never eaten cornbread at home but when I went to work for him he even had cornbread for breakfast. In addition to cornbread for breakfast we had cottage cheese with sour molasses.

When I was working for him he'd put a team with a plough ahead of me. I'd be the second team. There was another man behind me with a plough. Every time those men went around a field I went around with them. It was rough but I stayed on the job.

THIS PAGE

Harland (aged 7) stands next to his mother Margaret, with his brother Clarence (5) and sister Catherine (2), circa 1897.

In the end, Henry Monk said I was the greatest hand he'd ever had.

The way I looked at it, I was redeeming myself with my mother. Henry Monk paid me four dollars a month. I worked for him all that year. We started plowing each morning as soon as we could see the sun coming up. When the sun went down behind the tops of the trees we unhitched our horses. We fed them, went up to the house, ate our supper, then came back down to the cow barn to milk. I milked 16 cows. It was 10 o'clock at night before we got our milking done. Afterward we strained the milk, put it away and washed out our milk buckets.

The next morning we'd get up at 4 o'clock, groom the horses, harness them, feed them and go back to the house and eat breakfast. Then we'd milk the cows again. When the horses were done feeding, we'd get them out into a field and we'd work until the sun went down. It made for a long day.

That summer I not only redeemed myself with my mother but in spite of the long hours I put in, I learned to love work. Once you get used to it, there's great pleasure in it.

I've never believed in holding back or stinting on anything I've ever done and I've only had two rules: Do all you can, and do it the best you can. It's the only way you ever get the feeling of accomplishing something.

Henry Monk had a wife and daughter. They did our cooking. There is a theory that people on farms eat better than people in towns. That is true. And people who live on farms just naturally eat more. We worked harder so we demanded more food. We ate family style. We all helped ourselves from the same bowls. I even got so I liked cottage cheese with sour molasses.

***

When I was 12 years old, Mama married again. She married a man up in northern Indiana. He was a gardener. Winters I came home, lived with Mama and went to school. We had no school buses. I walked about two-and-a-half miles to school each way. If there was snow, I plodded through it.

I lived with Mama and my step-daddy for only a year. Stepfathers are not usually very kind to their new wife's children and this one didn't take to us either. So I went out again into the world myself and worked on a farm another year or two. I was just 13 when I did that.

I worked on Sam Wilson's farm. I lived with him and went to school, too, doing farm work for him before and after school. I milked the cows and fed the stock for my board. Milking and feeding the livestock went on all the time.

That year I was promoted to seventh grade. I went to school for two weeks, then I lost out in a wrestling match with algebra. Somebody had mixed the alphabet with figures. After that I never could figure out what that algebra teacher was talking about so I quit school. The only thing I learned about algebra was that X equals the unknown quantity. Even today, I don't know what that unknown quantity is.

I wouldn't advise anybody to drop out that young today because times have changed. Even if you work hard you can't always make it the way I did with no education at all. Recently there was a big Kentucky Fried Chicken promotion held in Gainesville, Florida. One of our franchisees was a graduate of the University of Florida. He wanted to get me in the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity, but they couldn't initiate me unless I was enrolled in a college. So they set up a special course for me. It was a three-day course in marketing. So while I was enrolled as a student there in Gainesville I got elected and initiated into the Pi Kappa Alpha. I guess I'm the only seventh-grade dropout in the country who ever belonged to a college fraternity.

After I dropped out of school, I painted carriages in Indianapolis at the Fairless Cart Works. Horse and buggies were still big business. Then, when I was 14, I left Indianapolis and went down to southern Indiana and worked on yet another farm there for a year. The following year I went to New Albany, Indiana, and got a job as a streetcar conductor. I had an uncle who'd been with the streetcar there for several years. He got me taken on. I was big and strong. I looked older than I was.

While I was on that job, a fellow got on my streetcar one night and asked me if I wanted to volunteer for the Army for a year and go to Cuba. He told me what the pay was and I thought it sounded pretty good, so I volunteered. I left in October.

I don't think they asked my age. If they did, I lied about it. Anyhow, I was accepted. I wasn't quite 16. I volunteered for a year in the quartermaster's corps. The agreement was if the Cuba trouble was settled inside of a year I could get a discharge. So I was only in the Army from October 6 until the following February.

All my life, it has helped me that I've been strong and husky. When I went to Cuba I got on a ship at Newport News. When I got off in Havana, seven days later, I weighed a lot less. I'd been seasick 24 hours a day all that time. I'd never been sick a day in my life but I feel seasick today just thinking about those seven days. I'm surprised I didn't die losing a lot of weight so suddenly. I'm told people have been known to die of seasickness. Right now I'd like to lose weight – although not that way!

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When I came back from Cuba the whole country was just like Teddy Roosevelt. We were all in a hurry to get some place. We all had new ideas. We figured they would lead us some place and we had very little time to lose.

If anything in those days had a future for a young man full of ambition, it was the country's railroads. A railroad engineer was a hero to all young men. He was what the jet pilot is today, or maybe the astronaut.

Like a lot of others, I was looking for a place to settle and a job with a future. To me a railroad was all those things. When I came back home from the Army in 1907, I landed in Sheffield, Alabama. I went to work there in the shops of the Southern Railroad as a blacksmith's helper. To me, a blacksmith's shop was the most fascinating place in the world. I loved to work the bellows and make the sparks fly. Boys today miss a lot; too much, if you ask me.

The blacksmith I worked for believed in working cool iron. He never got his iron up to a white heat. Without the benefit of blistering temperatures, the metal never got soft and pliable. I just had to pound thunder out of it and let me tell you, it pretty near wore me out.

The other helpers in the shop said the owner could go to hell for making us all work cold iron. I don't know why he insisted on it. There was no reason

for it. He was just mean, I guess. But, cool iron or hot, I stayed with him for two months.

When I left, I took a job in Jasper, Alabama, "doodling ashes." That means cleaning the ash pans out of a locomotive after an engine had finished its run. I'd fill the sand box, clean out the ashes and fix everything all ready for the next day's trip.

A fireman (the fellow who manages the output of steam on the locomotive) failed to show up for his run one morning. The engineer took me out on his run. I did such a good job firing that when we came back in he recommended me as a fireman. He wanted me on his run as a regular.

Since I wasn't 17, Mama had to sign a minor's release for me so I could work on that railroad. The railroad was called the Northern Alabama, a division of the Southern Railroad. I fired between Sheffield and Jasper, Alabama. That was an 86-mile run. Later the Northern Alabama got a franchise which let it run all the way into Birmingham.

I got to be a pretty fair fireman. I don't want to boast, but I was better at it than any other fireman who ever fired that run. For one thing, I knew how to spread that coal out. I could look in the firebox and tell what kind of combustion was there by the purple, blue and green color of the gasses. When I put the coal in, I spread it just right so it would get full combustion as soon as it hit the fire. That way, I didn't put in a lot of coal that would just lay there and smother the rest of it into ash.

Nights, I was taking a correspondence course on locomotive work at the International Correspondence School. The pictures in the book they sent me showed the color of gasses and the way a fire ought to look in a locomotive firebox. By doing the thing like it ought to be done, I found I didn't have to do much work and when I got to the other end of the division I was never tired or dirty. It was a pleasure. I took pride in it. And I always wore white overalls and white gloves when I was firing an engine. I never even got my face dirty. That was pretty unusual – nobody else ever did it that way. Just me.

Eventually, I was made chairman of the Grievance Committee of our Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. We had one fellow the company had

laid off. All the company wanted was a fair day's work done. If I had to do it today, maybe I wouldn't do what I did then. But when they fired him and it violated the union's rules, our Grievance Committee demanded they put him back to work. The company insisted they wouldn't, but when we took our appeal right up to the Southern Railway's general office in Washington, they gave him back his job and paid him a year's back pay.

Before they did that, they pleaded with me not to push the case. "You're the best fireman on the division," they told me. "There's nobody like you. You save more coal than any man we've ever had." They weren't threatening to do anything to me if I did push the case, but they kind of let me know they thought I was doing wrong.

Not long after that, I had an attack of acute indigestion while I was firing my engine. I was on a passenger run. Another fireman was dead-heading on the train to the other end of the division. He'd fired the same run many a time. I was awful sick and in terrible agony. I went back to the mail coach where there was a toilet, asking that other fireman to take my place on the engine until I got over my suffering.

THIS PAGE

Harland was an energetic worker on several railroads between 1907–1915. His first job was 'doodling ashes.'

When I came back to take charge of my engine, the train master saw me climbing over the coal tender from the mail car and asked the engineer where I'd been. He was told I'd been back in the coach and the off-duty fireman had been firing for me while I was sick.

They kicked me out for insubordination. According to the rule book, I should have notified them that I was sick and they would assign a substitute. But if I had wired the dispatcher, it would have tied the train up at the depot and we'd have lost time. The way it was, we lost no time; but that gave them the chance to get even with me, and they fired me on the spot.

It wasn't a square deal. Nevertheless I was guilty of insubordination and I had always insisted on living by the rules. I went to work as a section hand on the same road with an "extra" gang. An extra gang does special track work like laying new ties. I got 70 cents a day and my board for that. I slept in a camp car on a sidetrack.

There was another reason I took that job. I'd gotten married and my wife was expecting. I'm 19 years older than my first child, Margaret, so that must mean I was about 18 years old when I was married. I met Josephine in Jasper, Alabama. I married the first and only girl I ever went with. She wasn't going to school or teaching. She was just a home girl. Her daddy was a merchant in that town.

Anyhow, Josephine and I got married and when I was fired from that job as a fireman, I couldn't leave home to look for a new job. Those 70 cents a day on the "extra" gang would just about pay my expenses and my young wife's keep, too. It's hard to imagine that in those days. If it was used right, 70 cents a day could run a house.

When baby Margaret arrived, I got a job with the Norfolk and Western Railway. A lot of coal was being shipped abroad from Roanoke and Norfolk and I had no trouble landing that job since the engineers I had worked with gave me good references.

IMAGE ABOVE
Harland with his first wife,
Josephine, circa 1932.

CHAPTER 2
A Culinary Education

When we first got married, I had to train my wife to do the cooking. She was a wonderful girl but her mother had never taught her to cook. Her family had always had hired cooks.

When it came to teaching her, I cooked what I knew. Mama had shown me how to cook some things and recipes had always appealed to me. I memorized them or clipped them out of papers or magazines. Then when I got married I tried them out on my family. I knew how to do country-style cooking, how to cook vegetables and how to season them.

I knew how to cook squash in lots of different ways and I knew how to cook turnip greens and collard greens. Turnip greens always ought to be cooked with a ham hock or with a piece of salt pork. Many people will cook turnips until they're red or brown. This is a mistake. A turnip wants to be just as white and pretty when you've cooked it as it was when you put it in. Stop cooking it as soon as it's done! Overcooking it will kill all the vitamins and minerals in it. It also kills the wonderful sweet taste a turnip should have. I also knew how to fry parsnips. To tell the truth, I cooked just about everything a country cook ever put on the table.

Hominy was one of my favorite dishes. I still love hominy if it's fixed right. When I was a little boy, I found out that hominy was the whole kernel of the corn with the heart taken out of it. When I cooked my hominy, first I fried a couple slices of bacon. Then I took the bacon out of the pan and into that hot bacon fat I stirred a tablespoon of flour. I judged how much flour to use by the amount of water in my hominy. Canned hominy has a lot more water in it than the dried kind. Frying tightens up that moisture and lets it adhere to the grains of hominy. At the same time, it carries the bacon flavor all through.

Red-eye gravy is mighty good with hominy, too. Red-eye gravy is based on the essence that comes out of country ham when you fry it. You can't make red-eye gravy out of the kind of ham you get in the markets today. Country ham is one that has been slow cured and then slowly smoked. When you fry it, some of its juice is going to ooze out into your skillet. After you've taken

your ham out of your skillet, spoon the excess grease that comes out of it into a dish or bowl but leave the brown specks of ham or cracklin' in the pan.

Then add a dash of water to your skillet, depending on how much ham you've fried, and add a couple tablespoons of coffee from a coffee pot. That gives you your red-eye gravy. Set your skillet back on the fire and let the ham juice and water caramelize on your skillet bottom. Then pour in another dash of water and take your spatula and rub it quickly over the bottom of your skillet until the bits are rubbed loose. Pour that into your fat and let it settle in the bottom. It'll be reddish in color. As I said, it's good over hominy, too.

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THIS PAGE
Colonel Sanders with his second wife Claudia, on their wedding day in 1949.

I remember one time – I was firing an engine between Kentucky and Jackson, Tennessee then – I was walking down the street looking in the windows and there was a big display of a fancy new baking powder I'd never heard of. It showed some cakes that were baked and how wonderful they were. So, the next morning just as soon as the store opened I went in and bought a can of that baking powder and took it back home. I was going to show Josephine how to make a cake. Well, she and I both laugh and roll on the floor about that today. When that darned cake came out it looked just like a haystack. It rose right up in the middle pretty near to the ceiling. I guess I'd put too much in. Anyhow, I never fooled with that baking powder again. I use another kind of baking powder in all my cooking.

But I never used it to make things like cabbage and lima beans and snap beans look greener. That kills the vitamins, too. A vegetable is at its greenest when it's cooking. That's when the chlorophyll starts to expand. It's ready to bust its little cells and if it busts out of those cells, the acid in them makes it turn dark. That happens when turnip greens or cabbage or snap beans or limas are overdone. Put them in hot water and when they get to looking just as green as they can be, take them out and scoop them out of that hot water into ice water. That sets the chlorophyll right where it is. When that happens they're practically done. Then put them back into another pot of warm water. Don't boil them anymore; just keep them hot until you're ready to take them out. Then when you take them out you don't have to butter them or use any other seasoning on them. They're out of this world.

But I was talking about teaching my young bride how to cook. She used to say she'd never marry another man who knew how to cook. She meant I criticized everything she did.

My only hobbies have been food, cooking and hard work. While somebody else is playing tennis or golfing or fishing, I'm in the kitchen with a recipe somebody has given me, testing it out. That's what I enjoy doing most. And I'll be willing to bet you'll get enjoyment out of trying some of my recipes, too.

Take my recipe for pecan pie. I've never seen one published anywhere else that uses lemon juice or vinegar.

Cooking steak is supposed to be easy. Every husband figures he's the best in the world at doing it. The way I look at it, millions of good steaks are spoiled in backyards every week by charcoal grills.

Not only that, but 99 out of 100 steaks in the restaurants are ruined by putting them on what is called a char broiler. The juices from your steak drip down onto the hot coals or hot ceramic, and then they burn there and come back up past your steak and deposit soot, which makes your steak taste bitter.

Long before I was in the restaurant business, I kept that oven hot all the time because I always served hot biscuits with my food. When a biscuit is served it should be piping hot. And there's a special way to cook good biscuits as opposed to cooking bad biscuits. A bad biscuit is still better than a roll any day, but to make a good biscuit light and feathery you don't knead your dough too much. Just mix it as lightly as you can. As soon as it hangs together enough to roll it out, cut the biscuits out and put them on the pan that way. They should be very soft. If you keep kneading the dough, you agitate the gluten in the flour and that makes the biscuit tough.

When I did get into the restaurant business and one of my waitresses came in with her order, my cook would reach into the refrigerator where we kept the biscuits made up just that morning. They were already cut out and laid there on bun pans. I served small ones, what I call tea biscuits. The big ones I call cat-heads.

My waitress dipped up her soup and salad and the cook prepared the entrées and got the vegetables on a plate. Once she'd served the entrees, she came back to the kitchen and the biscuits were done. It takes about 10 or 12 minutes to cook a biscuit. That way when she took those biscuits to the table, they were piping hot and ready to be drenched with plenty of butter. It's these secrets of cooking that helped give my food a nationwide reputation

OPPOSITE PAGE
Colonel Sanders as a young man, circa 1914.

CHAPTER 3

From Lawyer to Mechanic, a Jack of all Trades

When I left off and began talking about cooking, I was working for the Norfolk & Western Railway. My wife wouldn't come with me because she said I was jumping around from job to job too much like a flea. Josephine thought I had an itchy foot and I'd never be able to hold a job.

There was a big rush of hauling soft coal to the East Coast for shipment to Europe right about then and I got in a lot of overtime. I worked there for about three months before that coal rush began to peter out. Then somebody told me that the Illinois Central Railroad had a big fruit haul going in their refrigerated cars so I went to work for them.

At the same time I was studying law by mail at night through the La Salle Extension University. I had an idea that someday I'd be another Clarence Darrow. Next thing I knew the Rock Island Railroad had a big rock haul going. They were double-tracking a lot of their system so I left Jackson, Tennessee, and went to work for the Rock Island.

My wife was in Jackson while I worked for the Illinois-Central. When I went to the Rock Island she went back to live with her daddy for a while.

I not only studied law, I practiced it, too. Then I quit the Rock Island. They had a wreck one day and the railroad's lawyers were signing up the hurt victims. They talked them into settling their claims for a dollar, persuading them to sign a power-of-attorney giving me the right to settle their cases. That was the end of my railroading.

After that I went to Little Rock and studied law in the office of Judge Fred Iscreed. I practiced in the courts of the Justice of the Peace. My fees gave me enough to live on so my wife came to Little Rock and lived with me there.

That move to Little Rock was a milestone in my life. I was there for three years studying law, reading the material La Salle sent me, and reading in the office of Judge Iscreed. When any of my cases had to go to a higher court,

a court above the Justice of the Peace Court, if I didn't win in the J.P. Court, I turned them over to the judge. He'd take them from there on in and we'd split the fee. It was a slim living, but I was getting by.

Then, I decided I didn't want to be a lawyer anymore. I went back to Henryville, Indiana, where my mother lived and went to work as a section hand on the Pennsylvania Railroad.

That year I cleaned out 250 privies. I counted them, so I know. Boy, I got tired of that section work. There were cousins there from my mother's side of the family. All of them were making a good living, wearing nice clothes, and there I was, a bum unloading coal cars, cleaning privies–anything to make a dollar.

I had the same blood in me that those other boys had. If they could make a living and wear white-collared shirts, I could, too. So I borrowed a suit of clothes from a cousin and went to Jeffersonville (where my second daughter, Mildred Marie, was born). I wanted to see if I could get a job with Prudential Life Insurance Company. They hired me to sell insurance, giving me what they called a debit. A debit is a certain area with a certain number of homes in it. Usually it meant the man who had that debit would collect $100 to $125 in fees in a certain area. But he could write new insurance, too. I didn't know it, but I was the fifth man they'd put on that particular debit that year.

My writing was usually done at night when the husbands were home. I didn't know how to do anything other than hard work. As a result, when that debit job should have been a lost cause for me, I became one of the greatest producers the office had. In 13 months I was promoted to Assistant Superintendent in charge of the staff. I stayed in the insurance business for quite a while. About that time I founded and became the first president of the Young Men's Business Association in Jeffersonville. That was something like Rotary or Kiwanis.

I'll never forget the car I had then. It was the first automobile anybody on our street had. It was an old Hupmobile with a brass thing on the radiator

and leather straps that fastened onto the fenders to hold the hood on. My Hupp was a two-cylinder job. We used to go out to Henryville from Jeffersonville in it. I'd pile my whole family in it and out we'd go to my mother's every Sunday. There was a rise that just looks like a hump in the road now, but to us then it looked like a mountain. We rolled along in a cloud of dust all the way. There were no paved roads.

When we'd get to the bottom of this little incline, the family had to get out. I'd grind the valve while my family walked up the hill. Then they'd get back in. They thought they'd gone so far that when we got back to the city limits of Jeffersonville, they'd sing, "Back Home Again in Indiana."

About that time I organized the Fall City Transportation Company. It ran a ferryboat between Jeffersonville and Louisville. We had an old steamboat we called the Asthma.

She had one good exhaust and one weak exhaust. She went "Chow-choo-Chow-choo." Half the time she sounded like she was drawing her last dying breath. The Asthma couldn't run when there was ice in the river and people who had to go to Louisville would have to go eight miles downriver to New Albany, cross there and come back up.

Anyhow, I organized a new company and I sold $135,000 worth of stock in 30 days. I had an option on a steel-hulled boat in St. Louis. When I got the ferry company really going I went over to Columbus, Indiana, and was offered the job as Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce. I wasn't as good a secretary as I was at running a river ferry line so I didn't hold that job for more than a year. They didn't fire me, but I could see what was going to happen so I resigned. If you're honest with yourself, you can tell if you're doing a good job or a bad one. Besides, there was something else I wanted to do: manufacture acetylene farm lights.

I'd cleared about $22,000 off my ferryboat deal. That was a lot of money in those days, so I started manufacturing farm lights. Those were wonderful things for farmers who'd been living by coal oil lamps. A farm wife could even cook over acetylene light.

But Delco was also coming in with their individual electric farm lights about that time and they were stiff competition because they'd worked out a plan to finance their installations. I wanted to be paid in cash or as much of it as I could get. I took notes for a lot of it.

I had a second problem, too. I expanded too fast. I had salesmen out in several different states but I guess I didn't keep track of them properly. For one thing, we didn't have the communication system we have now. My crew was far enough out of my reach that I couldn't check up on things the way I should have.

Little by little, I lost everything I'd put in the business and I wound up broke. And I had one weakness: I never finished putting in a lighting system that I didn't become the dearest friend of the family who bought it. I'd come home, put my whole family in the car and go visit those people. They'd come to visit us, too. To this day, I still see a lot of them, still friends with people I met when I was putting in their farm lighting.

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One day I came home and said, "We're moving to Winchester, Kentucky. I've taken a job there with the Michelin Tire Company, selling tires."

So we lived in Winchester for a while but I thought the most beautiful place I'd ever seen was Camp Nelson, Kentucky. They had a wooden bridge there that Lewis Wernwag built in 1838. It was then the longest wooden covered bridge in the world. There was a creek under it that flowed into the Kentucky River close to where the wooden bridge went across. There was a swinging bridge across the river.

I bought a house right at the end of that swinging bridge. You couldn't reach it any other way except across the bridge. It was right up against a hill. The swinging bridge was built just for wagons but I drove automobiles across it. I had to drive my children in to Nicholasville to school.

One frosty morning I was pulling my son Harland Junior's car with my car to get it started. Just when we were on the middle of that bridge the

right hand cable broke and both cars flipped. In those days cars' tops weren't metal, they were canvas. I fell 42 feet down. My son fell 35 feet. He came out of it with only a little scratch (although, tragically, he died later, at age 20). But I was mashed up pretty bad. There wasn't a place on my body that wasn't black and blue and my head was split from one of my eyebrows through the forehead.

I also had a fractured forearm. When I fell, I was knocked out. When I came to, my motor was down in the water and my car was on the edge of the bank. The first thing I saw was my car's little old-fashioned back window. I tried to get my head out through it but I couldn't. And I couldn't get out of either side of the car because it was mashed flat, but somehow the cowl had busted loose. I went down under the water and came out that way.

When I came up, the neighbors up on the cliff at the highway level were yelling, "Somebody go get a doctor."

I told them, "Don't get a doctor. I'll tell you when I want a doctor."

I went back up to my house holding the top of my head in place with my hands. Blood was gushing between my fingers. I got to the house and my wife washed my face and doused turpentine on my cuts. That used to be my great remedy.

In fact, it still is. Anything bad that happened I just put some cotton in turpentine and swabbed the wound with it. About three years ago, somebody shut the door of a big Lincoln car on my hand and it took the end of one of my fingers off. I had with me a little cream pitcher I'd bought at a Howard Johnson, so I went out and bought some turpentine, filled that little pitcher, and stuck my finger down in that. I found a doctor and he sewed it back on. It took nine stitches. But I came all the rest of the way home with my fixed-up finger in the turpentine. That finger knitted so there's hardly a scar and I was using it again in no time.

But I didn't finish telling about that accident on the bridge. The neighbors had a doctor down the road. Since the bridge was down, he had to cross the river on a skiff to tend to me. In fact, we had to find some neighbors with skiffs to move us out and across the creek.

Saturday that same week, I pulled myself together enough to cover my Michelin Tire territory by bus. I sold tires despite being so torn up and bruised I could hardly move off and on that bus. I was bulldog determined to do it. But determination or not, the Michelin Company figured I'd be laid up for quite a while so they took me off the territory. After that, I was out of a job for a while and had no car.

When I felt better I took to job hunting. I hitchhiked to Louisville but I didn't find anything so I started hitchhiking my way home again. A gentleman stopped and picked me up in his big car. I told him what I'd been through and why I was out of a job. Turned out he was state manager for Standard Oil. He didn't talk much but he picked enough out of my head to find out that I would work and work hard.

After a while he asked, "How'd you like to run a service station?"

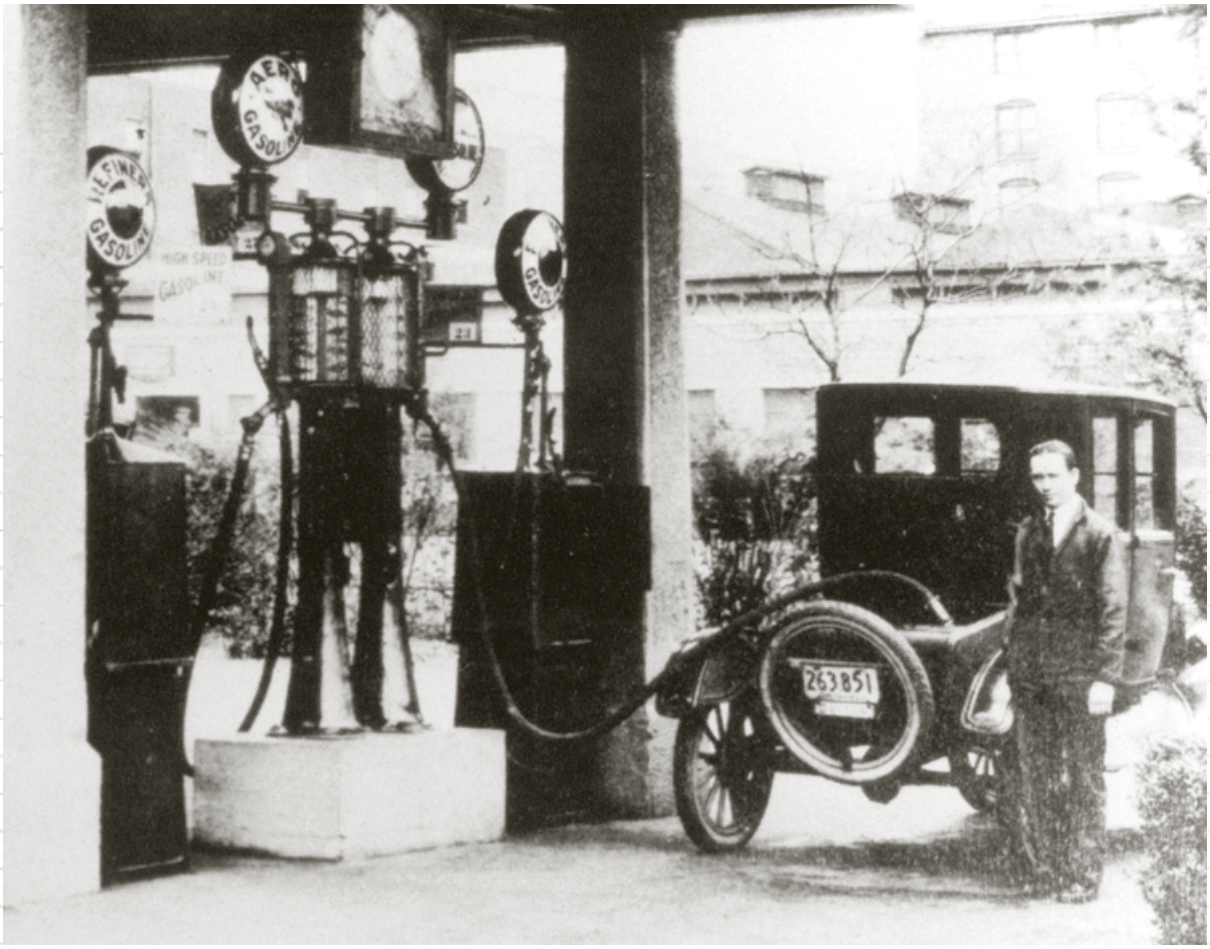
I said, "I've never run one but I could. I can do anything anybody else can."

"I can't promise you anything right now," he said, "but the Nicholasville station may be vacant soon and up for lease. If it is, would you like to try it?"

I said, "Sure."

Standard Oil had built that station at a heavy cost right across the street from the post office. But instead of running a service station, the fellow who leased it was running more of a boat yard. He was a great fisherman and he had all the sportsmen in town filling up their boats at his place. But that's about all the gas he sold. He didn't seem interested in autos or trucks. The rest of his time he built boats.

Standard Oil was getting tired of that and not long after they gave him a 30-day notice cancelling his lease. The fellow told all his friends the company had been mean and cruel to him by cancelling his lease so many of the locals wouldn't come back. The first day I ran that station I only sold three and a half gallons of gas. My profit was two cents a gallon. The next day I sold 10 or 12 gallons to a stranger who didn't know what the situation was. But the townspeople who passed my corner wouldn't even look my way.



ABOVE
Harland Sanders held many jobs during his 20s and 30s before opening his 'Servistation' in Corbin, Kentucky in 1930.

Then I remembered something. When I was traveling around selling tires, one place had given me the kind of service I had never gotten anywhere else. They had wiped my windshield.

It was that simple.

Back in those days there were mud holes in the highways. That meant a lot of splashing and dirt. A driver usually got mud on his shoes and that mud dried and tracked into his car. I'll never forget that fellow wiping my windshield and windows just because I'd bought gasoline from him.

So, when I took over that Standard Oil service station I made up my mind that I'd give good service including windshield wiping. I even went one better. A lot of people hated to ask to have their tires checked for air pressure, not wanting to ask for free service.

When a car came into my service station, the first thing I'd grab was my water can and head for the radiator. As I went past the window, I dipped my hand in the water and flipped some of it on the windshield. Then I put water in the radiator and when I came back I wiped the windshield and asked, "Anything else I can do for you?"

"Why, yes, I want some gas," they'd say.

The news about the way I ran things got around and even some of the locals who'd sworn off the station came in to see what I was like. I never let them get away without showing them something extra they needed. Whatever it was, I'd do it for free. I'd fill a tank with gas and I'd say, "Notice your right back tire is a little low. If you'll pull over to the hose, I'll be glad to fill that tire up for you." Then I'd check all the rest of his tires. Then I'd thank him.

That was new, too.

Word got to spreading about the service I was giving. I know it's hard to believe, but in a month's time I was doing a business of over $12,000 a month.

That was three times as much gas as anybody had sold there since the day the station was built. It only proved one thing to me – hard work works. Only I added personal and helpful service to it.

At Nicholasville I sold gas all day, and if anybody had flat tires and didn't need them right then, they'd leave them with me. After 9 at night I'd vulcanize tires sometimes until 2 o'clock in the morning. Then I'd be back there at 5 a.m. to open up. I sold more gasoline between 5 and 7 a.m. than most stations sold all day long. I guess you could call what I was running a combination garage and service station.

THIS PAGE

Harland Sanders opened his ‘Sanders’ Servistation’ (on the left) in 1930. Several years later, he moved to the larger building across the street, which became ‘Sanders’ Court and Cafe.’

CHAPTER 4:
What Came First: The Chicken

I kept that first station for quite a while before I leased a bigger one with a garage. Then the drought of 1927 and 1928 hit Kentucky and farmers were selling their sheep for 20 cents a head. Today they bring $20 a head. There was no feed and no water anywhere. That broke many a farmer.

I'd put out a $6,000 line of credit to them, all the money I had at that time, and I couldn't collect a dime. One month I had to sell my horse to finish paying my rent. I began to think, "If I have to sell off my equipment to pay the rent, what's the use of being here?" So, once again I quit. This time I wasn't ahead but I wasn't behind. I owed nobody.

Right about then the Shell Company made me a proposition because they'd found out I'd sold more gasoline than anybody else in the countryside. If I'd go to Corbin, Kentucky, they'd build me a station rent free. I took them up on their proposition and moved to Corbin.

As I say, the whole country had gone broke. That included me and my family. The panic of 1929 was on. Corbin was the only place I knew I could start again without any money, a place where business would be driving by my door 24 hours a day.

I went to Corbin and took that station. My family ate oatmeal and light bread three times a day before the station was ready for us to move into. But even at that, we were a lot better off than most folks.

I thought I knew what being broke was but I hadn't seen anything until we got out in that country in the Cumberland Mountains of Kentucky. The mines were shut down. Folks had been out of work and there was a Depression going on.

About that time I also got involved with obstetrical work, delivering babies. There was nobody else to do it. The husbands couldn't afford a doctor when their wives were pregnant. They had no money at all. No nothing. Like I say, some of those homes didn't have enough money for their next meal.

We had one family by the name of Humphrey. They lived back in the woods, way beyond the end of the road. This lady was due to deliver. I'd been told when she was expecting so I kept a close watch. When I didn't get any call I went to her and did an examination and determined that the baby was dead. That was the reason it hadn't been born.

I asked some men to get some bed clothing and lay it on poles lengthwise leaving the poles about two feet longer at each end than the bedspread. That made a stretcher. We put her on this bedspread, then four men took hold of the poles and we carried her about two miles out of the woods to where the ambulance could get to her. They took her on in to the London hospital and there they found that sure enough, the baby had died. The doctor said in another couple hours, peritonitis would have set in and she would have died, too. I don't know how they delivered the baby. I had no hand in that, but the mother came back a well woman.

When another lady I knew was expecting, I told them to let me know when she went into labor so I could allow myself a little time and not have to go tearing right up there. They came in about two o'clock in the morning and said that labor had started so I got there by 5 a.m. That family lived way back in the hills. You could only drive so far and then you had to ride the rest of the way on a horse or mule. I drove to a man's home, left my car there and asked him to lend me his mule to ride over to the expecting mother's home. It was a rainy morning when I got over there.

I saw right away it was a case I didn't know how to handle. It wasn't going to be a natural, easy birth. She was in agony and I could tell by her stomach that the baby wasn't at the right angle. I rushed back to town to get a doctor I knew. I put a lot of pressure on him, saying, "You've got to go, Doc. This poor woman has been in such agony for so long, she'll die." He stalled a while and said, "Well, I'll go if you get Doctor Corum to go, too." He wanted help. He didn't want to go by himself and he didn't think I could get the other doctor to go. That way he wouldn't have to go, either. Well, Doc Corum said he'd go. I drove the two of them to the place where I had to leave my car. That farmer had two mules, so I let the doctors ride over the hill while I walked the three miles myself.

When he got there, Doc Corum looked at the woman and he knew right away what was wrong. He just took hold of that lady's belly, gave it a little twist and a baby boy dropped right out on the bed. It just popped out.

The doctor was ready to make out the birth certificate. He went down to the barn where her husband was working and asked, "What do you want to name this baby?"

The husband pointed to me and said, "Whatever the name of that man is there. That's what I want to call the baby." So, they called him Harland.

Shortly after, I up and quit the baby business.

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But at that place in Corbin, the Shell Company built my family two bedrooms and a bathroom and a little kitchen in back of the station. We lived there rent free.

It was there that I started my restaurant business and put my plain and simple knowledge of food and cooking to work.

When I opened that new station in Corbin, Kentucky in 1930, it was about a mile and a half from the center of town. I didn't know until after I got there that I was moving into such a rough neighborhood – in fact, it was known as "Hell's Half-Acre." Seems like there had been a man killed behind every tree and telephone pole before I got there. You could count on a murder every Saturday night.

My place brought the first electric lights anybody had ever seen out on the edge of that town. They had to put in poles and wire just for me.

I did a lot of advertising, too. I painted "Sanders' Servistation and Café" on the sides of barns everywhere. The way I spelled service station was aimed to catch people's attention. I spelled it "Servistation," all one word, on all the barns 150 miles in every direction from Corbin. I did that painting myself. I mean, I did the coating. A sign man outlined the letters and then I would

fill in the body of the letter. (When you start something you have to do a lot of things yourself).

I could have copyrighted that word "servistation" but I didn't. I didn't have a dime in those days to use for copyrighting anything. I used the word "café" mainly because it meant fewer letters than "restaurant" painted on the barn, so I could make them bigger.

Every time I painted a barn, the business at my station got a little better. One day when I came in from painting a sign, a gentleman was sitting at one of my tables eating. He asked me, "Are you the owner of this place?"

"Yes," I replied.

He said, "I've been a-followin' your signs for 200 miles. I thought I'd find a 12-story building when I got here. It's no 12-story building, but you sure don't have to apologize to anybody for your food."

When I started serving meals, I didn't even have enough money to buy a rug. After I'd been in Corbin 30 days I got a Congoleum rug that cost $16. I put it down in the front part of the service station. Then I wheeled out our old family dining room table and six chairs. Millionaires and truck drivers all ate off that same table. They were all the same to me. They were just people who wanted a good meal. I'd cook up supper for our family of five, Josephine and our three children. Then we'd stall on eating for a while, figuring maybe we'd sell some of our food. Sometimes we'd sell one meal, sometimes we'd sell it all. If we did, I'd start cooking all over again.

A typical meal I served then would include whatever the meat or entrée was that day. Then maybe I'd add creamed butter beans and possibly spinach, collard or turnip greens.

I discovered that Yankees didn't really know what turnip greens were. The travel editor of the Detroit Free Press came our way one day and when she got back home and was writing about her trip she said when she got to Cincinnati the trees had begun to bud. As she got deeper down into Kentucky the grass was greener. "Then," she wrote, "we had our first real Southern cooked meal in Corbin, Kentucky, at Sanders' Café. We were given turnip greens."

Also, we'd most likely have mashed potatoes or sometimes quartered potatoes or sometimes sweet potatoes au gratin. We planned our meals according to my family's needs. We'd just set out a plate for any hungry customers that dropped in and we'd fill it with whatever we had.

The first 20 years I was in the restaurant business I had no written or printed menus.

We didn't have fried chicken when we first started. In those days, fried chicken took a long time to prepare. I didn't have the fast method that I worked up later. If I fried chicken and the customer didn't want fried chicken, it was wasted because you couldn't retrieve it.

I always raised my children not to waste food and they still don't, even today.

My new method made it both practical and palatable. It wasn't until nearly two years after I opened my Corbin place that I started tinkering with chicken.

My combination service station and restaurant was on the inside of a curve. Coming down the road you couldn't see it. My competitor across the street had a smaller service station but he didn't serve my kind of food. He had a little lunch counter set out with sandwiches. He didn't have a table where people could sit down as they could at my place.

I wanted his side of the road and I knew some day I'd get it. When the natural gas lines were put in out there and they were pushing the gas lines under the road I had them push an air line from my air compressor over to my competitor's place. That way he could draw his air from my tank.

I just gave it to him for nothing and he sure appreciated it. He was a good neighbor. We got along fine, although I was getting most of the gas and food business. The big truck lines started coming south about that time, hauling tires south and hauling cotton back north.

Because my food was good and because truck drivers tell one another about that, it was a good source of revenue for us in Corbin. Tourists didn't have any money to go up and down the highways in those days, but truck drivers did.

There's an old saying that truck drivers always find the best places to eat on the road. I wouldn't say that's always true but it was true in my case. Of course, they bought gas, too. They'd buy 40, 50 or 60 gallons of gas for their big tanks, so I had me a nice gas business going.

Then in about a year's time, my competitor across the street, Mr. McVay, decided to go out of business. He proposed to re-lease his station to me. I was glad to get it so I went across to his side of the road. I took my gasoline business with me, too, although I kept my old place to boot for quite a few years after that.

Because I'd been a good neighbor to him, Mr. McVay wouldn't think of letting anybody else have his place but me. After I'd had it for a while, the Pure Oil Company came along and asked me if I wanted to buy it. I said I couldn't afford to. They said they'd buy it for me and I could pay them back at the rate of a penny a gallon on the gas I sold for them. That helped me pay $10,000 for that whole block – all the frontage from one street to the other.

Pretty soon I built three homemade family-style tables in the new place. I painted them green and I took my big dining room table across and put it in my new restaurant. What with the little lunch counter that was already there, I really thought I was in the restaurant business.

That's when I first began to put fried chicken on my menu.

I believe that fried chicken is North America's Hospitality Dish. I spell all those words with capital letters. I don't care whether it's a king, a preacher, or a potentate who comes to see you, if you give him good fried chicken with mashed potatoes, chicken cracklin' gravy, and hot biscuits and vegetables, you're giving him the best the American table can offer.

At first I fried my chicken in an iron skillet the way Mama had always fried it. She had used lard. My wife had used Crisco. I used a popular vegetable shortening at the time.

But as I say, I used old iron skillets for a while. I put my cut-up chicken in a pan and pressed flour into it with my fingers. It sticks on better that way.

When the chicken was nearly done I remember Mama used to turn it several times. Then when it was nice and brown, she'd pour a little water down the edge of the skillet, put the lid back on and set it on the back of the stove so it would stay hot there and simmer slowly. The steam that built up had an effect of tenderizing the meat without drying it out too much.

When my business got heavier I had to have something bigger than a skillet so I got myself an old-fashioned, oblong Dutch oven, about 18 or 20 inches long and about six or seven inches deep. It had a heavy lid. I'd fry my chicken in it on top of the stove, and then as the chicken would reach just the right stage after I'd turned it several times, I'd pour in my water, maybe about quarter of a glass, down the side of the Dutch oven. Before it got to bubbling up, I would slap the lid on, shove it to the back of the stove and put an iron on top of that to try to keep pressure in it. I did it that way for several years.

That must have been my instinct at work for cooking since I didn't know about pressure cookers in those days. But even that way I used to cook chicken had the effect of pushing the spices and juices right into the chicken all the way down to the bone. I hadn't figured out all the spices I needed yet. I was only using a little of it in the flour.

Then one day I heard they were having a demonstration of a new-fangled thing called a pressure cooker up at the hardware store. They knew I was always serving fresh vegetables in small quantities. It was their idea that I'd have to cook more of them ahead to keep them ready in my steam table so they asked me to come to the demonstration.

I said, "You can't cook my beans the way I do because I like the bacon and the seasoning to cook right through the beans."

"Don't worry," they told me. "We can do it." So I went down to take a look. I took my green beans along, my bacon and the salt and pepper I was going to use on those beans. I let them load their pressure kettle the way they thought it should be done and lo and behold, when they got through and

the beans came out, they were seasoned just beautifully. They fooled me. They got the same taste in three and a half minutes.

That convinced me. I bought eight of those cookers. After that, I could cook small quantities of vegetables and put fresh vegetables that were never tired and old on the table at all times.

Next I got to thinking about frying chicken with one of those things. Here I was frying chicken and trying to keep pressure on it in my Dutch oven. Now that I had a pressure instrument (although it was a very small one, it held only about four quarts), I wondered why I couldn't fry chicken in it. So I equipped it with a safety valve. After that, all I had to do was determine how much fat to use, what temperature to use, and how long to fry it under pressure. After trying it out a few times, I made up my mind about the correct pressure and the right amount of time.

Within a year a competing company came out with a six-quart pressure cooker. I grabbed that, too. In another year or so, an eight-quart pressure cooker came out and I bought some of those.

In the meantime, I had developed my own special seasonings. I was selling an awful lot of chicken and I was building a wide reputation for it. I had started out with a couple of seasonings, including pepper and salt. By trial and error, I finally arrived at what I felt was the perfect blend to supplement the fragrance of my chicken. I got up to about ten different kinds of seasonings.

But no matter how much chicken I sold, I still coated it by hand with my seasoned flour. I was afraid to put in another seasoning. I had one in mind I thought would be good with the rest of my seasonings but there was nobody to try it out on except my customers. They'd come in to my place expecting their chicken dinner to be exactly the way it was the last time they'd had it.

If I put in a new seasoning, they might not like it as much as the chicken they'd eaten before. I've always been determined that a dish that tastes great once will taste exactly the same or even better a year later.

Then one day I got an order for 500 chicken dinners. They were to be eaten on a boat trip up to Lake Cumberland. My assignment was just to fry the chickens for that many dinners and deliver them in big cases. I had an inspiration. I thought, "These chicken eaters are not my regular customers. They don't even know my chicken. I'll try my extra new seasoning element out on them."

I threw two handfuls of it into the flour and stirred it up with the rest of my seasonings. When I fried it up, it was the best chicken I'd ever tasted in my life.

And, I've never changed my ingredients from that time to this.

THIS PAGE
Interior of the Sanders' Cafe
in the late 1930s.

CHAPTER 5
A Country Ham Primer

I didn't really develop a pressure cooker of my own. The cooker I use existed. All I did was adapt it.

I still ran a small country restaurant, but I was growing. My wife Josephine helped me at the start but she faded out of the restaurant scene when I made enough money to hire help. Two years after I went into the business I bought a restaurant in Berea, Kentucky, 65 miles north of Corbin. I kept the old place, too. In fact, it was always my stand-by. I went to Berea to run the new restaurant while my son-in-law watched over the Corbin place. My daughter helped him look after it, too.

I had varied my menu a little but not much. Beside fried chicken I was giving my customers country ham and skillet-broiled steak.

I always made sure I served good country ham and the best steaks I could buy. By boiling or baking a country ham you get so much shrinkage. The only way to get your money back is to fry it. You get your red-eye gravy that way, too. If you boil or bake it you won't have ham gravy. I'm not trying to knock good baked country ham. It's mighty good. There are no two ways about that.

When you came in to eat in my Corbin restaurant you wouldn't know what you were going to pay. The waitress would tell you what we had on hand that day. She gave you your choice of meat and you had all you wanted to eat, but you had no choice on vegetables. But your bill wouldn't kill you.

The average cost of one of my meals in those days was $1.25 to $1.75.

Pretty soon my Corbin place was listed in Duncan Hines' *Adventures in Good Eating*. I felt being in that book gave me a moral obligation to make sure my food was right, and my meals always were right. Nearly everybody enjoyed them.

After the main part of the meal, if my customers wanted to keep on sitting there eating hot biscuits, honey and apple butter, I gave them all they

wanted until they couldn't eat any more. As they came through Corbin on their return trip, a lot of them said, "When we went south we thought your prices were a little high, but we haven't had anything as good to eat since we left here so we're tickled to come back."

Between chicken and country ham, I built my business and my reputation until it was known far and wide. A lot of people told me my food was the best between Cincinnati and Atlanta.

For breakfast I had two prices for ham and eggs, fruit, coffee and hot biscuits. There was one price for packing-house ham and another price for country ham. The customers would come up to the cash register and ask, "Are you sure your price for ham and eggs is $1.35?"

I'd ask, "Did you have country ham or did you have a packing-house ham?"

They'd say, "We had country ham."

Then I'd explain that my country ham cost me from $1 to $1.25 a pound, whereas the other cost only 60 cents a pound. Plus, country ham had a lot of waste in it, about 50 percent. So, it really cost me more than $1.25 a pound.

One day I got tired of having to explain all that standing behind my cash register so I made a sign about my country ham and eggs. I figured that would stop people from asking questions.

I framed it and put in on the wall. It said, "Fruit juice, country ham and eggs, red-eye gravy, hot biscuits, honey and apple butter, beverage – $1.35." I added a line underneath that: "Not worth it, but mighty good."

From then on I sold more country ham and eggs. Clippings about that sign were mailed to me from all over the United States. Somebody would tell their local paper, "I was in a restaurant in Kentucky. They have a sign on the wall there that reads so and so." Then somebody else would see that clipping and mail it to me.

It was good salesmanship, although I didn't do it for that reason. I just did it so people wouldn't ask me questions. Some people thought that a piece

of ham and eggs with red-eye gravy and biscuits and honey wasn't worth $1.35, but I beat 'em to it by telling them that I knew it myself.

If I ever start a chain of country ham and egg restaurants those same words will be on the wall again. They'll cause conversation and it takes conversation to get word-of-mouth advertising going, even advertising about good food.

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The important thing about country ham is preparing it. But first of all, you have to know how to select one. You go out to a country grocery store or to a farmers' market and inquire whether anyone has any country hams for sale.

Mail-order ham sellers in Richmond or Smithfield, Virginia sell thousands of them every year, so they're not impossible to get. They just take a little hunting. Most farmers have a half-dozen hams tucked away someplace that they'll sell, because if they do they'll get $1 or $1.25 a pound for them.

I knew how to select hams with the right flavor if they had the right smell. I'd buy them all within 300 to 400 miles of Corbin. Toward the middle of the summer they'd get scarce, and you'd have to search far and wide for them. I even sent a Cadillac over to Smithfield, Virginia. It came back loaded with nearly 80 country hams.

Another important thing about cooking country ham (or any ham, for that matter) is to slice it at least 3/8 inches thick. If you cut it thin, the way most people do, it will dry out when you cook it. I cut my ham 3/8 inches thick and I serve four to five ounces per serving, so it doesn't make any difference whether it's in a short slab or a big piece, just as long as it's the right thickness. Then when I fry it, I use a moderately hot skillet (always in a skillet, never on a grill) and I press the fat down with a spatula while it's frying. You want the fat to get hot to get all the grease out. By the time you've got the fat pressed out enough, the lean part is ready.

There's a thing called ham steak that I abominate. I'll go in 99 out of 100 restaurants today where they say they have country ham and they'll have ham steak on their menu. What they do is cut out the center slice for you,

only they cut it too thin. I never got a piece of ham yet that was cut as thick as it ought to have been. Next morning when you go into the same place and you want country ham and eggs for breakfast, they give you slices cut from the hock end where the meat isn't as good as it is through the center.

I wanted anyone who ate ham and eggs in my restaurant to have some of the best part of the ham. I had to sell it all, even the inferior part of the ham, so I cut that center slice into three pieces, threw it on an over/under scale and weighed it out at about two and a half ounces. Then I'll put another two ounces of ham meat cut from the hock. That way, I'd always give two pieces of meat with every order of ham and my customer got the very best part of the ham. What's more, the ham tastes good and all of it is good eating.

I can't seem to talk enough about the nonsense called ham steak. Cutting ham steaks, a cook will probably cut about 12 or 14 slices out of the center of his ham. That's as far as the real good steak goes. Then he'll begin to run into the hock end.

On one side of the knife it was good ham steak and on the other it was the hock end. Since most cooks aren't careful about that dividing line, a ham steak isn't always what it ought to be. So I always cut all my ham up in pieces and serve four-ounce portions, making sure that each portion contains a piece of that good ham. If one piece has a little too much fat, I'll make another part a little heavier to make up for that.

The important thing is to make sure everybody has enough good country ham to eat. If you're given flavorful meat, it doesn't take as much to satisfy your appetite.

Country ham is spicy and aromatic. I worked up such a reputation for the flavor of my country ham that one day a man came into my place with his wife. She was madder than two wet hens because he'd made her come all the way from Knoxville, Tennessee, a 100-mile trip, and hadn't let her eat all that way because he wanted her to eat "real country ham" at my place.

They both ordered country ham dinners but after she took a bite or two she said she didn't like country ham, so the waitress changed it for something else. I didn't know anything about this at the time. Another group of diners

told me what happened later. The man ate his ham dinner and she ate something else, but when she was about 14 miles up the road after leaving my place she admitted, “I can still taste that country ham in my mouth. It tastes real good now.”

He was an executive with the National Cash Register Company. When he got back to Dayton, Ohio, he told some of the other executives there about his wife not liking my ham, yet saying she could taste it later on. They wanted to know where in the world you could get ham like that. He told them at Harland Sanders’ Café in Corbin.

The next Sunday those people drove 262 miles each way to my place to eat country ham. A really dedicated country ham eater will do a thing like that. And the pleasant taste you have in your mouth after eating it makes it worthwhile.

Many a time I’ve been asked, “Where can a city woman get a country ham to cook?” I think I’ve already answered that. The main trouble is that most people don’t know what they’re looking for in the first place. For that matter, I’ll bet a lot of people don’t know what really good, hot biscuits taste like. Some may have gotten close to good biscuits by eating the ones that come frozen, but that’s the nearest they’ve come. There’s no reason people can’t make their own biscuits starting from scratch.

The trouble is they just don’t know the feel of the dough. They knead it too much. When I put out my first 300 or 400 Colonel Sanders’ Kentucky Fried Chicken franchises, I threw in my biscuit recipe. Not only that, I showed my franchisees how to make them. I thought biscuits and chicken gravy just had to go with chicken. In my opinion, there ought to be a law against using rolls with chicken cracklin’ gravy.

CHAPTER 6

A Leap into the World of High Finance

When I came back from Cornell, my restaurant seemed like a toy. At Cornell, I'd cooked in a huge kitchen for 2,600 students. Up there one morning I'd made 72 pumpkin chiffon pies before breakfast. In my own place I wouldn't serve 72 pies in a year. At Cornell they had big walk-in ice boxes and all the modern kitchen trimmings. That's when I sold my Berea restaurant and went back to Corbin.

I had something new on my mind. As far as I know, I was about to put up the first motel east of the Mississippi.

Until then, nobody in our part of the country had ever seen anything but a run of separate cabins to sleep in when they were on the road. It was my idea to put my sleeping rooms all under one roof in an L-shaped court. With that in mind, I drew a floor plan. I talked to people in my restaurant about it. I showed them my sketches and asked them, "Would you sleep in a place like this if I built it?"

They all seemed mighty receptive to my idea so I went to work on it. The way I had it figured, I could get 17 rooms on that lot.

Then I did what to me at the time was high financing. I had cleared $2,500 on the sale of my Berea place. I found out how much the bricks would cost to build the new rooms I wanted. The bricks themselves would cost me $700. I went to a bricklayer to see how much it would cost to have that brick laid. Finally, I found a man who said he'd lay them for the same cost as the bricks. So that was $1,400 of my $2,500 gone already, which only left me $1,100 to buy lumber.

Then I put on a roof. My idea was to finish up one or two rooms. As I rented them and made a little money, I'd finish the others. But as it turned out, I had the whole thing nearly finished before I knew it, so I hit up the oil company that was selling me my gasoline for more help. They were already giving me a penny a gallon and letting me pay for the property out of that and here I was putting those buildings on this mortgaged property. The question was

whether they would let me have enough lumber to finish the job, to put on the roof and windows, and finish the motel and still pay for it on the basis of a penny a gallon. They agreed. At that point I was finished except tiling the showers and buying the furniture. The total cost would be $5,500.

I couldn't borrow any more money on property I'd already mortgaged, so I had to find a loan shark. When I found one, I made him a proposition. In exchange for $5,500 I'd cut him in for one third of my profit for three years. I wouldn't give him any equity in the property, but every Monday morning I'd settle with him, based on the rooms I'd rented during the previous week. I guaranteed him that his profit each year wouldn't be less than $2,000.

"How can you guarantee that?" he asked.

I said, "I'll give you a second mortgage for $11,500 that will include the $5,500 you lend me and the $6,000 I'll promise you you'll get. If you don't get it, you can take the whole works away from me at the end of three years."

Different people told me, "That's a mighty high rate of interest to pay," but I told them, "To me it's not really interest because every time he makes a dollar I make two."

The way it turned out, instead of him winding up with $5,000 after three years, he made $10,000 because I ran the place for four and a half years without a vacancy.

I had a good product. My motor court was popular. And I had my restaurant to feed my lodgers. But if you haven't got any money to do anything with (and nothing but the will power to do it), that's what I call high finance.

I made the bedrooms in the motel soundproof. They were heavily insulated with rock wool and they were air-conditioned. In each room I put a two-station radio speaker. That radio was controlled from my office so I was in charge of both the volume and the time of night they were shut off. And each room had its own tiled bath and wall-to-wall carpeting.

Each one also had Perfect Sleeper mattresses and box springs and solid hard rock maple furniture. Those rooms were beautiful and way ahead of their time.

It was such an unusual set-up I made Duncan Hines' review again. He carried pictures of those bedrooms in his book *Lodging for a Night* for two or three years.

I also passed a rule. I wouldn't let anyone stay at my place if they lived nearer than 100 miles to Corbin. In Kentucky the name of the county is stamped on every license plate, and of course, when you run a motel your lodgers also have to give you any information you want about their car registration.

My idea was this: I didn't want the young folks from Pulaski County, 47 miles away; from Williamsburg, 19 miles away; Barbourville, 17 miles away; or from London, 14 miles away, to get up a bunch to go partying and come to my place to spend the night. Nowadays motels near cities call that kind of trade "taxi customers."

If they lived closer than 100 miles away, they could go home if they really wanted to sleep. They didn't have to stay at a motel.

That was one of the ways in which I kept my clientele high-class. John Willy, publisher of *Hotel Monthly* magazine, had been urging hotels to get into the motel business. He wrote an article about my place for his magazine and took pictures of the interiors of my rooms, the tile bathrooms and the hard rock maple furniture.

I must say the photos looked really attractive. Also, Willy wrote that having been in one of my rooms, he was amazed that within five or ten minutes a waitress came to his door with a tray of coffee, sugar and cream, on the house.

I might also be the first motel owner who ever put a complimentary bowl of fruit in a room. I thought it a nice gesture but I soon found I didn't need to. As I said, when I'd been open four and a half years and I'd never had a vacancy, I probably needn't have gone to that expense.

I charged five or six dollars a night for an average room. Some of my bigger rooms with two double beds might have brought me eight dollars.

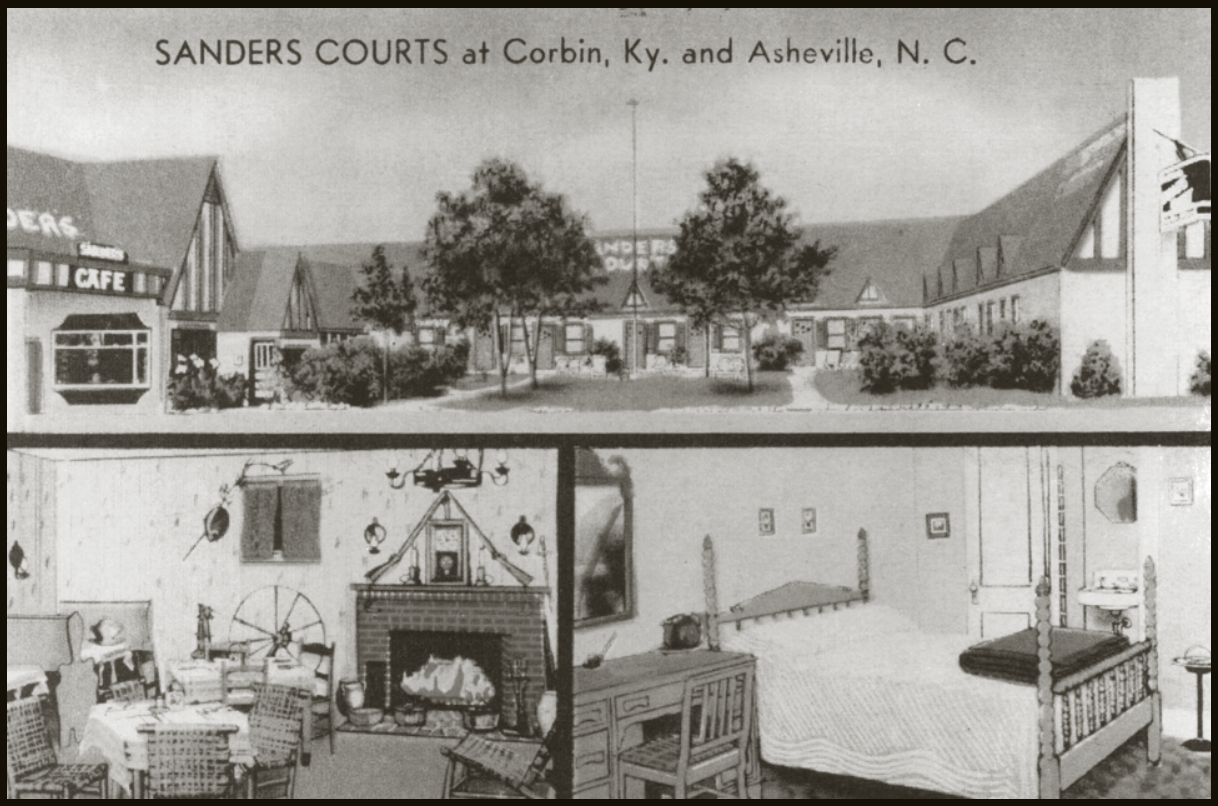
My family complained that I gave away as many rooms as I rented. Friends from all over had a tendency to stop by. I wouldn't let them pay and I wouldn't take any money for food from them. I'd often seen my court half full of just friends.

In his story in *Hotel Monthly* magazine, John Willy told about having the coffee brought in and how much it pleased him. Then he told all about the meal he had in my dining room. He described my fried chicken and my country ham. He said my vegetables were delicious. He added, "They were served with hot biscuits, and when I say hot biscuits, I mean hot biscuits."

I got his point. He meant that to impress anybody, biscuits must be served piping hot. That's the reason I always made sure my biscuits were the last thing to come out of the oven. Usually I suggested to my customers, "Open your biscuit and put some butter on it." I always kept plenty of fresh country butter and pure honey on each table. Nobody ever had to ask for more butter or more biscuits in my places.

It was a wonderful place to eat, no two ways about that. When I'm traveling today, if I could get a meal like I served at my place in those days, it would certainly make for happy traveling. It wasn't fancy food, no shish kabobs and sauces. Later I did get around to serving Lobster Newburg, lobster tails and Cornish hens for banquets. I could fry three Cornish hens in one of my pressure cookers. I fried them whole with my seasoned flour, and they turned a golden brown. They made the prettiest looking plate you ever saw on a banquet table. They were served whole and each person cut up his or her own.

THIS PAGE
Sanders' Court & Cafe was a popular tourist stop from the mid-1930s through the mid-1950s.



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Harland Sanders proudly showed the high quality of his motels in Corbin, Kentucky, and Asheville, North Carolina.

CHAPTER 7

High "Steaks" and the Motel Business

In a small restaurant it's better not to go in for a big variety. My advice is to keep your menu small but good. That way you can give more attention and care to what you do serve.

Take my steak, for example. I served a steak that was out of this world. I always aged my own meat. I'd buy it according to the market and I always cut my steaks thick. People rarely talk about how good a steak was. They talk about how thick it was. So I gave customers a thick steak, even if it wasn't wide as a barn door. It was mostly the eye of the rib, but not like the eye you buy at a market. I called mine a club steak, or, to be exact, "Colonel Sanders' Club Steak."

When I had a motel in Asheville (I'll tell you how I came to start that place in just a minute), some fellows came in one evening and asked me, "Is this a Sanders' Court Inn?" I said, "Yes."

They said, "We'll bet you a dollar you can't serve a steak here like they serve at Sanders' place in Corbin, Kentucky."

I said, "You eat a steak here and if it isn't the same as it was in Corbin, you don't have to pay a penny for it."

Everywhere I went I used the same standard. I cut each steak a full inch thick. That steak would be about three inches wide and about seven or eight inches long. It made a 12-ounce steak and every bit of it was edible. There was no bone. There was just a little fat out on the point and along the edge. I would heat the skillet in the oven before I started cooking it and cook the steak on its sides, too, so the fat was almost like cracklin'. It had just enough good, rich fat to go with the lean you were eating it with.

But getting back to how I got started in the motel business, I wouldn't have made a nickel if it hadn't been for that loan shark. Sure, he thought he was going to get the whole Court someday, but Sanders' Court and Café went on and on. So the fellow who had done so well with me decided he wanted to build me another motel in Asheville, North Carolina.

So, we built another one down there together on the same basis.

The Asheville place already had a restaurant. The building was already built, too. That house was on a 64-acre farm. It had been owned by the Englishman who'd brought the Bessemer steel process to this country. Eating there was like eating in your own home. I equipped the bedrooms with hard rock maple furniture just like I had done in my Corbin place.

We built 24 rooms there. Some of them were rooms with two beds, and I always used double beds in those. That way, if a family of four stopped in, instead of having a twin bedroom, I could put four people together: Dad, Mom and the kids. I never had to turn anyone away because of not having the right accommodations.

When we opened our Asheville place, we did mighty well. That was lucky for us because we opened it in July, and in November my Corbin place burned down – the dining room, the motel and everything, right to the ground. They called me in Asheville from Corbin and told me my motel was on fire.

They were so hysterical they weren't making much sense. I said to one of the girls in the dining room, "Calm down and tell me where the fire is now."

She said, "The dining room burned first. It's burning now around the court to room 14 or 15. We've got the Williamsburg Fire Department and the Corbin Fire Department here. The London Fire Department is coming."

I said, "When they get there, have one of them get ahead of the fire and cut the building in two. Knock out one of the rooms – the roof, wall, everything – but save the rest."

The London Fire Department did just that. I was back in Corbin as soon as I could drive the 191 miles over those mountain roads. On my way up I thought about how I was going to rebuild. I even figured out a way to finance it. I was far enough along with the land by then, and we had a good business and a good line of credit, so I knew I could get some money.

With the Asheville Court paying off as quickly as it was, I figured I could rebuild the Corbin place as sleeping rooms and not build a dining room.

That way, I'd just be renting rooms. So I intended to build 35 rooms in a space where I'd had 17 rooms and a dining room before. In my mind I also made part of the new building two stories. That way, I'd have a lot more rooms when we reopened.

The trouble was, after I got my new court finished, I'd still have my same old restaurant customers, and they'd want the same food I'd always cooked for them. That worried me.

I knew I was up to my borrowing limit at the bank. I'd borrowed $17,000 and that was the maximum they could lend to any individual. But the man I bought the lumber from to rebuild my court had plenty of money. If I bought lumber from him for a dining room, he'd just lend my money out on interest somewhere else. So I went to see him and said, "My customers are raising heck with me for a dining room and I want to make you a proposition. You sell me the lumber to build a dining room and I'll pay you 6 percent interest on it. What's more, I'll pay you every cent of profit my dining room earns until you're paid off. I don't know how fast that'll be, but it'll be all I make."

In that way I got that dining room opened two days before Labor Day. As a matter of fact, I didn't quite have it finished, but I used big sheets of plywood for my kitchen work tables. I completely paid for that new dining room in less than a year. That represented an outlay of $35,000. The walls of my new dining room were lined with wormy chestnut wood. They were the last wormy chestnut boards in the whole country because the chestnut trees in this country have all died since.

When I rebuilt that dining room, it not only made my customers happy, it made me money. I was at the height of my glory.

CHAPTER 8
Hard Times and Grounded Dreams

When World War II broke out and gas, oil and tire rationing hit, suddenly I had no tourists. Vacationers vanished. Asheville was summer vacation land and tourists couldn't get enough gas to travel, so I had to close down my Asheville place.

I went west and worked in a restaurant until the latter part of 1942 as a supervisor. But I hung on to my Corbin place because there was enough emergency vehicle and truck travel at Corbin to keep it open and make the payments on the $17,000 I'd borrowed at the bank. I left a woman who had been manager for me for eight years in charge of my Corbin place while I went west and took my crew with me.

When I came back I decided to sell my Asheville place, go back to Corbin, and tend to my own affairs. So I put a price on my Asheville place that would make me a profit of $24,000. The fellow who bought it didn't have any money. He was a railroad man in Detroit, but he wanted a motel.

I told him I'd take $10,000 down and he wouldn't have to make any more payments until three years had come and gone. Then he could start paying for those three years as well as the balance, but without any interest. He went home and sold his chickens and everything else he could to scrape up that $10,000. He made $110,000 during his first year there. That meant I had made $24,000, so I was happy, too.

I came back to Corbin before the war was quite over. In the meantime I'd run cafeterias for the government at an Ordinance Works in Tennessee. During that time I helped feed some 7,000 people a day. When I took those places over they had 135 employees. By the time I got them stationed the way I thought they ought to be and had cleared out the dead wood, I was running the whole shooting match with only 81 people. They did the same work 135 people had done.

When I took over those cafeterias there wasn't a pound of butter in any of them. However, there were about 2,000 pounds of margarine that had cost the previous manager eight cents a pound. He also had many, many cases

of condensed milk. That was his idea instead of cream for his customers to put in their coffee.

He had never had a piece of meat in the cafeteria that was better than U.S. Commercial and that's the cheapest meat you can buy.

I got rid of that cheap meat and I threw out all that margarine. I either sent it to the dump or sold it as old grease at two cents a pound. I got rid of the canned milk and ordered 22 percent butterfat dairy cream. I used nothing but genuine stuff all the way through.

In spite of those things, I charged the same prices the man ahead of me had charged for three years. It happened there was a clause in my contract that the government could call for a review of my prices any time and that they would give me 30 days to adjust my prices accordingly. I had never raised the price of anything and I was serving 100 percent better food. I had seasoned it right and had cooked it right. Yet when I'd been there only a few months, they ordered my contract reviewed. I was notified that I had to cut my prices.

I was charging the same prices the people before me had charged and I was giving better value all the way. That didn't make any difference. Orders were orders. I was put on 30-day notice to comply with my new orders, or else. I hedged for a few weeks without giving an answer. When I finally did give them my answer, it was that I wasn't changing my prices. So they took the cafeteria back.

Then I went to Oak Ridge, Tennessee. I worked there for a while as Assistant Manager in a cafeteria. Then, when the war was over, I leased another space in Georgetown, Kentucky, 115 miles north of Corbin. I took a fellow in with me who'd been a manager with me at one of the Oak Ridge cafeterias. I gave him $300 a month and 50 percent of the profit for running my dining room. I've always tried to be generous in my terms.

My new associate was smart. He opened the place as a partnership under both our names at the bank. Only I didn't know he'd done that. He bought

everything for the dining room under both names. Later, when I had to dispense with his services, he told me I couldn't fire him because he was a partner in the business. I'd have to buy him out. By golly, he was right. I did have to buy him out. He had set the thing up in such a fashion that he was my partner without my having to sign any papers or anything.

I could have gone to the law with him but I didn't want a long, drawn-out lawsuit so I paid him off and got rid of him. After he was gone I did well.

In about 1945 I became involved in another venture that ended up getting me tangled up with the Internal Revenue Service. After a certain length of time, almost everybody decides what they're going to do with the money they've got. The son of the man who'd financed me in the first motel I built wanted to build an airport in London, Kentucky. He figured that he'd train G.I.s under the G.I. Bill. He had it all worked out how much money we'd make. The way he saw it, nobody had any money to build the airport but me. Sentimentally, emotionally and morally, I couldn't say no to the man who had financed me in the first place.

The man who had financed me went in for a fourth of the business and his son went in for a fourth. Another investor had a fourth of the stock. He didn't put up any money. I don't know what they did with their stock, but that airport cost me $38,000, and the man with whom I'd built the airport never got even one trainee. Then he made me a freeze-out proposition. He'd buy the whole thing back from me at a certain number of cents on the dollar.

I said no. London men had awakened their city to the fact that they could talk the government aeronautics board into building a municipal airport for them. So I gave it to the city of London rather than let this fellow freeze me out. London got an airport and I lost my money.

I couldn't help but be distressed about losing money, but it was gone and I've always made it a rule never to worry about water over the dam. I had made money along the way and I figured I'd make some more someday.

So I went back to Corbin and kept myself busy with my place there.

Then in making my returns at the end of the year, my bookkeeper described the airport loss as a business loss. The year before that I'd had another business loss with $24,000 of the money I'd made at Asheville. I'd loaned a certain person $14,800. He later took bankruptcy against me, so my bookkeeper took credit for that loss, too, and wiped it off my books.

It was about then that President Truman got after everybody about evading their taxes. I thought my business was as clean as a hound's tooth. I'd never tried to dodge a dime's worth of taxes in my life. To make double sure, I hired a C.P.A. to look at my books. He told me that if I asked for a net worth statement and the government found any errors in it, they wouldn't give me a penalty. They'd charge me 6 percent interest. So I asked that C.P.A. to have a net worth statement made.

Next thing I knew, the government men came to see me. My C.P.A. worked with them and they went through the books. When they came to that $14,800 loss, they disallowed that, although it was a perfectly valid bad debt.

It just goes to show you, most people learn things the hard way. I sure did.

When the Internal Revenue man came to the $38,000 I'd lost in the airport deal, he disallowed that, too. I argued about it, but they said it was a capital loss. "You didn't lose that out of your business," they told me. "You lost that out of your capital." Then instead of doing what the C.P.A. had told me they'd do, they assessed me 50 percent penalty, plus 6 percent interest going back a ways. As a result, I had to borrow money at usurer's interest. It practically broke me.

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I was in Chicago at the National Restaurant Convention in June 1952, when a woman came to our table. She was handing out pieces of paper to fill out and give to your waitress if you wanted your horoscope read. Later she'd come to your table and cue you in. Out of curiosity and not knowing what a horoscope really was, I filled that paper out just for fun.

After a while she came to my table and said, “I’m sorry I couldn’t get to you sooner. We won’t have time now during the meal to go into it but if you’ll come back this afternoon I will be glad to give you a reading.”

We made an appointment for 3:30. When I met her she said, “You’re going to come into a good bit of money next year.”

I told myself, “This has got to be bad fortune telling because there isn’t going to be any money coming to me next year, over and above what I work for.”

She wrote down the following June 28 and June 30 on a little yellow pad. She added, “Within three days of getting this money, you’ll be offered a lot more money.”

I thought, “Gosh, this really is bad fortune telling, sure enough, because nobody is going to offer me any money.”

She put that piece of yellow paper with the two dates on it into my billfold and told me to wait until the following June and see what happened. Lo and behold, on the 28th day of June the next year, a man came in to see me and gave me $25,000 for the lease on my place at Georgetown. He bought my inventory, too. To me, that was a very good deal. In fact, I’d have taken less for it.

I left Georgetown then. I’d sold Asheville, so that just left me my old business at Corbin. I went back to Corbin with $29,000 in my pocket and had a good business going for me there. Three days later a telephone call came from a real estate man in Cynthiana, Kentucky, about 150 miles north. He said he was authorized to offer me $164,000 cash for my Sanders’ Court and Café and business set-up. I said, “No, sir, it’s not for sale. I won’t sell it.”

The next morning he called me again and said, “Can I come down to see you and offer you a price that you will take?”

I said, “No, sir, I won’t even talk to you. It’s just not for sale.”

There was no point in selling out. My motel was right on the highway. That in itself was worth a fortune. I’d been there more than 20 years and

tourists going north out of Cleveland made a point of spending a night in my motor court and having their dinner and breakfast there. Ninety percent of my business was done with tourists. I was just as happy as I could be.

About six months after that offer had been made to me, the surveyors moved the junction of the highway away from my motor court and restaurant. The junction had always been right in front of my dining room. Fifty percent of the people who were headed south looked forward to stopping at my place at that junction. Now, by golly, they passed it up. That alone cut my business in half.

I sweated that out for a year or two. Then they surveyed the Interstate highway, too, and they moved that seven miles west of town. That meant that all my tourist business would go.

It was then that I tried to sell my motel and dining room, but everybody else knew the highway was going to be moved. I couldn't sell it for anywhere near a fair price. I fooled around several months trying to sell, cutting the price down and down and down. Finally, I sold it at auction in March 1956. It brought $75,000 whereas a year and a half before I could have gotten $164,000 for it.

There I was paying usurer's interest on the government money I'd gotten stuck for. By the time I paid that off, I hardly had any money to do anything else with.

THIS PAGE

The Colonel and Pete Harman promoting the new 'Bucket O' Chicken' developed in 1957.

CHAPTER 9

Magic in Multiples: Franchising Takes Off

If I hadn't been 66 years old and had a $105 Social Security check coming in every month, I don't know what I would have done. But for me it wasn't a matter of giving up. It was just a problem of what to do next.

Back in 1952, I met Pete Harman while we were attending a restaurant short course at the University of Chicago. He didn't drink or smoke and neither did I, so when the rest of the class went out partying or nightclubbing, he and I walked around visiting restaurants. All we did was discuss food and the food business. I got to know Pete real well. He was a young man but he'd just spent $24,000 remodeling his drive-in. I was anxious to see a restaurant somebody had spent $24,000 on, so later that year when I went to Australia for the World Convention of Christian Churches, I arranged a stop off in Salt Lake City for a couple days on my way there.

I couldn't get Pete interested in talking about chicken then because he just wasn't interested in chicken.

He'd been in business 12 years and in all that time he had never served a single order of chicken. The last night I was there he was going to take me to dinner at a club up in the mountains nearby. I said, "Pete, instead of taking me up there, I want you to taste this fried chicken of mine. Let me fry my chicken for you. Have your head waitress, your manager, your wife, anybody else in and let's let them try my chicken, too."

I insisted so strongly that he did and I fried chicken and made cream chicken cracklin' gravy to go along with it. When I was making the gravy he came by and said, "What are you doing now?"

I had the flour in the cracklins'. I was ready to add the milk. I said I was making gravy for the chicken.

He sort of grunted and I said, "One thing about this, if you make the gravy good enough you can throw away the chicken and just eat the gravy, Pete."

He didn't serve mashed potatoes in his restaurant because it was a drive-in and everything was French fried. But somehow I made my mashed potatoes with milk and butter just like Mama had done and when I fried the chicken, I made cracklin' gravy. Then we all went to a big round table in the corner of his dining room with his staff and his family and I filled all their plates with chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy.

I also had a bowl of gravy sitting in the middle of the table. The biscuits were brought in at the last minute. When they took a bite of my chicken I watched to see if there was a gleam in their eyes. Sure enough, their eyes lit up.

Pete's wife looked at him and nodded and I thought, "That's going to do it." They all ate my chicken down to the bone just as clean as could be and they ate the gravy and mashed potatoes like nobody's business. Pete reached over, got two more biscuits, opened them up on his plate and smothered them with gravy.

He saw me watching him and he said, "I see what you meant when you told me I might want to eat the gravy and throw the chicken away." But he still wouldn't say he'd start selling my fried chicken in his restaurant.

On my way back from Australia my second wife, Claudia, met me on the West Coast and we stopped off in Salt Lake City so she could see Pete's place.

It almost knocked my eyeballs out. He had painted seven-foot-high letters on the front of his window: "SOMETHING NEW – SOMETHING DIFFERENT – KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN."

He had eight pots (that's what we call our pressure cookers) a day going. And he was selling my chicken like crazy over the radio. He hadn't told me a thing about it. He'd just wanted to see how it would go.

Then we got together on an agreement. I let him have the whole state of Utah. During his fifth year after Pete took on my Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise he did $3.5 million in business. That's $3.5 million up from $160,000, and 75 percent of that increase was done with the help of Kentucky Fried Chicken.

The next four years after signing up Pete, I think I lined up four or five more franchises. Each of them paid maybe $10 or $12 a month. I hadn't really been out to franchise regularly, but after that highway change in 1956 I had to choose a new direction, so I went into the franchising business in earnest.

So after I lost my restaurant in Corbin, I thought I'd try and see if I could continue franchising my own special kind of fried chicken. I started out on the road trying to franchise it.

At first, I only had a modest amount of luck. I bet I've been thrown out of more good restaurants than any man in the United States. When you tell a restaurant owner that his chicken isn't as good as it ought to be and you have a better way to cook chicken, it's an insult to the average restaurateur. Nevertheless, I decided that was how I was going to make my living from then on.

My $105 Social Security check let me travel around Ohio and Indiana. There were a lot of restaurants in those two states. Social Security was buying my gasoline and something to eat when I absolutely had to put something into my stomach, although I was given a lot of complimentary meals when I visited restaurants. Paying eight or nine dollars a night for a bed was the hardest thing.

That year, my Salt Lake City friend Pete Harman gave me a heavy wool blanket with my name woven into it. I'd roll up in that and sleep on the back seat of my car.

I'd always park at the edge of town so that the restaurant man I was going to see the next day wouldn't know how broke I was. That way I saved enough money to buy my pressure cookers. I never borrowed any money for my new business and never sold any stock. I owned it all. I could earn $100 a month and still draw my Social Security. My company usually didn't make $100 a month, but whenever it did make any money, I put it all back into more equipment.

I did most of my talking to small restaurant operators, the kind of businesses known as mom-and-pop operations, people who dealt directly with their customers. I understood people like that. It wasn't like calling on a large

restaurant with a snobby chef in a tall white hat or the maître d' of a fancy hotel. A man like that would have already convinced his boss he knew everything there was to know about food, and that a country boy like me had a lot of nerve trying to tell him how to fry chicken. I'd be thrown out the back door instead of the front door.

Dealing with small people, with strugglers, many of them no better off than they'd been five years before, I was treated kindly. I did right by them, too. My product has made millionaires out of some of them.

Looking back, it seems now that one of the most courageous things I ever did was to start out in my car with a pressure cooker to sell my first Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise. As I say, I had no money except my monthly Social Security check but I had 3,500 brochures printed. I handed those out at the National Restaurant Convention in Chicago. I expected to get some inquiries as a result of those brochures, but I don't think I ever got more than two or three.

Then I put an ad in a magazine, one of the few advertisements I've ever used. It told about how much my first franchisee had increased his business. He really had had a phenomenal increase. After that I began to get a trickle of inquiries.

Every day I'd go to the post office to see if anybody wanted a fried chicken franchise. If I got three or four I was elated. I remember getting one from Canada and I was thrilled but I didn't know how on earth I'd ever get enough money to go way up there and show the man how to fry my chicken. I didn't rely on sending out written instructions.

A couple who stayed in my motel one night was on the way from North Carolina to Canada. It happened that the next morning I was out with my grandson playing with a football. We were throwing it back and forth and it got out of my hands and rolled in front of my young customer. I asked if he had slept well. I always liked to treat my customers like guests.

I said, "Where are you going?"

He said, "Edmonton, Canada."

"I wish you knew how to fry our chicken," I told him. "I've got an inquiry from up there." It seemed like such a good idea, I said, "I'll tell you what. If you'll stay and have dinner with us, I'll teach you how to fry my chicken and I'll give you a pressure cooker and you can stay another night with us for free. Then I'll send you out and you can demonstrate my method when you get there."

He thought that was a good idea so he stayed and had dinner with us. Then I took him back in the kitchen and showed him how to fry my chicken the way I did. So he took the cooker and my seasoning with him and went on up to Edmonton and demonstrated it. Today that man's one of the biggest Kentucky Fried Chicken operators in Canada.

Even then I never charged for a franchise. I used the honor system. I didn't get any money to begin with. I had to put out money to get to a restaurant to demonstrate; then after my franchisees made their first money, I'd get some back.

People have wondered how I handled my franchisee business using the honor system without getting swindled. The fact that I could make a living like I did and scarcely ever have to dun a man was dear to my heart. I got monthly reports from my franchisees regularly and I don't know of more than a handful that I ever audited or questioned.

ABOVE
As word got out about Kentucky Fried Chicken, customers lined up to try this tasty new meal.

They were doing well and when they did well, I did well, too. I got a nickel a head for each chicken they sold. I'd figured a special way of cutting chicken so they got three orders out of each chicken. That way whatever their menu price was (some of them as high as three or four dollars for a dinner) they were making out just fine.

My idea was to launch them in business by giving them one of my franchises and not charging a thing for it. I leased my own pressure cookers to them because I had a patent pending on my method of frying chicken. I did that so if they cancelled with me they couldn't keep going with my cooker and fool the public into thinking they were still selling my Kentucky Fried Chicken. I don't think I ever cancelled more than three or four people out of a thousand the whole time I was franchising.

I also used a certain kind of flour. That flour was no secret. I told my franchisees what kind of flour was best. But the 11 different seasonings, spices and herbs mixed with that flour is a secret. It complemented the flavor of my chicken. I packaged my privately developed seasoning. I was careful to keep that package uniform everywhere – the United States, Canada, Hawaii, Puerto Rico – anywhere we shipped the seasoning. Nobody knew what my formula was. I had to keep it a secret to protect my franchisees.

Not long ago, Pete remarked, "That first chicken dinner has changed a lot of lives in the past 12 years. Back then we had 25 employees working for us. We have more than 500 now. In the long run, that meal helped our key suppliers out, too. Not to mention our truck salesmen – we've bought a lot of trucks. And then there are the half-dozen bankers who put up a lot of money to whom I've paid a lot of interest. In my own mind, I think the main reason for the growth of Kentucky Fried Chicken is the fact that from the time the Colonel showed us how to cook chicken that first evening until today, he's done everything he could to help us and all of his other franchisees. His untiring energy powered the thing for me, as well as others. In fact, he gives more time with little Kentucky Fried Chicken operations than he does with the big ones. He's working for the underdog all the time."

OPPOSITE PAGE
Colonel Sanders gave his first franchise in 1952 to Salt Lake City restaurant owner Pete Harman.


Kentucky

CHAPTER 10
Gaining Momentum: Business Blooms

Whenever I signed up a franchisee I'd go into that man's kitchen and fry chicken for him and his staff for two days to as much as a week, depending on how capable his staff was and the volume he was doing. I carried my pressure cooker, my flour and seasonings in my car. In it, I had a 50-pound can of flour and a soft drink chest full of ice and chicken. That way, if a restaurant owner didn't happen to have poultry in his place, I could give a demonstration anyhow.

My system was always to ask to fry my chicken first for him and his staff. If they liked it, I'd have a right to think that his customers would like it, too. I often hit the better restaurants in spite of the fact they were the hardest to line up because customers rarely sent their chicken back with a complaint. If you go into a restaurant like that and order something you think you're going to like, and you find you don't like it, you just accept it. You don't make a scene. You pay for it and go away. Of course, you never come back, but the owner doesn't know that.

That's the way it was with my chicken. If a restaurant was serving chicken and customers didn't like it, they always ate part of it because they didn't want to make a fuss. So a restaurant owner had no way of finding out whether his chicken was any good. He had nothing to compare with my chicken. The big restaurants thought they were satisfied, although they couldn't prove it, and they weren't interested in letting me into their kitchens to demonstrate my product. It was mostly the little fellows who paid me heed. As a result, a lot of the small restaurants I called on then are a lot bigger now.

I had photographs of Pete Harman's operation in Salt Lake City with me to show the Doubting Thomases. Those pictures showed long lines of waiting customers. I also had figures that proved how much business he had done and what percent of it was in Kentucky Fried Chicken.

I can't remember exactly when I copyrighted the name "Kentucky Fried Chicken," but I believe it was 1955. I not only copyrighted the name then,

I filed a patent application for my method of frying. My subtitle, "it's finger-lickin' good," is also a trademark and a trademark is often better than a copyright. It's registered in all the United States and every Canadian province. And I still own the Canadian Corporation, although it's being administered by a foundation I set up.

The idea of a 66-year-old man practically starting all over again was daunting, but it was the most interesting part of my life. At my age it was a challenge, despite having faith in my product, in me and in my ability to pull it off.

I never liked the idea of using my photograph on things. I had always referred to my face as my mug. But I did have a line drawing made for use in advertising, and when I saw it on the boxes containing my food I nearly fainted. Phil Clauss, one of my franchisees in Fort Wayne, Indiana, had a brother-in-law who advertised on a national scale. He got his brother to make this line drawing, but neither of us asked what it would cost. I thought it would probably run around $1,200, at the very most $1,500. When I got the bill for it, it was $8,000 for just one drawing. I thought if I had to pay such a price, by golly, I'd have to use it. It was on all my literature and I've often referred to it in my television work or radio interviews. I say, "When you see this mug of mine you know you're going to get good food – at least you'll get good chicken."

Proud to say, my mug is a well-recognized symbol now.

As I said, starting out all over again at 66 didn't scare me. I'd been in rags before. I'd been just as low and hungry as a body could be, and it didn't bother me to think I'd hit the bottom again. But I must admit that I never thought the project I began so late in my life would get as big as it did. However, the fried chicken business multiplied and got bigger and bigger until at last I put myself on a salary of $30,000 a year and dropped my Social Security check.

I had no trouble earning my new salary. In fact, my business did so well that before a year was over I gave myself another $10,000 raise. The government said that was okay.

I also paid my employees good salaries. I paid my office staff $7,000 a year. Country-bred stenographers and bookkeepers who had been working for $45 a week in their neighborhood went to work for me at $7,000 a year. I didn't do that just because I felt like it. I've always believed that everybody likes to have a good wage. I got credit for paying them good wages and if Uncle Sam came along and took it away from them in taxes, it wasn't my fault.

As a result, my employees gave me their all. We all worked six days a week. We only had one holiday a year on Christmas. The rest of the time we worked. It might have seemed hard on them, but when payday came around they'd never had money like that before so they felt it was worth their while.

THIS PAGE
Colonel Sanders giving a demonstration.

My ex-secretary was living in Shelbyville, Kentucky when I moved there in July 1959. In about October someone said to her, "There's an ad in the paper. It says that Colonel Sanders is looking for a secretary and he's starting her at $100 a week."

In a small town of 4,000 people that is a whale of a good salary, considering there weren't too many jobs thereabouts for women. They worked at the Court House or maybe kept books in various stores. So if anybody said he'd start you out at $100 a week, that was a whole lot of money.

She had a good job in a cement block plant and she'd had no reason to change until then. The man she'd been working with at the block plant was the Chamber of Commerce secretary. A small town like that doesn't have an employment agency. If you want a job you just apply at the Chamber of Commerce. They handle the employment problems.

Shelbyville is in the middle of the dairy country and it's a prosperous town. Most of the farmers that make their fortune put a tenant in their home out on the farm to run it, and then move into town.

The man my ex-secretary had worked with at the block plant told her he had had a call from me and I was looking for a secretary. He called her and said, "I've got something really good for you – a job with Kentucky Fried Chicken."

She said, "Well, there's no harm in me going out to talk to the Colonel." She had nothing to lose because she was planning on quitting her job anyway. So she called me and came out to see me on a Saturday afternoon.

At that time there wasn't any office building behind my house, no blacktop driveway or anything. There was just an old garage. In the room where I keep a piano and couch now, there was a square breakfast table and an old oak wooden desk. She came up into the sun room to talk with me.

She didn't know I didn't allow my employees to smoke, which in her case it made no difference because she didn't smoke.

She began to work for me. At first she did secretarial work. When she started I had a big wire basket with unanswered letters stacked end to end

in it as tightly as I could shove them. That's how long it had been since I'd had a secretary. I'd let my mail pile up all that time because I didn't have anybody to answer it. I was usually out on the road and the only other secretary I had in my office was a bookkeeper. She couldn't write letters the way I wanted. I wanted somebody who could write a letter after I'd given her a general idea of what I'd wanted to say and have it make sense. Even if I hadn't dictated all of it, I wanted it to sound like me.

She got the idea right away. She felt that since it was my business, I was entitled to run it the way I wanted to. If it failed or if it was a success, it would be my doing. I was paying her and I had a right to say what I wanted.

I guess I was dogmatic in some things I wanted to do, but as far as she was concerned my decisions were good ones. I did a lot of things differently. When I wanted things done for my franchisees, I wanted them done, even if we all had to bend over backwards.

I'd take orders on the phone even if they came in the middle of the night. When she came in the next the morning there would be an order on her desk for a new set-up from one of the franchisees out on the West Coast that I'd taken at 2 a.m. When I got on the phone, I couldn't seem to say no. People would call and tell me they felt like I was their godfather. Then they would say they were having a grand opening and ask me to come. I was always ready to go. When I signed up a new franchisee he'd come with his wife and spend three or four days at my house while he was learning how to fry chicken my way. I treated them like kings and queens. I cooked big meals for them myself.

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Before many years passed, things were gaining momentum so fast they were hard to keep up with. I kept thinking, "The drive-ins will close in the fall, so when they close I'll catch up on all the things that have backed up on me." But there wasn't any such thing as slowing down in the fall. More people just kept on applying for franchises. But somehow I managed to spend time out in my yard feeding the squirrels and scraping snow off the walk. When a big snow came, I'd never let one of my boys go out and scrape

it away. I did it myself. When I'd come back inside, my face would be so red my staff would be sure I was going to have a heart attack.

All I can say is I've just had a physical checkup in a Louisville hospital and my blood pressure is that of an 18 year old. The doctor told me, "Your heart is stronger than mine plus two more men. You'll either get killed in a car or an airplane. That's the way you'll go, Colonel."

I sometimes lose my temper, but not for the sake of throwing a tantrum. My one goal is to help my franchisees. But regardless of who I was talking to, I'd say, "Mighty nice talking to you," before I hung up. I always like to end on a pleasant note, no matter how heated the conversation has been. I've never hung up a telephone angry. I always say something like, "Best wishes to you." And that's the same with my letters, which I always sign, "With Best Wishes."

It may be another one of my quirks, but not being a smoker or chewer of tobacco, I've always been prejudiced against those two habits. I reasoned that if one of my men who went out to train a franchisee smoked while he was working, he might lay a cigarette down on a maple table and burn it. I didn't like the idea of a man having a cigarette in his mouth when he ought to be tending to business. So I made it a rule that nobody who worked for me could smoke, even at home. If they had money to burn they didn't need to burn mine. I'd rather pay my money to some man who has to feed a family and is saving up for the better things in life instead of burning it up in tobacco.

I'd say that nine out of ten of my employees were smokers when I gave them a job, but I never had to fire but one employee for it. One day I stepped in the restroom and smelled smoke. I went back out to the warehouse and asked, "Which one of you just smoked a cigarette?"

The fellow who did it owned up and I said, "You know the rules. Go in, get your time and go home."

That made firmer believers out of the others. They didn't smoke anywhere. I didn't have any ashtrays except on the desk. I didn't have any cigarette butts all around. In my offices the air was fresh and pure.

A lot of people have said to me, “Why don’t you retire?” I tell them, “A man will rust out quicker than he’ll wear out.” So, I keep right on going. I’d rather wear out than sit down and rust out. I believe I’d be dead in 18 months if I was to quit now. I’m halfway between 75 and 76 and I still get a thrill out of work.

And the franchisees I’ve signed up are my children. The real reason I eventually sold the management of my business was that I was thinking of the franchisees. I wanted to have the business carried on successfully for them.

I poured so much of myself into my business that even though I’m technically out of the management part of it now, I can’t get it out of my heart. It’s in my blood. I guess it always will be. After all, I’ve lived Kentucky Fried Chicken ever since I first thought of it.

I think the reason I sold my business is that I knew Kentucky Fried Chicken had a tremendous future ahead of it. All the time I was traveling I’d think, “We’re going places. Someday our stock will go public. There are so many different avenues we could follow.” I was just bustin’ with ideas. Then the phone would ring or somebody would call and I’d have to leave town and I’d tell myself, “I’ll take care of that when I get back home.”

During all this time, the things I was thinking about never got done. I guess I knew it would take a big organization to realize my company’s potential. I’m a lot of things, but I am not an organization man.

I still feel like the franchisees are my babies, though. I’d fight a sawmill right now for them. I may have quit running the company but I just keep going like a house afire. As I’ve said, I still go to the outlets where new franchisees are having their grand openings.

There’s something inside of me that makes me want to help people, especially people who are having difficulty of some kind. But I’m also tough enough and have enough horse sense to know when people are trying to take advantage of me. When I sold my company I got letters from people all over the United States saying things like, “If I don’t get $5,000 by the day after tomorrow I’m going to lose my home,” and I could tell the lies from the truth.

One thing that has helped me is that I never lie in bed at night worrying. It's been that way since I was first in business in Corbin when times were hard for me. I was broke then and I'd lie in bed at night and plan how to finance something the next day and I'd get no sleep. Finally, it came to me. I thought, "Why am I thinking about this at this time of night? I can't see anybody even if I wanted to. I can do nothing. I ought to go to sleep." Ever since then, when I go to bed I make my mind blank and sleep like a baby. I think that has a lot to do with the fact that I'm still in good health at almost 76.

Most important, I think the Lord has kept me here on Earth for a purpose, either to do good for somebody else or to punish me for something I've done. I've described how a bridge fell with me on it at Camp Nelson when I was traveling out of there for a tire company. To come out of that wreck alive was a miracle.

THIS PAGE

The Colonel loved to show franchisees how to make his chicken 'right.'

CHAPTER 11
Passing the Torch

When I got my franchising really rolling I intended to start another separate corporation and call it Colonel's Foods. That was going to be for my employees and grandchildren. I figured we might put several other good items on the market and that maybe someday Standard Brands or General Foods would come along and buy it and it would make some money for the ones I was trying to help.

My business philosophy really crystallized back when I got fired from that two-dollar-a-month job when I was ten. I know I've said this before but I can't say it too often. After my mother gave me the tongue-lashing, I resolved that the good things of life can only be had by working for them. And since then, I've always given the best of what was in me. I don't want to sound like a preacher, but it's worked out and that's what has given me my best return. The fact that the corporation that grew out of my idea is still expanding is the proof I need.

The thing that amazed many of my co-workers was the fact that here I was without the benefit of any formal education. I was a seventh-grade dropout, setting up my own warehouses to distribute goods in 42 states. I had no accounting background, but I handled my own books, did my own invoicing and took care of the receipts. I'd set up everything in my own business. I even handled my own legal work. I wrote every contract in my files.

I took things on faith. A prospective franchisee would call from as far away as Alaska and say they wanted to go into the fried chicken business. I had never seen this person. I didn't know anything about him, but after talking to him on the phone I agreed to trust him and I shipped him $11,000 worth of equipment the very next morning.

A business is not supposed to be operated like that; but when I sold the company to John Y. Brown Jr. and his associates, I had only $4,000 in bad debts on my books. That $4,000 represented one-fifth of 1 percent of my gross. My sales were about three million when they took over. Brown says he thinks the real key to my success was the fact that I'd become known as a nationwide personality. But that's not as important as the way I first got

started, back when I'd taken a blanket out in my automobile and traveled around, sleeping in that car along with my chicken, my flour and seasoning, and my pressure cookers. I still travel around to all the grand openings.

Brown told me that he thought there was another reason for my success: my ability to size people up. I've always had a sixth sense that tells me when I'm talking to a phony and when I'm not.

But it was the people I had that really built the business. My franchisees are hardworking, earnest, honest people. That makes them easy to work with.

The philosophy I built into those franchises was this: I left the incentive up to each individual. They made it grow. So, I was able to offer my buyers an outstanding promotional job already in place. Being alive and real, not a person dreamed up by an advertising agency, is important. It's all about associating the human element with food.


COLONEL
SANDERS
RECIPE
Kentucky Fried Chicke
BUCKET
BREAK

CHAPTER 12
New Leadership, New Goals

A lot of people have asked me why I sold my business after pouring everything I had into building it up. The answer is something like this. When Brown first got interested in Kentucky Fried Chicken, the popularity of my idea was beginning to run right smack over me. My business was beginning to get too big for me, no matter how much energy and time I put into it.

People who wanted to know about Kentucky Fried Chicken visited me in my home. They'd stay for as long as a week at a time. I'd feed them and house them while they were there. They became a part of my family. In addition to everything else, I sometimes traveled as much as 200,000 miles a year. It's been said that I worked out of my hip pocket because I didn't have much organization. I had my family helping me; I had some people working in my warehouse and a very capable secretary. But actually as far as an organization was concerned, I was the organization. One man can only handle so much, and if I was out of town for a week, decisions had to be held up. That kept me frustrated. I decided to let somebody else handle the organizational end of things.

I wanted to consolidate my business and solidify it in case anything happened to me. I'm strong as a bull; I can wear men out about half my age. All I need is a call and I'm off to California or Seattle to help my people put on a grand opening. This is my greatest joy. They usually start about noon and go until 9 p.m. All that time I'm shaking hands, greeting people and just loving it. But after all, I'm only mortal.

One of my troubles is I'm a perfectionist. I don't mean that so much about my organizational or administrative skills, but rather in my product and in having my franchisees carry things out in exactly the way I'd taught them. That was part of my success, but my operation got so big I was concerned about it. I had people who were a big help to me. I had two daughters, a nephew and a grandson working for me. They were my key personnel. But no matter how good they were, I didn't have enough people in the home office to handle the load. When you build a multi-million-dollar business, you must have a smoothly running operation.

The truth was I just wasn't an "organization" man. And I wasn't about to be one, yet I was responsible for the financial welfare of more than a thousand franchisees.

It was hard for me to let go of the business. I didn't ever think I'd ever really let go. But the people who bought the management from me are organization types and they have access to some very wonderful people with fine talents. In two years these talented people have taken what was a $3 million corporation and have built it up to nearly $20 million. Of course, they had a great product to sell, but it took organization to keep up that kind of pace. No one man could have done it. Or two men, either.

Everybody works as a team and they think nothing of working 12 to 14 hours a day. I guess that's my influence. I set that example. My telephone is open 24 hours a day. I'm on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every week of the month. I once worked three years without taking a single day off. We had a picnic once on the Fourth of July but I even worked during that. I don't believe in vacations. My theory was if I could do without them two weeks out of the year, I probably didn't need them the rest of the time.

Now we have plenty of people on staff to take care of sending out supplies. And we have men who go out into the field to train our franchisees' cooks. And we always use fresh chickens. We have to explain and make sure that the franchisees understand why these things are so important. A man from our own office will spend two to four days training our franchisees' cooks.

We've never set any limit on the number of franchisees we want, but we only accept quality applications. That makes a big difference. We only accept those we think will fit in with our ideas. If they don't fit in, it won't do them any good to train them. They wouldn't do the right kind of job. We're using more and more discretion in picking our franchisees.

The all-important thing is to make sure that our fried chicken tastes the same all over the country, whether you eat it in Kentucky or in Fairbanks, Alaska; within 130 miles of the Arctic Circle or on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. It should all taste the same because we prepare the seasoning the same way and ship it everywhere it's used.

***

I never would have sold out to anybody unless the buyer promised that my franchisees would be treated right. I guess as many as 15 different groups tried to buy my business but I wouldn't fool with any of them.

I went to Nashville with Brown and visited Jack Massey and asked him what he thought of my business. Massey said to me, "You know what you want for your business. I'm not necessarily interested in buying it, but you write down what you think is a fair price and I'll write down what I think is a fair price."

Although we had never discussed it, we both wrote down $2 million. After that we had several meetings and I said I wanted them to meet some of my franchisees to see if they'd be agreeable. But first, I made sure that Massey and Brown had no intention of changing any of the personnel of the company I'd set up. They said they'd operate it as it was.

I had made a commitment to some of my franchisees like Pete Harman that I'd either talk to them before I sold or I'd sell to them. So we flew out to Salt Lake City and talked to Pete. He thought the $2 million price Brown and Massey offered me was very fair.

After spending three days there – I believe the final night was the Christmas party Pete had with his 450 employees, a real gala affair – I agreed to sell my business for two million dollars.

Pete wanted to buy in, and a contract was worked out. The next morning at 6 a.m., four of us signed a piece of legal yellow scrap paper over breakfast. I doubt if many $2 million contracts have been signed like that.

But after all, I had confidence in Pete and John Brown. I didn't know Jack Massey very well but I knew the way he stood in his community. I thought I knew enough about them all to feel I was dealing with the right kind of people.

What I wanted was somebody to carry on my business and really do something with it. I'd laid the groundwork for something big. One thing I wanted us all to do was stop by and see Kenny King in Cleveland on our way back. Kenny was one of my best franchisees.

With the signed contract, we stopped by to see Kenny and ask him if he wanted to participate by buying 25,000 shares. At that time, he was so involved with other things that he didn't go for it.

I'm mighty proud of the fact that so many people have made a lot of money out of my chicken business and I think I have a right to feel that way. At least six millionaires have been made by Colonel Sanders' Kentucky Fried Chicken. Four or five of them made more out of it than I've made myself.

ABOVE
In 1964, the Colonel sold Kentucky Fried Chicken to Jack Massey (L) and John Y. Brown Jr for $2 million.

Kentucky Fried Chicken is the largest seller of fried chicken in the world. In 1964 it sold over $56 million worth. In 1965 it is anticipated to hit $100 million in sales. Right now we have outlets in every state of the Union, in Canada, France and England. Next year we're going into Australia and West Germany.

A growth business like Kentucky Fried Chicken doesn't happen ordinarily, but as Brown is kind enough to tell people, "The Colonel is not 'ordinary people.' A man has to have drive and ambition and initiative to do what he did. He's got to be different. Anybody who gets up at 5 a.m. every morning and drives himself until 9 p.m., any man who feels that no task is too big or too small – that is no ordinary person. It took this kind of man to build this kind of business. I've never met anyone like him. It's been one of the finest experiences in my life to associate with somebody like the Colonel."

Brown goes on and says, "I have a lot of respect for the Colonel. He's temperamental. He's difficult to get along with, but in the end, you've got to love him. Everybody who knows him or has been associated with him, no matter how mad they may have gotten at him, has a deep affection for him. You just can't help it. He's got an electric appeal about him. When we took over this business in January 1964, the most important thing I had on my mind was that we keep him on our team.

"I don't guess the Colonel ever dreamed that someday the idea he hoped would make him a modest living with accounts paying him $10 a month, would grow into a company doing hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of business. But most of all, we had to have something to start with and the Colonel gave us that. He gave us a business opportunity with tremendous potential and to tell you the truth, we're really only just getting under way."

I didn't say all those things. Brown said them. But he's an honest man and I'm proud he felt called upon to say them.

In the first two years his new team operated, they got me on 11 of the best national television programs – The Johnny Carson Show, What's My Line, I've Got a Secret, Lawrence Welk and shows like that. It was the finest exposure a company could get and none of it cost us anything.

It's my guess all this exposure has increased our business 50 percent. In addition to that, they've made a film of my life, so now the company has a complete text, film, radio and television library to carry on after I'm gone.

THIS PAGE

Colonel Sanders with his famous packaging.

CHAPTER 13

Trendsetting and the Take-Away Bucket

When I sold the business, the pace was getting so fast and the pressure so great that I told myself that I just wanted to relax. But I can't relax. I don't know how.

Fortunately for me, the new company still keeps me very active not only in publicity and promotion but in giving them constructive advice, too.

I love to sell. I've been called a great negative salesman. In my opinion, that's the most effective kind. Instead of saying to a potential customer, "Come on, take it," I say to them, "Unless you care about quality, you can't have our product."

The really amazing thing about my business is that I set it up on a very simple basis and because of the way I set it up, Kentucky Fried Chicken has no liabilities; it signs no leases. Since the business is based on loyalty and its obligation to the franchisees is a limited one, it's simple to run. We don't have the usual headaches most businesses have. We do have contracts with suppliers around the country. They supply to all our people. Our franchisees are their own operators.

But anyone who knows me knows that I'll never be able to get the work of promoting Kentucky Fried Chicken out of my blood. The way I feel about our franchisees – to me they're as close as my own relatives.

No matter who's keeping the books, I'm still Mr. Kentucky Fried Chicken. And I will be as long as God gives me health and life. When older people ask me, "How have you been so successful after age 65?" I tell them, "Anyone who's reached 65 years of age has had a world of experience behind him. He's had his ups and downs and all the trials and tribulations of life. He certainly ought to be able to gather something out of that, something he can put together at the end of his 65 years so he can get a new start."

The way I see it, a man's life is written by the way he lives it. It's using any talent God has given him, even if his talent is cooking food or running a good motel.

You can reach higher, think bigger, grow stronger and live deeper in this country of ours than anywhere else on Earth. The rules here give everybody a chance to win. If my story is different, it's because my life really began at age 65 when most folks have already called it a day.

I'd been modestly successful before I hit 65. After that I made millions. When they're about 60 or 65, a lot of people feel that life is all over for them. Too many of them just sit and wait until they die or they become a burden to other people. The truth is they can make a brand new life for themselves if they just don't give up and hunker down. That's one of the reasons I've written this book. I want to tell people, "You're only as old as you feel or as you think, and no matter what your age there's plenty of work to be done."

I don't want to sound like I'm clearing my throat and giving advice about how a man can be successful. I'm not all puffed up. My main trade secret is I'm not afraid of hard, back-cracking work. After all, I was raised on a farm where hard work is the way of life.

There is nobody in the world who's sold more Kentucky Fried Chicken than Pete Harman. Working with a boy like Pete has been the most joyful experience a man could have. I couldn't think more of a son than I do of him. He speaks about me helping him, but nobody will ever know how much he helped me. The fact that he took over my chicken the way he did and proved it such a success, that's what got me into many other men's kitchens without getting thrown out.

One of my first franchises I put in was in Davenport, Iowa. I was sitting there with the supply man that furnished the equipment for the restaurant, watching everybody enjoy the way they fried chicken. He said, "Doesn't that make you feel good, Colonel, to see all them nickels a-rollin' in?"

I told him, "I wasn't thinking about it like that. I'm thinking it makes me feel good to see those people enjoy my kind of fried chicken for the first time. It must be the first opportunity they've had to enjoy good chicken except at home, of course. I'm proud of the fact that I've helped bring good chicken to the tables of millions of people."

Fried chicken won a photo finish at Food Olympics two years ago. Our American chefs won it with Boston baked beans and fried chicken. I had served it in my restaurant for about 16 years and people bragged about it. They bragged about my country ham, too.

My menus were built around those two specialty items. It's awful hard to beat country ham, red-eye gravy and hot biscuits. It's hard to beat them even with good fried chicken. But chicken is eaten more universally by all nationalities.

Last year our country's supermarkets sold over $250 million worth of prepared food. When I began to franchise a "take home" package of fried chicken, biscuits, mashed potatoes, and cracklin' gravy, there was a growing tendency for housewives to buy good prepared food and take it home ready to serve.

Although I'm not in the restaurant business anymore, I'm devoting the rest of my life to trying to get the housewife out of the kitchen at least one meal a week by buying what we call the "family bucket."

In our bucket we have 15 pieces of fried chicken, a pint of gravy and biscuits. All you've got to do is make a salad and a vegetable and you have a fine chicken dinner for a family.

I've even got a franchised place in Tokyo. You know how they say Kentucky Fried Chicken in Japan? "Kentakk-furaido-chikin." Although fried chicken is supposed to be a Southern dish, the people up North and East like fried chicken just as much as we do down here in the South. We have franchisees in the New York area now, too. That section was the last place in the country to take hold.

CHAPTER 14

Hard Work: The Fountain of Youth

Hard work beats all the tonics and vitamins I've ever heard of. I have the constitution of a horse. It's because I've always kept busy. I get up early. If the weather's fit, I walk two miles every morning before breakfast. That gives me my exercise and keeps me nimble. And, as I've said before, I don't smoke or use tobacco. I eat the right food. My work hours run anywhere from 18 to 22 hours a day. I do get sleepy sometimes, but I never get tired.

I've got a guiding theory. A man can do as much as he thinks he can do or wants to do. But he mustn't try to justify his failures by blaming the world for his bad breaks. He mustn't go around feeling sorry for himself. Makes no matter what a man's age is, if he has grit and drive and faith, he'll be all right. That's the biggest thing of all.

It takes some of us longer than others to find out what we're looking for. But if you're honest in your purpose and you try to render a genuine service and sell the right kind of product, there's no question in the world, you're building something lasting and worthwhile.

If you work hard you can always keep body and soul together until you find your particular niche. Take the time I got fired off the Northern Alabama Railroad: My wife was due to have her baby shortly so I couldn't go out to hunt another job just then. Instead, I went to work with the section men keeping that railroad in shape. My pay was 70 cents a day and I slept in "camp cars," which were freight cars with bunks built into them and windows cut in their sides. But I managed to keep body and soul together until I was ready to leave.

I was never really out of a job. I'd do anything honest that needed doing. It's always been my opinion that if a man is willing to work, there's no reason that he should ever be out of a job. Maybe he can't find exactly what he wants to do, but he can always find something.

Another policy of mine all through life is this: I've paid good or better than average wages. My thinking was if an employee helps you create your money, then they should have more of what they created. For one thing, it makes

them happier. And it's also likely that they'll give me better service because if they realized they were getting more money from me than they would from anybody else, they were going to see to it that my place was run better.

For instance, for my motel at Corbin, I never hired a man simply to stay in the office and check folks into their rooms. He carried their bags in for them, too. If it was raining he met their car with a big 42-inch umbrella and escorted them to their room under the umbrella so they wouldn't get wet. Our employees at Corbin never took tips. They'd say to folks, "No, thank you. We appreciate your patronage. If it weren't for you coming here, I wouldn't have a job," and they actually felt that way about it. I paid them a substantial enough wage so they didn't have to take tips.

My philosophy was, "Give the best in service and value." You could rent a room anywhere but money couldn't buy the service I gave. And, of course, you couldn't get the kind of food we served anywhere else in that area.

I've always prided myself on providing jobs for people. And, I believed in educating my employees, too, not just myself. I'd take them to restaurant shows. One time I closed up a place I had in Georgetown, Kentucky, and drove all my employees to the Restaurant Convention so they could see the latest developments and catch up with what was going on. There were about 60,000 restaurateurs there and there was $3-4 million of restaurant equipment on display, as well as demonstrations showing how different food items are prepared.

Taking my employees there showed them how much bigger the restaurant business was than the four walls of our place. It also gave them a little recreation, a little change, a little extra inspiration, and they came back to work feeling much better. I sent my key personnel, all my managers, to Cornell University for a three-week short course. Any time I hired a new key manager, I sent him to Cornell to take that short course before I let him work for me. I knew he'd come back with a better idea of what the food business was all about, which would make him better qualified to render the kind of service I wanted.

ABOVE
Colonel Sanders with wife, Claudia, celebrating his 89th birthday.

CHAPTER 15

Community Service: Giving Your Best

One of my lifetime philosophies is you get back what you give. During the Depression when families didn't have money for doctors, I did anything I could do to help them. I've even come in and taken the sheets off my bed and given them away, or anything else we had in the house that might be needed. After all, I'd gone broke during the Depression myself. I was grateful to have the opportunity to start all over again and I wanted to be part of the community.

But somehow I always managed to make enough and, as I always tell people; my family didn't really know we were poor. I told my family whenever they needed anything to help themselves from the cash register. There was always a little something in the cash register.

A man can be generous and practical at the same time. You can't help everybody. After some of those TV shows I've been on, I've had people send me their electric bills and their water bills and notices from the gas company that their gas is due to be cut off. I paid the bills for one woman in Dayton, Ohio, but I told her it wouldn't happen again. If I were to take care of all the requests that are made of me, I'd be making requests of somebody myself because I'd be flat broke, too. If you support the charitable organizations that are supposed to look after the disadvantaged, that's all anyone can expect of you.

ABOVE
The Colonel loved to do whatever he could to make children happy.

When I had my restaurant down in Corbin, one of the activities that gave me a thrill was entertaining a little orphanage known as The Galilean Children's Home out in the country about 16 miles from town.

There were 84 children there, all the way from little babies up to 10 or 12 years old. I did as much as I could to help them get the place established. I furnished bathroom fixtures like pipes and fittings. But what gave me the greatest pleasure was every Sunday during summertime, I'd take an old-fashioned five-gallon ice cream freezer and 20 gallons of ice cream mix, then I'd go out there.

I'd make the girls' ice cream first. Then I'd go over to their dormitory on the hill and I'd feed them five gallons of ice cream. Those girls just ate and ate. They never had so much ice cream in their lives. Then I'd go to the boys' hill and make ice cream for them. They could clean up five gallons pretty quickly, but if they wanted more I made it. I made my old-fashioned country ice cream out of sweet milk, eggs and sugar.

Another time I enjoyed seeing the children immensely was Christmas. I closed my restaurant just after noon on Christmas Eve and kept it closed until after Christmas. That way my employees could be home with their families and say hello to Santa Claus. As soon as I closed the restaurant I started roasting turkeys and fixing candied yams and dressing. I'd have as many as 120 people from that orphanage as my guests – the children plus all the workers. Most of the time there'd be eight or ten outside guests visiting the home. They were all invited, too.

They bought a huge bus and they'd all pile into it and come over to my place in that. I'd helped raise funds to buy that bus myself. Those children would all pour in when that bus arrived and you talk about a jolly time! That dining room was plumb full of tots dressed so prim and nice. Well, all I can say is it was simply a thrill.

I'd have some of my friends in, too. They'd help wait tables and carry the food out of the kitchen. I did the cooking and fixing the plates myself. Everybody had a big turkey dinner, all they could eat with all the trimmings. There was an a cappella choir in the group and after dinner we had an hour of religious songs. They'd go home in the middle of the afternoon, satisfied and full of good food. It made Christmas great for me, even if I did most of the work. I kept that up until the orphanage broke up a couple years before I left Corbin.

Another big thrill I had was helping a church in Clark County, down in southern Indiana where I was raised. As a boy on a farm, my first Sunday school was held in a little country church about two and a half miles from

our home. I got my early religious training there. I got such a sound and thorough training. I don't care how far I might depart from it, I always come back to it. Mama always made us go to Sunday school and church every Sunday no matter what the weather was like. She went with us, too.

I was out there one summer at that church in Clark County when I noticed the back end of the church was under dirt. The hill had worn down against the building, the dirt about 12-14 inches deep. Since I'd put an oil furnace in eight years before, nothing else had been done to that church. I knew termites would get to it, so I talked to the minister about jacking it up and putting a foundation under the church. Then we figured that as long as we were going to do that, we should put a basement under the entire thing and add some Sunday school rooms.

We not only put a basement under it, we put in a new plywood floor to cover the rough board floors. We put down padding and carpeted the floors from wall to wall and built a vestibule in front of it. We've got new oak pews and a podium now. That church is just beautiful and it will serve nicely the way it is for another 100 years.

During that remodeling I discovered that my great-grandfather had built that church for the community in 1884, so it was a kind of coincidence you might say. We dedicated the work we did to my mother since she'd been an early patron of the church and had really started her three children out right in it.

I've always felt charitably inclined toward any organization that needed help, and I always gave that help when I could. I reasoned I would do anything for anybody if it did them more good than it did me harm. That's a pretty good rule to live by.

When I sold my business I didn't plan to sit on my money. The truth is I gave more to charity than I could deduct from my income tax as a charitable donation. To put it another way, it's not my intention to keep my money. The people who will inherit my money are still living and will probably outlive me. But on account of the enormous inheritance tax heirs have to pay, I'm going to give all of it that I can to them, while I'm still living. That way I can see what they do with it and it'll be a pleasure to see some of them get started.

The day that I was paid $2 million for selling my business, the Social Security office sent me a notice to come down and see them. They wanted to reevaluate my Social Security program. Lo and behold, when they were through, they gave me a $16 raise. Since I had a check for $2 million in my pocket, I decided the only thing for me to do with that Social Security money was to give it to a worthy organization. I gave it to the Salvation Army.

I've always had a soft spot in my heart for the Salvation Army. I happened to attend a Salvation Army annual dinner at a hotel just a few days after I'd sold the management of my fried chicken business. The papers were carrying headlines like, "Colonel Sanders Gets Two Million Dollars."

The speaker that night was a minister. He mentally summed it up: 10 percent of $2 million, that's a tithe of $200,000. So that's how much he figured I ought to give to the Salvation Army. Of course, it didn't all come at one time because I didn't get my money all at once. But in the end, I spent more than the 10 percent on the Salvation Army. Part of it went into an $85,000 Settlement House.

They honored Mrs. Sanders and me by dedicating a plaque to us. That house is located in the east end of Louisville, Kentucky in an area that really needs it. And it's done a world of good. A year ago in their old quarters they had an attendance of about 600. That included the children's playground, the Sunday school room and all the other activities. This year, in their new quarters, they've more than doubled their attendance. So you see, the new facility is serving a lot more people and serving them better.

The reason I lean toward the Salvation Army is because, regardless of how low a man or woman gets, the Salvation Army will pick them up and try to help them out. The Salvation Army has done more for the down-trodden man than any other organization. It has reached people who might never have been reached by anyone else. I figured that, instead of picking a lot of charities to give to, I could reach more of the needy and down-trodden humanity through the Salvation Army.

ABOVE

Colonel Harland Sanders received the Horatio Alger Award from Dr Norman Vincent Peale in 1965. With them are KFC Board Chairman Jack Massey and KFC President Mr John Y. Brown Jr.

CHAPTER 16

From Humble Beginnings, a Legacy

I was surprised and honored in 1965 when I was given the Horatio Alger Award. I didn't even know who Horatio Alger was. Having to quit school in the seventh grade, I wasn't familiar with Alger's books. As for reading, I hadn't even been in a library.

When somebody hit it lucky, I'd hear someone say, "He's a regular Horatio Alger," but it didn't mean a thing to me. I figured someday I'd find out what it meant. All I knew was that it meant "from rags to riches." So when I got the nomination, I was surprised.

I received a letter telling me I'd been nominated and asking if I could come to New York to the Waldorf-Astoria on a particular day in May, in the event that I won the award. I told them I could. I looked into it and I found the association fosters the American way of life. It tries to convince young people that there are still opportunities for everybody who really looks for them. Those opportunities aren't all gone yet. You don't have to belong to a big corporation to make it. Take me. I came from nothing.

The nominations committee picked 15 or 20 people they thought should receive the award. Then they sent those nominations to 500 colleges and they were distributed to 3,000 campus workers who read the stories and biographies. They were the ones who determined which 10 people were to receive the awards each year. President Eisenhower, President Hoover, Conrad Hilton and J. C. Penney have been among the winners. Some mighty fine folks have gotten it.

Some of the smartest men I've ever known never finished high school or college but they have a native intelligence. There's a lot of difference between a little book learning and being educated. It all depends on how you define education. The world seems to feel that the only educated men are those who've enjoyed a formal education. I know many successful men who never even got out of grammar school.

In accepting the award I said that, while the fact that I'd been lucky enough to strike it rich was responsible for me receiving this award, I'd rather think that the real reason was the things that had been my privilege to do for my fellow man. A person can get rich winning the lottery or gambling or pulling off some crooked deal, but what I'd done was bring a thousand or more men into the fold of American independent businessmen. All of them were making a good living, educating their families, enjoying their lives. I figured maybe that made it all right for me to receive that award. But it made me and my family really proud nonetheless.

Some people wonder what I do for Kentucky Fried Chicken right now. I'll tell you what I do. I live – and as long as there's breath in my body and I'm walking around, I'll be selling fried chicken. I don't have to utter a word. All I have to do to be worth more than my pay is to just keep circulating.

I've always felt that the day a fellow stops running he goes downhill fast. I hope I die doing something active. I have a morbid fear of lying sick in a bed. To me that would be worse than dying.

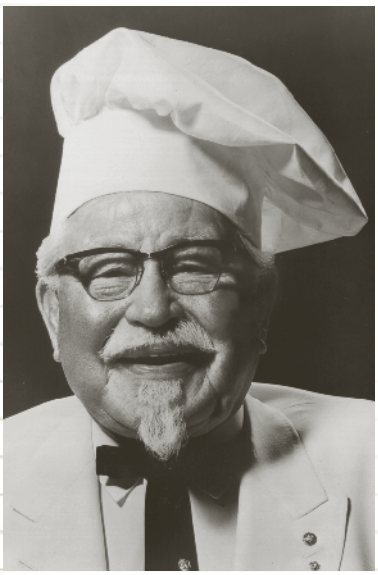
Someone reading this, who feels he's in the twilight of his life, I'd like to tell him that twilight won't fall until his last breath is drawn. There are many things a man can do with his life if he has enough desire. And I don't mean just piling up money. I'd rather think back on what I've done for other people as I've gone along, especially the people who have handled my product and the people I've helped get started in the business.

I have had 1,000 franchisees, all on the honor system, and to never have any of them audited or require any affidavit as to how much they've sold, I have to admit that's pretty unusual. But it wouldn't seem so unusual if you knew those men. They're just about the finest group of fellows anyone ever got together, no two ways about it. We loved each other. I always felt if a man couldn't be trusted I didn't want him. And I always tried to give a man a break, providing he was trying to give himself a break.

It makes me proud and happy that I started a wonderful thing that has made so many people prosperous. I wish I could see the total of how much income I've helped others make in the course of a year. Last year *Institutions*, a big magazine in the restaurant industry, printed a summary of all the large restaurants and restaurant chains. They listed the top 400 chains in the United States. Kentucky Fried Chicken was 18th in the nation. No chicken company came even close to us. Howard Johnson had a higher gross than we did, but we accounted for $100 million in the 12-month period the magazine covered.

That was several months ago, and the way things are run now, I wouldn't be surprised if it's not half again that large. I'd say I'm responsible for $150 million going into various people's pockets – working people, kitchen help. Many of these people had never had a prospect of making a decent living all their lives, and now they're wealthy.

A lot of things have changed over the years – business strategies and complicated economic theories – but they haven't been able to change the Golden Rule. That one still works and my story is the proof.



THIS PAGE
Colonel Sanders
– The Original Celebrity Chef.

With Best Wishes


Col. Harland Sanders

The Food...

Appetizers

Hot Biscuits
French Fried Parsnips and Cauliflower
Corn Fritters
Corn Chowder
Hush Puppies
Mint Julep

Hot Biscuits

1½ cups (180 g) all-purpose flour
1½ teaspoons salt
1 tablespoon sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon baking soda
¼ cup (48 g) solid vegetable shortening
1 cup (240 mL) milk or buttermilk

Optional ingredients
1 cup (225 g) salted butter
⅔ cup (160 mL) honey

Preheat oven to 400° F (200° C).

Combine flour, salt, sugar, baking powder and baking soda in a large mixing bowl; cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

Stir in milk or buttermilk just until a soft dough forms.

Turn onto a lightly floured board and knead gently 10 to 12 times or until no longer sticky. Divide dough in half; gently pat or roll each half into an 8-inch (20 cm) circle ½-inch thick (13 mm). Cut out biscuits – pressing straight down – with a 2-inch (5 cm) biscuit cutter. Reform scraps, working it as little as possible and continue cutting.

Place cut biscuits on an ungreased baking sheet with edges barely touching. Brush tops of the biscuits with a little milk. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes.

Makes: 9 to 12 biscuits

Kitchen Tip: These biscuits are great with some honey butter. Beat together 1 cup (225 g) salted butter and ⅔ cup (160 mL) honey until smooth. Place honey butter into small ramekins and then chill in the refrigerator to firm. Remove from the refrigerator 10 minutes before you are ready to serve.

THE COLONEL SAYS:
For a biscuit cutter, I use a frozen orange juice can or a baby food jar.

French Fried Parsnips and Cauliflower

4 or 5 parsnips trimmed, peeled and sliced into uniform, equal-sized pieces
2 egg yolks
½ cup (120 mL) milk
1½ teaspoons salt (divided use)
2¼ cups (270 g) all-purpose flour (divided use)
1½ teaspoons white pepper
1 head of cauliflower cut into flowerets
2 tablespoons each of salt (40 g) and sugar (30 g) for preparing parsnips
Vegetable oil for frying (Canola or corn oil)

Bring a quart (1 L) of water to boil; dissolve 2 tablespoons of salt (40 g) and sugar (30 g). Add parsnips, lower heat and cook for 4 to 5 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Beat egg yolks at high speed with a hand mixer until they are fluffy and lemon-colored. Add milk and ½ teaspoon of the salt. Gradually add ¾ cup (95 g) of the flour, beating until well incorporated. Chill in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Combine remaining flour, white pepper and salt in a medium sized mixing bowl. Set aside.

Prepare your deep-fryer according to manufacturer's directions. If deep-frying on a stove top, use a cooking or candy thermometer and a deep sided pot large enough to hold enough oil to submerge the parsnips and cauliflower. Because these vegetables will be covered with batter, it is best not to use a frying basket; heat oil to 400° F (200° C).

Remove batter from the refrigerator and set next to the dry flour mixture. Dip parsnip or cauliflower pieces in the batter, shake off excess, then toss in flour mixture to coat. Add coated pieces to the hot oil a few pieces at a time. Fry until golden. Remove from the hot oil with a slotted spoon or tongs. Drain on a plate or tray lined with a paper towel. You may need to add 1-3 tablespoons of cold water to help maintain batter consistency.

Serves: 4 to 6

THE COLONEL SAYS:

This makes parsnips taste good.

Corn Fritters

¾ cup (90 g) all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon sugar
½ teaspoon salt
1 egg, beaten
½ cup (120 mL) milk
1 tablespoon (15 mL) melted butter or shortening
2 cups (480 g) of fresh cut corn off the cob or a 15¼-ounce (480 g) can of whole kernel corn, drained
Vegetable oil for frying (canola or corn oil)
Confectioner's sugar or maple syrup

Prepare your deep-fryer according to manufacturer's directions. If deep-frying on a stove-top, use a cooking or candy thermometer and a deep sided pot large enough to hold enough oil to submerge the corn fritters. Heat oil to 365° F. (185° C).

Combine flour, baking powder, sugar and salt in a large mixing bowl. Set aside.

Combine beaten egg, milk, and melted butter or shortening and add them to the dry ingredients mixing until the flour is moist. Stir in the corn.

Carefully drop batter one spoonful at a time into the hot oil. I suggest using two spoons – one spoon to scoop batter, the second to push the batter into the oil. Cook no more than six fritters at a time. Fry until golden brown, about 3 or 4 minutes.

Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.

Dust with confectioner's sugar while still warm or serve with maple syrup.

Makes: about 12 to 18 fritters

THE COLONEL SAYS:
These are simple to make and people always relish them.

Corn Chowder

1 tablespoon (15 g) butter
1 cup (130 g) finely chopped sweet onion such as Bermuda or Andes
½ cup finely chopped celery
4 cups (900 g) corn cut from cob or 4 cups (900 g) canned corn kernels (not cream-style), divided use
2 medium-size potatoes, washed, peeled and cut into ½-inch (13 mm) cubes
2 cups (480 mL) chicken broth
2 cups (480 mL) milk, divided use
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
Pinch cayenne
1 cup (240 mL) heavy cream

In a 5-quart (5 L) Dutch oven or large pot, add butter and melt over medium-high. When butter is melted, add onion and celery and cook until softened, about 5 minutes.

Add 2 cups (approximately 450 g) of the corn, potato cubes, and chicken broth. Bring to a boil, lower heat, cover and simmer for about 15 to 20 minutes.

Place remaining corn and 1 cup (240 mL) of the milk in a blender; process until smooth. Add to Dutch oven; stir in remaining cup of milk, salt, black pepper and cayenne. Continue to cook over medium heat until soup is uniformly hot (do not boil).

Stir in heavy cream. Continue to cook and stir until the soup is once again uniformly hot.

To serve: Divide chowder among six individual soup bowls. Sprinkle with a little more black pepper.

Serves: 6

Hush Puppies

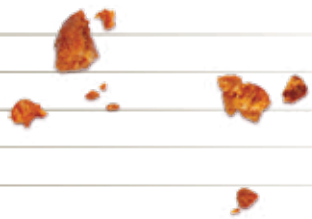
3 cups cornmeal (450 g)
– for best results use 2 cups (300 g) coarse cornmeal plus 1 cup (180 g) fine cornmeal or cornmeal flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1½ teaspoons salt
2 eggs, well beaten
1 to 1½ cups (240 to 360 mL) milk
1 medium yellow onion, peeled and minced
Vegetable oil for frying (canola or corn oil)

Combine cornmeal, baking powder and salt in a large mixing bowl. Stir in eggs and enough milk to form a soft dough. Stir in onion.

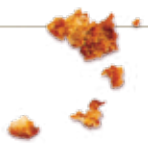
Prepare your deep-fryer according to manufacturer's directions. If deep-frying on a stove-top, use a cooking or candy thermometer and a deep sided pot large enough to hold enough oil to submerge the Hush Puppies. Heat oil to 375° F (190° C).

Drop batter by the tablespoonful into the hot oil. You can fry 8 to 10 of these at a time, but don't crowd the pan. Remove when they are golden brown using a slotted spoon or strainer. Drain on a dish or tray covered with a paper towel.

Makes: About 2 dozen



THE COLONEL SAYS:
These Hush Puppies come up high and light and are mighty tasty with fried fish.



Mint Julep

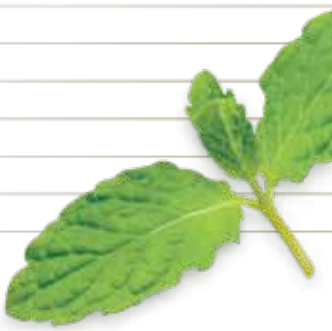
Simple Syrup
1 cup (250 mL) water
1 cup (225 g) sugar

Fresh mint bouquet
(divided use)
Crushed ice, rolled in a towel
to dry
2 oz (60 mL) Kentucky bourbon

Make a Simple Syrup mixture by combining water and sugar in a 1-quart (900 mL) saucepan. Bring to a boil, then lower heat to a simmer. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat. Add 6 sprigs of mint, pressing them against to bottom of the pan to release their flavor. Let stand in syrup until completely cool. This can be done a day or two in advance. Once the syrup is cooled, strain out the mint leaves and then pour the syrup into a screw top jar. Store in the refrigerator until ready to use.

To make a Mint Julep, add crushed ice and 2-3 teaspoons (10 to 15 mL) of the Simple Syrup to a chilled Tom Collins glass or silver julep cup. Add bourbon. Stir, not touching the glass, and add a sprig of mint for garnish. Serve immediately.

Serves: 1



Sides

Candied Sweet Potatoes
Onion Pie
Transparent Squash
Cranberry Conserve
Fried Tomatoes
Bread Stuffing

Candied Sweet Potatoes

4 large sweet potatoes
2 tablespoons butter
½ cup (90 g) packed brown sugar
¼ cup (60 mL) sherry

Optional ingredients
½ cup (40 g) coarsely crushed cornflakes
½ cup (90 g) packed brown sugar
¼ cup (60 g) melted butter

Preheat oven to 350° F (175° C).

Scrub and boil the potatoes in a 2 to 3-quart (2 to 3 L) saucepan until tender, about 30 to 40 minutes. Drain, cool and then peel. Slice sweet potatoes into ⅜-inch (10 mm) thick slices.

Place slices in a buttered 2-quart (2 L) deep baking dish in layers, with a little brown sugar, and a few dabs of butter over each layer. Repeat until all sweet potato slices are used. Pour sherry over all.

Bake for 30 to 40 minutes.

Serves: 4

Kitchen tip: Add a crumb topping for attractive presentation. Before placing this dish in the oven, combine coarsely crushed cornflakes with brown sugar and melted butter. Sprinkle over the sweet potatoes.

Onion Pie

Non-stick cooking spray

For the crust:

1½ cups (180 g) bread crumbs
1 to 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
5 tablespoons (70 g) butter, melted

For the filling:

¼ cup (55 g) butter or margarine
2 pounds (900 g) onions, peeled and thinly sliced
4 eggs
1½ cups (360 ml) milk
¼ pound (125 g) sharp cheddar cheese, grated

Preheat oven to 350° F (180° C).

Lightly spray a deep 9-inch (23 cm) pie pan with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside.

For the crust, combine bread crumbs, parsley, salt and pepper in a small mixing bowl. Set aside.

Melt the 5 tablespoons (70 g) of butter in a 10-inch (25 cm) skillet over medium heat, being careful not to let it brown. Remove from heat and gently work into the bread crumb mixture, tossing with a fork until crumbs are uniformly moistened.

When cool enough to handle, press breadcrumbs into the pie plate, lining the sides and bottom completely. Bake for about 10 minutes. Remove from oven. Set aside until ready to use.

Wipe out skillet with a paper towel, and then melt the ¼ cup (55 g) of butter over medium heat. Add onion slices and cook, very slowly until onions are translucent (do not brown) about 10 to 15 minutes. Spread the cooked butter and onions over the crumb pie crust.

Beat the eggs slightly and then add the milk slowly. Season with salt and pepper and then pour the mixture over the onions.

Sprinkle the grated cheese over the top and bake for about 25 minutes, or until it is set.

Serves: 4 to 6

Transparent Squash

1 (2-pound/900 g) acorn squash or packaged fresh peeled and cubed acorn squash
¾ teaspoon allspice
½ to ¾ cup (100 to 150 g) sugar
⅓ to ½ cup (75 to 115 g) butter
½ teaspoon salt

Using a sharp chef knife, trim the top and the bottom of the acorn squash so that it can sit flat on the table. Using either a vegetable peeler or a sharp knife, *carefully* trim off the green peel. Trim the green peel from the groves by cutting along the groves to form wedges. Separate wedges and continue to peel until all the green has been removed. Dice into ¾-inch (19 mm) cubes.

Add cubes to gently boiling water, cover and lower heat; simmer until it is fork tender, about 10 to 15 minutes. Drain off the excess water until it barely covers the cubed acorn squash.

Combine sugar, allspice and salt; pour over the squash. Dot with butter.

Turn heat to medium-high until the water begins to simmer. Turn heat to low and let it cook down until practically all the juice is gone, about 45 minutes to an hour.

Serves: 4 to 6

THE COLONEL SAYS:
This is a vegetable dish that was a great favorite in my restaurants. Take it from me, it is just out of this world.

Cranberry Conserve

1 (11-ounce/330 g) package fresh cranberries
2 crisp, tart apples
2 large oranges
1–2 cups (200 to 400 g) granulated sugar

Wash and remove any damaged cranberries. Process in a food processor until roughly chopped. Transfer to a large mixing bowl.

Wash, core and seed the apples, cut into slices and process in a food processor until roughly chopped. Combine with cranberries.

Wash oranges. Using a zester, zest both oranges and set aside. Remove as much white pith as possible from each orange. Cut orange into 8 sections, removing seeds and as much white membrane as possible. Process zest and orange sections in a food processor until roughly chopped. Combine with apples and cranberries.

Stir in sugar until dissolved. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Makes: About 4 cups

Kitchen notes: McIntosh, Gala, and Braeburn apples work well in this bright, ruby-red relish.

THE COLONEL SAYS:
This is nice to serve as a side dish with almost any meat or as an appetizer.

Fried Tomatoes

3 large firm, ripe tomatoes (Beefsteak tomato or similar)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
3–4 tablespoons (45 to 60 mL) of milk
2 eggs, slightly beaten
Unseasoned bread crumbs
Flour
1 tablespoon butter plus more as needed
3 tablespoons vegetable oil plus more as needed

Slice tomatoes ½-inch (13 mm) thick. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Whisk together milk and eggs in a shallow dish. In another shallow dish, spread out a thick layer of bread crumbs. Place dishes side by side on the counter so you can bread the tomatoes before frying.

Dip each tomato slice in the egg-milk mixture to coat, then in the flour. Dip the floured tomato slice back into the egg, and then into the bread crumbs.

With heat at medium-high, add butter and oil to 10-inch (25 cm) skillet. When butter is melted and oil is hot, place coated tomato slices (three or four at a time) in the frying pan, and fry until golden brown on each side, about 3 to 5 minutes per side. Add more butter or oil to the pan, as necessary.

Drain cooked tomato slices on a plate that has been covered with a paper towel.

Serves: 3 to 4

Kitchen tip: Chopped fresh parsley makes a colourful addition to the breadcrumb mixture. Or try substituting Panko (Japanese breadcrumbs) for the plain breadcrumbs for added texture and eye appeal.

THE COLONEL SAYS:
Here's an inexpensive but filling dish that just about everybody loves. I like to fry my tomatoes in bacon drippings; matter of fact, I usually cook up a batch of bacon to serve with my fried tomatoes. But you can use butter if you prefer.

In the Southern United States it is very popular to make these fried tomatoes with unripe green tomatoes.

Bread Stuffing

For a 1-pound (450 g) loaf of bread use:

1 white onion, minced
½ cup (110 g) butter (divided use)
½ to ¾ cup (120 to 180 mL) chicken broth or water
½ teaspoon sage, fresh
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon thyme, fresh
Freshly ground black pepper

A day or two before you plan to make the stuffing, lay out approximately 15 slices of bread on a baking rack to dry.

Tear dried bread slices into 1-inch (25 mm) pieces.

Add 3 tablespoons of the butter to a 10-inch (25 cm) skillet over medium-high heat. When butter begins to sizzle, add onion. Reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is tender.

Meanwhile, in a large mixing bowl, combine bread cubes, sage, salt, thyme and pepper.

Melt remaining butter in the frying pan. Add broth or water and heat through, and then pour onto the bread, stirring and tossing until the stuffing becomes uniformly moist. You'll want it less moist if you are planning on stuffing a chicken or turkey, and wetter if are going to bake it separately in an oiled casserole or pan covered with aluminum foil. Bake along with the turkey or chicken in a 325° F (165° C) oven for 35 to 40 minutes or bake at 350° F (175° C) in a casserole by itself until thoroughly heated, about 20 to 25 minutes.

Serves: 8 to 10 people or enough to stuff a 14 to 18-lb (6 to 9 kg) turkey

THE COLONEL SAYS:

Making stuffing when I was a child was quite a performance. We liked a dry, crumbly, buttery stuffing, not a wet, soggy one. My Mother didn't use any measuring spoon for the spices – she gauged the amounts by tasting and sniffing.

Breakfast

Coffee – The way we used to make it on the farm
Butter Thin Pancakes
Light Bread
Extra Special Scrambled Eggs
The Colonel's Special Omelet
Potato Pancakes

Coffee

The way we used to make it on the farm

¾ cup (70 g) medium to coarse grind coffee
1 egg
6 cups (1.5 L) cold water
1 cup (240 mL) cold water to settle grounds

Crush the egg – shell and all – into ground coffee in an old-fashioned coffee pot or a medium sized cooking pot. Add 6 cups of cold water. Bring to a boil; then turn down the heat to a gentle simmer. Allow coffee to simmer on the stove for 3 minutes. Remove from heat and immediately add 1 cup cold water to settle the coffee grounds. Let coffee rest for 10 minutes before serving, to allow all the coffee grounds to settle to the bottom of the pot.

Serves: 6

THE COLONEL SAYS:

I know most cookbooks don't tell you this. They seem to think it's "as simple as boiling an egg." The truth is neither one is simple.

Butter Thin Pancakes

1½ cups (360 mL) heavy cream
1½ cups (360 mL) milk
4 beaten eggs
2½ cups (300 g) all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
2 teaspoons salt
1 cup (225 g) melted butter
Canola oil

Combine heavy cream, milk, and beaten eggs in a large mixing bowl. Beat well with a hand mixer on medium-high speed.

In another bowl, combine flour, baking powder and salt. Gradually stir dry ingredients into heavy cream, milk and egg mixture with the mixer on low speed. When batter is smooth, stir in the butter.

Heat a lightly oiled griddle or heat a tablespoon of oil in a 10-inch (25 cm) skillet over medium-high heat. Pour or scoop the batter onto the hot pan, using approximately ¼ cup (60 mL) of the batter for each pancake. These thin pancakes will bubble all over, but do not turn until the bottom edges are dark golden, about a minute. Flip and cook for about 15 to 20 seconds longer. Transfer to a warm plate.

Either tent the plate with aluminum foil or place the plate in a warm oven to keep them hot while you continue to make the rest of the pancakes. As you cook the pancakes, add more oil as necessary.

Makes: About 33, 3½-inch (9 cm) pancakes

THE COLONEL SAYS:

This was the biggest seller in my restaurants. It's a recipe I made up myself. When you put it on a hot griddle or grill, it bubbles up all over. Being so thin, it's almost like a crepe Suzette but it is also out of this world as a pancake! They already have so much butter in them, you may not need to grease your griddle.

Light Bread

1 cup (240 mL) milk
½ cup (100 g) sugar
2 (¼-ounce/7g) packages instant yeast
1 cup (200 g) warm mashed potatoes
4½ to 5 cups (540 to 600 g) all-purpose flour (divided use)
¾ cup (145 g) solid vegetable shortening
1 teaspoon salt
Melted butter

Scald milk by pouring it into a 1-quart (1 L) saucepan over medium high heat. Continue heating until temperature reaches 180° F (82° C) on an instant-read thermometer. Do not allow to boil. Remove from heat and cool to 120° F (48° C).

Pour warm milk into a large mixing bowl and add sugar and yeast. Allow to sit in a warm place for 10 minutes. Yeast should be all bubbly.

To the yeast mixture, add mashed potatoes, 4 cups of flour, shortening, and salt. Kneed 5 to 10 minutes until you can form a smooth ball of dough and dough springs back when gently depressed. Loosely cover with plastic wrap and a tea towel and allow to rise in a warm place until doubled in size (approximately 1 hour).

After doubled in size, turn onto a lightly floured surface and divide into 2 equal dough pieces. Punch down dough pieces and shape into oval loaves. Place oval loaves into two lightly greased 8½ by 4½-inch (22 by 11 cm) loaf pans.

Cover with plastic wrap and a tea towel and allow dough to rise in a warm place until double in size.

Preheat oven to 400° F (200° C).

Remove plastic wrap and towel. Place loaf pans into the preheated oven, bake for 30 to 40 minutes.

Remove from oven, and then remove loaves from pans. Cool on racks. Brush tops with a little melted butter while still hot.

Makes: 2 loaves

Extra Special Scrambled Eggs

2 eggs per person
Pinch of paprika
Pinch of salt and pepper
Pinch of chili powder
1 tablespoon butter or margarine
1 tablespoon large curd cottage cheese

Beat the eggs, paprika, salt and pepper, and chili powder with a fork in a mixing bowl. Set aside.

Melt butter (or margarine) in a 10-inch (25 cm) skillet or sauté pan. When the butter is hot but not brown, add eggs to the pan, add the cottage cheese allowing 1 tablespoon for every 4 or 5 eggs. If the cottage cheese is firm, use it sparingly. Be more generous with a loose curd cheese. Stir gently until the cheese is mixed thoroughly with the eggs as they set.

Turn the heat off before they are really done, as the eggs will keep cooking as long as the pan is hot.

Serves: 1 to 2

THE COLONEL SAYS:

The secret is to cook slowly over a low heat. After a time or two, you will know how much cottage cheese your family likes in this delicate, creamy dish.

The Colonel's Special Omelet

2 eggs
2 tablespoons milk
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon butter
Your favorite omelet ingredients

Beat together eggs and milk. Add salt and pepper.

Melt butter in an 8-inch (20 cm) omelet pan over medium heat until it begins to sizzle. Add your favorite omelet ingredients and sauté lightly, pour in egg mixture. Cover and cook for approximately 1 minute.

Remove the cover and lift the edges of the omelet. Tip the pan slightly to let the liquid egg run under the cooked edges. Cover pan again and cook until set (but still soft) and lightly browned on the bottom, about 2 minutes more. Remove cover, then, using a spatula, fold the omelet over and then slide it out of the pan onto a hot plate.

Serves: 1

THE COLONEL SAYS:
I don't like wet, leaky omelets, so I make mine in a covered pan. I also prefer making several small omelets than a big one, but you can still make a good 4-egg omelet for 2 but no more. Use a 10-inch (25 cm) omelet pan instead of an 8.

Potato Pancakes

2 cups (400 g) mashed potatoes (about 1 pound)
1 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons (60 g) butter, melted
1 beaten egg
1 cup (120 g) flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
Vegetable oil for frying

With an electric hand mixer, combine mashed potatoes, salt, butter and beaten egg.

Combine flour and baking powder in a small mixing bowl and then add flour mixture slowly to mashed potatoes, working in as much of the flour as needed to make a soft but firm dough.

Turn out onto a working surface that has been generously dusted with flour. Gently turn the dough over on itself a few times. Then roll out or pat out to a ½-inch (13 mm) thickness.

Spoon additional flour onto a saucer near the stove top.

Heat ⅛-inch (3 mm) of oil over moderately high heat in a large heavy skillet until it is hot but not smoking. Keep about a cupful of oil nearby because you will have to replace it as the pancakes fry.

Dust your hands generously with flour before handling the dough. Tear off a small pancake-size piece of dough, gently dredge it through the flour and place in the hot pan. Fry until light brown.

Drain on a plate that has been covered with a paper towel or place in a warm oven until all dough is fried.

Serve hot with melted butter or honey.

Serves: 4 to 6

Kitchen tip: These potato pancakes make a delicious side dish served with sour cream and chopped chives or apple sauce.

Main

Roast Turkey
Roast Beef
Meat Loaf
Scalloped Potatoes
Chicken Brunswick Stew
Apple-Stuffed Pork Chops
Mulligan Stew

Roast Turkey

16 to 20 lb (7 to 9 kg) young turkey (approximately 2 lbs (900 g) per person)
1 cup (225 g) butter, room temperature
Salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 300° F (150° C).

Remove giblets from the inside cavity of the bird. Cover the bird generously with soft butter, then sprinkle with salt and pepper, inside and out. Place bird in roasting pan breast up (no need to turn it). The old way of roasting poultry was to start with a very hot oven and reduce the heat to moderate after ½ hour. Today's method of using a low heat all the way through seems better to me. The meat is more moist and there is less shrinkage.

Put remaining butter in the pan and baste occasionally with the butter and drippings from the bird. When done, remove from pan to a platter and remove the skewers and string. Keep turkey warm while you make the gravy from the pan drippings.

Cook until you have reached an internal temperature of 165° F (75° C) and juices run clear.

THE COLONEL SAYS:
My own preference is a large hen turkey, but a large young tom turkey was better when the whole family came for Thanksgiving.

Roast Beef

2 to 3 rib roast beef
(preferably the first cut)
Salt and pepper

Preheat your oven to 300° F (150° C).

Place your roast, fat side up, in an uncovered roasting pan and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Do not baste or turn it. Roast to the following internal temperatures. Always check your meat with a meat thermometer!

	Internal temperature
Medium Rare	145° F (63° C)
Medium	160° F (71° C)
Well Done	170° F (77° C)

There will be less shrinkage than in a hot oven, and the meat will be deliciously browned but juicy and never dry.

Meatloaf

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 medium onion, minced
¼ cup (70 g) green pepper, minced
2 pounds (900 g) ground chuck beef
2 eggs, beaten
1 cup (90 g) old fashioned oats, uncooked
¾ cup (180 mL) tomato juice
¼ cup (70 g) horseradish
1 tablespoon salt
2 teaspoons paprika
1 teaspoon dry mustard
½ cup (140 mL) tomato ketchup

Preheat oven to 350° F (175° C).

Heat oil in a 10-inch (25 cm) frying pan over medium-high heat. Add onions and green peppers and cook until onions soften, about 10 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Combine chuck beef, eggs, oats, juice, horseradish, salt, paprika and dry mustard in a large mixing bowl, add sautéed vegetables and work all the ingredients together with your hands until well incorporated. Pack this in a 9 by 5-inch (23 by 13 cm) greased loaf pan.

Spread the ketchup on top and bake for one hour.

Serves: 6 to 8

Scalloped Potatoes

4 to 5 medium-size potatoes, thinly sliced
2 white onions, thinly sliced
Salt, pepper, paprika
½ cup (60 g) all-purpose flour
½ pound (225 g) grated Swiss, Parmesan or Cheddar cheese
Milk
1 pound (450 g) country sausage links

Preheat oven to 350° F (180° C).

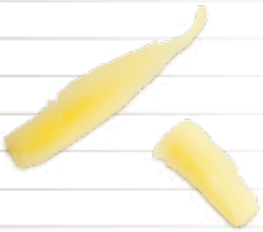
Butter and lightly flour a 1½-quart (1½ L) gratin dish or a shallow oven proof casserole.

Arrange a layer of sliced potatoes in the bottom, then a layer of onion. Season this layer with salt, plenty of freshly ground pepper and paprika. Sprinkle flour over this. Sprinkle some of the grated cheese. Add another layer of potatoes, onions, seasonings, and cheese, and a dusting of flour. When the final layer is in the dish, pour enough heated milk to barely cover the top layer. Cover and bake for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, fry the sausages in a sauté pan, browning only lightly, remove from sauté pan and slice each sausage into ¼-inch (6 mm) thick bias. When the potatoes have baked 35 minutes, remove from the oven, and arrange drained sausages on top. Return to the oven and finish baking, about 15 to 20 minutes. When the potatoes are tender and the sausage is lightly browned, the dish is ready. You may need to re-cover the dish with tin foil, if you find the dish is getting too dark before potatoes are tender

Serves: 4 to 6

Kitchen tip: For an alternative way to finish this dish, use bulk country sausage instead of slices. Fry the sausage in a 10-inch (25 cm) frying pan, seasoning well with salt, pepper and paprika until the meat is no longer pink. Pour off excess fat. Top potatoes with the mixture; return to the oven and continue to bake, uncovered for an additional 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and cool for 5 minutes before serving.



THE COLONEL SAYS:
This is an elegant dish, because the sausage flavors the whole thing. Serve with almost any vegetable such as peas, green beans or asparagus.

Chicken Brunswick Stew

- 3½ pounds (1.6 kg) chicken parts
- Salt and pepper
- 4 bacon slices, cut into 1-inch (25 mm) pieces
- 2 cups (480 mL) warm water
- 1 (28-ounce/775 mL) can diced tomatoes
- 3 medium onions, peeled, halved and thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1½ teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 (10-ounce/315 g) package frozen baby lima beans or broad beans
- 2 cups (420 g) canned whole kernel corn, drained
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Season chicken with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Fry bacon pieces in a 4 to 5-quart (4 to 5 L) Dutch oven. Remove bacon with a slotted spoon and drain on a plate that has been covered with a paper towel. Set aside

Add chicken pieces to the bacon drippings. Fry over medium-high heat, turning pieces until they are golden brown all over. Pour off drippings.

Add the water, tomatoes, onions, Worcestershire, sugar and salt. Stir, cover, and simmer over low heat until the chicken is tender, about 1½ hours.

Remove chicken from the pan with a slotted spoon. When cool enough to handle, discard skin and strip meat from the bone. Cut meat into smaller pieces, and then return chicken to the pot. Add beans and corn; cook for 30 minutes longer. Adjust seasoning, adding more salt and pepper, if needed.

Add butter and cayenne pepper. Simmer for 30 minutes.

Ladle into soup bowls, sprinkle with bacon bits.

Serves: 6 to 8

Kitchen tip: This can be prepared in a slow cooker. Follow instructions for frying bacon and chicken. Transfer chicken to your slow cooker set on low. Add water, tomatoes, onions, Worcestershire, sugar and salt. Cook for 6 hours, then remove chicken with a slotted spoon and follow directions for skinning and deboning. Add meat back to the slow cooker along with beans and corn. Cook for an additional hour. Add butter and cayenne pepper. Cook for 2 hours.

THE COLONEL SAYS:

Taste as you go to check on the seasoning. This chicken stew should be seasoned fairly lightly. This makes a fine family dish.

Apple-Stuffed Pork Chops

2 teaspoons butter
2 tablespoons finely diced onion
2 crisp, tart apples, washed, cored and chopped (divided use)
1 cup (60 g) bread crumbs, fresh
2 teaspoons minced fresh parsley
Unsweetened apple juice (divided use)

For chops:
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
4 (5-ounce/155 g) boneless 1-inch (25 mm) thick pork chops
¼ cup (30 g) flour
Salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 350° F (180° C).

Melt butter in a 10-inch (25 cm) skillet over medium heat. When the butter begins to sizzle, add the onion and ¾ of a cup of apples and cook until just softened, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat.

Combine the bread crumbs with the minced parsley. Gently stir into the onions and apples, adding a bit of apple juice to keep the stuffing moist but not wet. Turn into a mixing bowl. Set aside.

Wipe out the pan and return to the stove.

Create pockets in the fatty side of the pork chops with a sharp, pointed knife. Be sure not to cut all the way through. Open the pockets, season inside with a salt, pepper, and stuff with the cooked bread crumb mixture. Tie each pork chop with butcher string.

Combine salt, pepper and flour and place in a shallow dish or bowl. Dredge chops through the seasoned flour, shaking off any excess; add a tablespoon or two of vegetable oil to the skillet and heat over medium high. When oil is hot (but not smoking), add the pork chops and cook, turning once, until golden, about 3 minutes per side. Repeat with each pork chop.

Place lightly browned pork chops into an 8-inch (20 cm) square baking dish. Add a little water, a splash of apple juice, and the remaining chopped apple to the pan; (liquid should be no more than ¼-inch (6 mm) deep).

Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove foil, return to the oven and continue baking for 30 minutes.

Serve hot with pan juices and cooked apple ladled over each chop.

Serves: 4

Mulligan Stew

3 tablespoons canola oil
1 large onion, medium diced
1 pound (450 g) lean beef stew meat cut into 1-inch (25 mm) cubes
1 pound (450 g) lean pork meat (tenderloin or similar), cut into 1-inch (25 mm) cubes
1 pound (450 g) chicken tenderloins cut into 1-inch (25 mm) cubes
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 (14½ ounce/420 g) can of beef broth
1 (15-ounce/425 g) can green peas, drained
1 (28-ounce/794 g) can diced tomatoes, undrained
1 (15¼ ounce/432 g) can fresh-cut corn kernels drained
1 (15¼ ounce/794 g) baby lima beans or broad beans, drained
1 cup (240 g) sliced carrots
½ teaspoon paprika
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
Salt and pepper, to taste
½ cup (120 mL) dry sherry

Heat the oil in a large stock pot over medium heat. Add onion and cook until translucent. Add the cubed beef and pork and sauté until lightly brown, add the chicken cubes and sauté until lightly browned. Add 3 tablespoons of all purpose flour and coat everything evenly. Add beef broth and use a wooden spoon to scrape all the good stuff off the bottom of the pot. Add the remaining ingredients, and salt and pepper as needed. Cover pot and simmer for 1 hour. Lift lid and allow soup to simmer until pan juices thicken slightly. Adjust seasonings, if needed.

Just before ladling into individual bowls, add sherry, and stir to combine.

Serves: 10 to 12

Kitchen notes: It is the most forgiving of all stews. It can be made with whatever the cook has on hand – all chicken, all pork, all beef, veal, turkey or any combination thereof… add whatever vegetables can fit into the pot. It can be made in a 6-quart (5 L) slow cooker.

Desserts

Baked Apple Dumplings
Pecan Pie
Chocolate Pie
Lemon Sponge Pie
Special Brown Betty
Sand Tarts
Oatmeal Cake
Upside Down Peach Cobbler

Baked Apple Dumplings

3 cups (360 g) flour
3 teaspoons baking powder
¾ teaspoon salt
1 cup (190 g) + 2 tablespoons
solid vegetable shortening
Milk
¾ teaspoon nutmeg, ground
¾ teaspoon ginger, ground
1½ teaspoon cinnamon, ground
6 tablespoons (150 g)
light brown sugar
2¼ cups (450 g) sugar
1½ cup (360 g) water
3 tablespoons butter
6 small tart apples pared,
cored, and halved lengthwise

Preheat oven to 400° F (200° C).

Butter a 11 by 7-inch (28 by 18 cm) baking pan.

Combine flour, baking powder and salt in a large mixing bowl. Cut in shortening with a pastry blender until very crumbly. Add as much milk as needed to hold dough together, and mix lightly with a fork.

Roll gently on a flour-covered surface into a large rectangle, about 24 by 16-inches (65 by 46 cm). Cut into six square pieces.

Make sure apples are a uniform size, cutting at base or top, where necessary. Combine nutmeg, ginger and cinnamon with brown sugar and sprinkle over apple halves to coat.

Place 2 apple halves cut sides together, in center of each square and fold up corners. With slightly wet fingertips, bring one corner of pastry square up to the top of the apple, then bring the opposite corner to the top and press together. Bring up the two remaining corners, trim off any excess dough and seal. Slightly pinch the dough at the sides to completely seal in the apple. Repeat with the remaining apples. Place in prepared baking pan. Don't worry if there are a few cracks, as this dish bakes the dough will bake together!

Heat sugar, water, and butter to the boiling point in a 2-quart (2 L) saucepan. Boil for 5 minutes until sugar is melted. Pour over dumplings in baking pan.

Bake for 50 to 55 minutes

Serve warm in individual dessert bowls with pan liquids spooned over the apples.

Serves: 6

Kitchen tip: A scoop of vanilla ice cream goes really well with this dessert.

Pecan Pie

Favorite or prepared unbaked pie crust
4 large eggs, slightly beaten
½ cup (110 g) packed dark brown sugar
1 cup (240 mL) dark corn syrup (golden syrup will also work)
Pinch of salt
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar or lemon juice
¼ cup (55 g) unsalted butter, melted
2 tablespoons vanilla extract
1¾ cups (260 g) pecan halves

Heat oven to 375° F (190° C).

Place pie crust in a 9-inch (23 cm) pie plate.

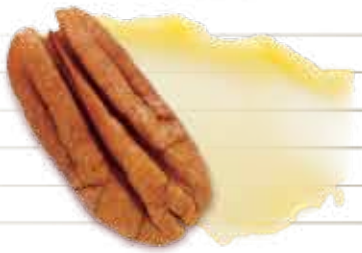
Mix eggs, sugar, syrup, salt, vinegar or lemon juice, butter and vanilla extract in a large mixing bowl until well blended. Place pecan halves in the pie shell. Pour the egg mixture over them.

Bake 40 to 50 minutes or until filling is puffed and pie is golden brown. Cool completely, about 2 hours. Store in refrigerator.

Remove pie from pie plate just before serving and place on a decorative plate.

Serves: 8

Kitchen Tip: If you are using a shortbread pie crust be sure to line your pie plate with parchment – this will help you easily remove the pie once it is baked.



THE COLONEL SAYS:

Pecan pie can turn any occasion into a special affair when you serve it for dessert.

Chocolate Pie

3 ounces (95 g) unsweetened chocolate, cut into pieces
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 eggs
1 cup (225 g) butter, softened (do not substitute margarine)
1 cup (200 g) sugar
Prepared 10-inch (25 cm) tart shell or 9-inch (23 cm) single crust pie shell, baked
Chilled whipped cream
Chocolate for shaving

Melt chocolate on a double boiler over low heat; set aside.

While chocolate cools, whip the butter and the sugar together in a large mixing bowl until fluffy. Then beat in the cooled chocolate and vanilla extract. Add eggs one at a time at medium mixer speed for 5 minutes after each addition.

Return mixture to double boiler and bring up to 140° F (60° C) stirring constantly.

Pour into pie shell and chill 1 to 2 hours before serving.

Just before serving spread or pipe on whipped cream and finish with some chocolate shavings.

Serves: 10

Kitchen tip: If you like nuts, try adding some walnut halves on top of the whipped cream for an added crunch!

THE COLONEL SAYS:

This is really rich and good, and it doesn't require any baking. You won't lose any weight eating this pie, but you can worry about that later.

Lemon Sponge Pie

3 tablespoons butter, room temperature
1¼ cups (250 g) sugar
4 eggs, separated
3 tablespoons flour
Dash of salt
1¼ cups (300 mL) milk
Juice and grated zest of 2 medium-sized lemons
1 unbaked 9-inch (23 cm) pie crust

Preheat oven to 375° F (190° C).

Beat the butter and sugar with an electric hand mixer on high until light and fluffy. Set aside.

Beat the egg yolks, flour, salt, milk, lemon juice and lemon zest until well combined. Then beat this mixture into the butter and sugar mixture.

In a clean bowl and with clean beaters, beat the egg whites until stiff. Gently fold the egg whites into the egg yolk-lemon mixture.

Pour this mixture into the pie crust and bake for 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 300° F (150° C), or until the top is golden and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, about 45 minutes.

Serves: 6 to 8

Kitchen tip: Macerated raspberries make a delicious and colorful topping for this pie. Simply mash a half-cup of raspberries, sprinkle with 2 tablespoons of sugar and stir until sugar dissolves. Stir in some whole, fresh berries, and stir to coat. Ladle over the pie just before serving.

THE COLONEL SAYS:
This is a different kind of lemon pie because it really has a sponge. Those egg whites will gradually rise to the top, bringing the flour up with them – the result is a lovely sponge effect. I could eat half of one of those pies anytime.

Special Brown Betty

Filling:

6 tart cooking apples
½ cup (120 mL) water
½ cup (120 mL) orange juice
½ cup sugar (100 g) sugar
½ teaspoon nutmeg

Crust:

16 square graham crackers
¼ cup (50 g) sugar
1 teaspoon grated orange peel
¼ cup (40 g) chopped almonds
2 tablespoons butter

Preheat oven to 375° F (190° C).

Peel, core and cut the apples into eighths.

Combine apples, water and orange juice in a 2-quart (2 L) saucepan; cook over medium heat until slightly tender, about 10 minutes. Add the sugar and nutmeg. Transfer contents of pan to a shallow baking dish.

Roll out the graham crackers to fine crumbs. Combine with the sugar, orange peel and almonds. Sprinkle on top of the apples and dot all over with butter. Bake until the top is crusty approximately 15 to 20 minutes.

Serves: 6

Kitchen tip: Packaged graham cracker crumbs speed the making of this easy dessert.

Sand Tarts

½ cup (115 g) butter
1½ teaspoons baking powder
1¼ cups (150 g) all-purpose flour
⅓ cup (65 g) sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 375° F (190° C).

Melt the butter in a heavy bottomed saucepan over low heat, and continue cooking and stirring occasionally until golden brown, about 7 to 8 minutes. Remove from heat and stir with a wooden spoon until cool. Combine flour, baking powder and sugar. Set aside.

When the butter is cool, add the vanilla extract and then stir in the flour mixture, a heaped tablespoon at a time, and work into a smooth paste.

Form paste into 1-inch (25 mm) balls, using your fingers and pressing the mixture firmly together.

Place on a buttered cookie sheet and press down gently. Bake until lightly browned, about 16 to 18 minutes, but keep a careful eye on them. They brown quickly. Remove from oven and cool completely before removing from the cookie sheet with a spatula.

Makes: 18 cookies

Kitchen tip: These are also great with a little peach jam placed into the center of each cookie, just press your thumb into the center of the cookie prior to baking and fill each depression with a bit of peach jam.

Oatmeal Cake

Cake

1 cup (90 g) oatmeal
1½ cups (360 mL) water
½ cup (115 g) butter, softened plus extra for greasing pan
1 cup 180 g) brown sugar, packed
1 cup (200 g) sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1½ cups (180 g) cake flour or all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Frosting

½ cup (40 g) shredded coconut, sweetened
1 tablespoon butter, softened
1 cup (180 g) of packed brown sugar
½ cup (120 mL) heavy cream

Preheat oven to 350° F (175° C).

In a medium sized pot, bring 1½ cups (360 mL) of water to a rolling boil and add 1 cup (90 g) of raw oatmeal; cook until all the water has been absorbed by the oatmeal; remove from heat, and set aside.

In a clean bowl cream together softened butter with brown and white sugar. Add 2 eggs to the butter and sugar mixture and beat in cooked oatmeal. Sift together all remaining dry ingredients and add to the cooked oatmeal mixture, add vanilla extract, and gently blend together.

Lightly grease a 11 by 7-inch (28 by 18 cm) pan with a little butter or margarine. Lightly dust greased pan with flour, make sure you get the corners and the sides of the pan. Line the bottom of the pan with parchment paper. Gently pour batter onto the parchment lined pan and level batter into an even layer. Bake in oven for approximately 15 to 20 minutes. You'll know it's done when it is firm to the touch and the cake no longer jiggles. Remove from oven and allow to cool slightly.

While cake is cooling, prepare frosting by placing a small- to medium-sized dry non-stick pan over medium heat. Add ½ cup (40 g) of sweetened shredded coconut to the dry pan and gently toast until golden, make sure you continually stir so it doesn't burn. In a small bowl, add almost all of the toasted coconut (save a little for decoration after baking), softened butter, brown sugar, and heavy cream, mix together until the sugar has melted.

Cover the cake with the frosting mixture, set the oven to the broiler setting, and move the baking rack to the second highest position. Place your frosted cake into the oven for approximately 1 minute or until frosting begins to bubble all over. Remove from oven and allow to cake to cool. Garnish with the remaining toasted coconut.

Kitchen Tip: For an extra crunch, add ½ cup of chopped nuts, such as pecans, to the frosting right before you put it under the broiler.

THE COLONEL SAYS:
Children love this oatmeal cake – and, I must say, it's very good for snacking

Upside Down Peach Cobbler

1 cup (200 g) sugar (divided use)
2 eggs
⅓ cup (75 g) butter or margarine, melted
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
1½ cups (180 g) flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup (120 mL) milk
6 to 8 fresh peaches, peeled, seeded and sliced or a 20-ounce (580 g) package of frozen peach slices, thawed

Preheat oven to 350° F (175° C).

Beat ⅔ cup (130 g) sugar and eggs together until creamy. Add butter or margarine and continue beating until thoroughly blended. Add vanilla extract.

Combine flour, baking powder and salt in a medium mixing bowl and then add to sugar and egg mixture alternately with milk.

Line an angel food pan with parchment paper. Fill it ⅔ full with peaches. Sprinkle ⅓ (70 g) cup sugar over the peaches. Pour batter over peaches and spread it evenly until they are well covered.

Bake about 55 to 65 minutes. Cool slightly for 10 minutes and then turn out onto large plate.

Serve warm.

Serves: 6 to 8

Kitchen tip: If you use frozen thawed peaches, be sure to drain them well in a colander before using.

Conversion Reference Guide

Measurement of Common Household Ingredient

Ingredient	1 US cup
Bread crumbs, dry	150 g
Bread crumbs, fresh, loosely packed	60 g
Brown sugar, packed firmly (but not too firmly)	180 g
Butter	225 g
Cornmeal, course	150 g
Cornmeal, fine	180 g
Flour, all-purpose (wheat)	120 g
Flour, bread	125 g
Flour, well-sifted all-purpose (wheat)	110 g
Oats, uncooked quick	90 g
Shortening, vegetable	190 g
Sugar, confectioners	100 g
Sugar, dark or light brown, cane (lightly packed)	220 g
Sugar, granulated cane	200 g

	US Imperial	Metric
1 cup	240 mL	250 mL
1 Tablespoon	15 mL	15 mL
1 Teaspoon	5 mL	5 mL

Approximate Temperature Equivalents

Fahrenheit (° F)	Celsius (° C)
100° F	40° C
125° F	50° C
150° F	65° C
175° F	80° C
200° F	95° C
225° F	110° C
250° F	130° C
275° F	140° C
300° F	150° C
325° F	165° C
350° F	177° C
375° F	190° C
400° F	200° C
425° F	220° C
450° F	230° C
475° F	245° C
500° F	260° C
550° F	290° C

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to all those around the globe who have made KFC such a powerful and beloved brand, including our franchisees, team members and partners. We are indebted to all those who continue to bring to life the Colonel's Original Recipe and his philosophy of delivering the best-tasting food to customers with friendly service… The Hard Way.

Special acknowledgments to Amy Sherwood and Joel Wetherington for discovering the unpublished autobiography and to Jeannie Litterst Vezeau for her historical knowledge and dedication to telling the Colonel's life journey.