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Title

Cookbook Writers and Recipe Readers: Georgiana Hill, Isabella Beeton and Victorian domesticity

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Abstract

This article examines female-authored cookbooks in the 1860s, focusing in particular on the little-known work of Georgiana Hill, and the famous life of Isabella Beeton and her *Book of Household Management*. Looking at the state of cookbook publishing in the 1860s, and considering both the tone and content of these publications, the author argues that taking Hill's authorial voice into account can enhance our understanding of how women operated in the highly competitive cookbook market. Hill's and Beeton's work, alongside that of Eliza Acton and numerous lesser-known cookery writers, suggests ways in which authors were conscious of addressing multiple audiences, including mistresses and servants, and both confident and incompetent cooks. At the same time, the frequent appearance of both European and Indian recipes suggests that the middle-class cookbook market made assumptions about the sophistication and cosmopolitanism of the domestic dinner table. The article goes on to investigate Hill's biography, and her navigation of the publishing industry, analysing in particular the archives of George Routledge and Co., in order to argue that even while it offered female cookery writers the opportunity to capitalize on their expertise, this was still an industry in which it was difficult for a woman to be fairly rewarded for her work.

Keywords

Cookbooks, domesticity, Mrs Beeton, middle classes, Georgiana Hill, recipes, publishing

Georgiana Hill published her first cookbook, *The Gourmet's Guide to Cooking Rabbit*, in 1859. It began:

And why should I not, as a good gastronome, publish some of my experiences in the 'social science' of cookery? When so many misguided authors find that, for all their devotion to the Muses, they are barely requited with bread, can it be wondered that I, an enlightened votary, should prefer 'keeping the pot boiling' under more generous auspices?¹

Calling herself a 'gastronome' and comparing herself with 'misguided authors' must have been a deliberate ploy to obscure her gender. In this way, Hill invited readers to think about this collection in relation to fine dining—a masculine privilege—rather than domestic management, which was the kind of food writing generally produced and consumed by women. By the 1890s, Elizabeth Pennell could write openly about being a 'greedy woman' and a gastronome, but in the 1860s the art of dining was still very much a masculine preserve.² By focusing on Georgiana Hill, this paper offers a new look at women as cookbook writers, the marketplace in which their publications vied for attention, and the authors' experiences of earning a living by publishing their work.

When *The Gourmet's Guide to Cooking Rabbit* first appeared, Isabella Beeton was working on her *Book of Household Management*, which was published in full in 1861. Introducing this work, Beeton wrote:

I must frankly own, that had I known, beforehand, that this book would have cost me the labour which it has, I should never have been courageous enough to commence it. What moved me, in the first instance, to attempt a work like this, was the discomfort and suffering

¹ Georgiana Hill, *The Gourmet's Guide to Cooking Rabbit* (London: W. Kent and Co, 1859) p. iii.

² Elizabeth Pennell, *The Feasts of Autolycus. The diary of a greedy woman. [Reprinted from "The Pall Mall Gazette."]* (Akron: Saalfield Publishing, 1900).

which I had seen brought upon men and women by household mismanagement.³

Beeton, like Hill, pondered the perils of poor diet. Hill highlighted the plight of 'authors...barely requited with bread,' while for Beeton it was whole households' 'discomfort and suffering.' In the 1860s, Isabella Beeton and Georgiana Hill were two among the large number of women who wrote about how to cook. As Janet Theophano has argued, women's cookbooks take on various tones from 'pride and pleasure' to 'resentment, anger, and frustration.'⁴ Hill's pleasure in cooking is clear in many of her works, while Beeton seems more attuned to the possible frustration of women who had to find fulfillment in homemaking.

The recent rediscovery of Georgiana Hill adds new evidence to the growing scholarship that questions Beeton's preeminence and influence as a Victorian cookery writer. Beeton has, deservedly, received much scholarly attention for her contribution to the Victorian cult of domesticity, and for creating a domestic advice book that gained great fame.⁵ When it came to cookery, however, Mrs. Beeton was a collector more than she was an innovator. As Valery Mars argues, we need to look beyond Beeton to understand the wide-ranging ways Victorians

³ Isabella Beeton, *The Book of Household Management* (London: S. O. Beeton, 1861), p. iii.

⁴ Janet Theophano, *Eat My Words: Reading Women's Lives Through the Cookbooks they Wrote* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), p. 146.

⁵ See for example Margaret Beetham, "Good Taste and Sweet Ordering: Dining with Mrs Beeton." *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 36 (2008), 91–406; K. Thomas, "Alimentary: Arthur Conan Doyle and Isabella Beeton." *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 36, (2008), 375–390; C. Clausen, "How to Join the Middle Classes: With the Help of Dr. Smiles and Mrs. Beeton." *The American Scholar*, 62, (1993), 403–418. Susan Zlotnick, 'On the Publication of Isabelle Beeton's *Book of Household Management*, 1861,' *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History*. ed. D. F. Felluga < http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=susan-zlotnick-on-the-publication-of-isabella-beetons-book-of-household-management-1861> [accessed on 19 December 2019]; Nicola Humble, 'Introduction,' in *Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management*, ed. By Nicola Humble (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. vii.

wrote about food and women's relationship to it.⁶ Mark Curthoys, commissioning editor at the *ODNB* decided in 2012 that Georgiana Hill's contribution to cookery writing merited her entry.⁷ He also did the research in the census and birth and death records to establish the basic timeline of Hill's life and writing career, and, finally, it was Curthoys who was the first to realize that Hill the cookery writer was not the same person as another Georgiana Hill, who wrote about women's history in the 1890s.⁸ The rediscovery of Hill's numerous publications, each one a short volume dedicated to cooking a particular meal or ingredient, opens up previously disregarded possibilities about the reading habits of middle-class housewives.⁹ While there is no clear correlation between cookbook ownership and usage, the success of a book, in terms of sales, is an indication that it offered something readers wanted.¹⁰ Georgiana Hill's

⁶ Valerie Mars, 'Beyond Beeton: Some Nineteenth-Century Cookery and Household Books in the Brotherton Special Collection,' in *The English Cookery Book: Historical Essays*, ed. by E. White (London: Prospect Books, 2004). See also Jolein De Ridder and Marianne Van Remoortel, 'Not "Simply Mrs. Warren": Eliza Warren Francis (1810-1900) and the *Ladies' treasury*,' *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 44 (2011), 307-326; Sheila Hardy, *The Real Mrs Beeton: The Story of Eliza Acton*, (Stroud: The History Press, 2011).

⁷ Rachel Rich "Hill, Georgiana (1825–1903), cookery writer," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-106198> [accessed 19 December 2019]

⁸ See Georgiana Hill, *A History of English Dress from the Saxon Period to the Present Day*, (London: R. Bentley, 1893); and *Women in English life from mediæval to modern times*, (London: R. Bentley & son, 1896). This confusion was perpetuated by Joan Thirsk in the Forward to Mary Prior ed, *Women in English Society, 1500-1800*, (Oxford: Routledge, 1985), pp. xiv-xxviii.

⁹ Hill published at least eighteen separate volumes, with titles like *How to Dress Salads; Shown in a Hundred Different Ways* (London: Routledge, 1866) or *How to Preserve Fruit in a Hundred Different Ways* (London: Routledge, 1867). These books are very different from the better-known compendium-style manuals which tried to provide a woman with everything she would ever need to know about cooking in a single volume. See for example Anon, *A Modern System of Domestic Cookery or the Housekeepers Guide*, (Manchester: J. Gleave, 1822); Anon, *The New Family Receipt Book, Containing One Thousand Truly Valuable Receipts in Various Branches of Domestic Economy*, New edition, Considerably Enlarged. (London: John Murray, 1837); Anon, *Modern Domestic Cookery: Based on the Well-Known Work of Mrs. Rundell*, (London, John Murray, 1853); A. Soyer, *A Shilling Cookery for the People: Embracing an entirely new system of plain cookery and domestic economy*, sixtieth thousand. (London: Geo. Routledge & Co., 1855).

¹⁰ D. Attar, *A Bibliography of Household Books Published in Britain 1800-1915*, (London: Prospect Books, 1987)

commercial success can be measured by the numerous editions of almost all of her works, and the publications of new versions for the US market.¹¹ In this article, I compare Hill's life and career to Beeton, in order to show how Hill's biography can enhance our understanding of the careers of women who chose cookery writing as a way to earn a living; in so doing, I also place the work of both authors in the wider context of the recipe-publishing market of the second half of the nineteenth century, alongside Eliza Acton, and a number of lesser-known authors.

Historians have begun to recognize the value of cookery books as a source for women's history.¹² Manuscript cookbooks in particular have revealed new ways of thinking about the transmission of knowledge and the creation of networks among friends and relatives.¹³ Published cookbooks, by contrast, have primarily been interesting to historians if penned by a famous name.¹⁴ Female novelists and journalists have been the object of scholarly attention in a way that cookery

¹¹ See for example: *How to Cook Potatoes, Apples, Eggs and Fish. Four Hundred Different Ways*, (New York: Dick & Fitzgerald, n.d).

¹² Some notable examples include S. Worth, *Digesting Recipes: The Art of Culinary Notation*, (Winchester: Zero Books, 2015); B. Ketcham Wheaton, 'Cookbooks as Resources for Social History,' in *Food in Time and Place*, ed. by P. Freedman et al. (University of California Press, 2014); L. Anderson, 'Cooking up the Nation in Fin-de-Siècle Spanish Cookery Books and Culinary Treatises,' *Romance Studies*, 27(2009), 121-132; J. Neuhaus, 'The way to a Man's Heart: Gender Roles, Domestic Ideology, and Cookbooks in the 1950s,' *Journal of Social History*, 32(1999), 529-555; R. Rich, 'If You Desire to Enjoy Life, Avoid Unpunctual People': Women, Timetabling and Domestic Advice, 1850-1910., *Cultural & Social History*, 12 (2015), 95-112; R. Zafar, 'The Signifying Dish: Autobiography and History in Two Black Women's Cookbooks,' *Feminist Studies*, 25(1999), 449-469.

¹³ See for example E. Leong, 'Collecting Knowledge for the Family: Recipes, Gender and Practical Knowledge in the Early Modern English Household,' *Centaurus*, 55 (2013), 81-103.

¹⁴ There are biographies of Alexis Soyer, for example H. Soutar Morris, *Portrait of a Chef: The Life of Alexis Soyer, Sometime Chef to the Reform Club*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Escoffier also published his own memoir: A. Escoffier, *Memories of my Life*. Trans. Laurence Escoffier. (London: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1997).

writers have not.¹⁵ Recent work has looked at women as illustrators, as part of the study of women as contributors to the periodical press, an area of scholarship in which Mrs Beeton also features.¹⁶ Nancy Henry, for example, researches women—both the authors and their characters-- as investors, but does not deal with the emphasis on financial management in domestic manuals, and what that might mean about the financial knowledge of their authors.¹⁷ Similarly, *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Women's Writing* includes essays on a range of fiction genres, travel writing, history, and reviewing, among others, but nothing on domestic manuals or cookery books, both of which provided numerous women their writing careers in this period.¹⁸ When it comes to working with food, there has been little written about women in restaurants, though Brenda Assael has made some mention of female restaurant owners and managers, as well as waitresses, in her recent work on the London restaurant.¹⁹ The many women who worked, often anonymously, publishing cookbooks and other successful advice genres have largely been neglected in research about women's work in the nineteenth century. Yet Kathryn Hughes points to the rise in numbers of aspirational publications aimed at the lower middle classes in the

¹⁵ See for example A. Easley, *First-Person Anonymous: Women Writers and Victorian Print Media, 1830-1870*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); L. H. Peterson, *Becoming a Woman of Letters: Myths of Authorship and Facts of the Victorian Market*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2009); B. Palmer, *Women's Authorship and Editorship in Victorian Culture: Sensational Strategies*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

¹⁶ On women illustrators see S. Walton, 'Suitable work for Women? Florence Claxton's illustrations for *The Clever Woman of the Family* by Charlotte Yonge,' *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies* 11 (2015), online. As long ago as 1996 *Victorian Periodical Review* dedicated a whole issue to women as editors and writers.

¹⁷ N. Henry, "'Ladies do it?': Victorian Women Investors in Fact and Fiction,' in *Victorian Literature and Finance*, ed. by F. O'Gorman, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 111-132.

¹⁸ L. H. Peterson, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Women's Writing*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

¹⁹ B. Assael, *The London Restaurant 1840-1914*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

mid-nineteenth century, an area of publication to which numerous women were contributors.²⁰ It was here that Beeton found her opportunity; and it was as part of this genre of aspirational advice literature that Routledge launched its Household Manuals series, to which Hill was one of the first contributors.

1. Cookbooks and the Middle-Class Market

The publishing boom in aspirational advice can be attributed to the sustained growth of the middle classes, who prized the separation of home and work, and were eager for advice that situated the home as a sphere of activity equivalent to the man's world of work.²¹ Both Beeton and Hill lived, in part, from their writing, and their different experiences illustrate the variety of ways in which women could be treated, depending on, for example, their marital status, social status, and whether they had come to cookery writing through journalism, as was Beeton's experience, or through housekeeping, as Hannah Glass had done in the eighteenth century, and Georgiana Hill quite probably did in the 1850s. Isabella Beeton's husband, Samuel, was a publisher, which was how Beeton came to work on the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and, eventually, *The Book of Household Management*. Beeton was not paid directly for her writing, the profits of which were part of the family business.²² Without a husband or close male

²⁰ from K. Hughes, *The Short Life and Long Times of Mrs. Beeton*, (London: Harper, 2006) pp. 160-1.

²¹ The link between Beeton, self-help and middle-class status is discussed in C. Clausen, "How to Join the Middle Classes: With the Help of Dr. Smiles and Mrs. Beeton." *The American Scholar*, 62, (1993), 403-418.

²² Here and throughout, biographical data about Isabella Beeton is drawn from Hughes, *Short Life and Long Times*, unless otherwise indicated.

relative to negotiate on her behalf, Hill struggled in her dealings with publishers.²³

Whatever their background, female recipe writers could anticipate a ready audience for their advice. Cookbook publishing increased significantly in the 1850s and 60s, as books were purchased by a growing middle class with money to spend on food. While Henry Notaker argues that the 'invention' of cookbooks is complex, Margaret Beetham's claim that 1860 to 1900 can be identified as the period in which the characteristics of modern cookbooks were established chimes with the argument for this period as one in which numerous authors were able to earn a living from these publications.²⁴ Social mobility meant that newly affluent housewives needed to learn how to run a home fit for their new circumstances. While the flavours of Empire (coffee, sugar, curry spices) had been present at affluent tables for over a century, the growth of the middle class meant more people able and desirous to expand their culinary palette.²⁵ Cookery practices were also being reshaped by the availability of more and better ingredients and by new cooking technologies in the home.²⁶

²³ Hill's contracts were witnessed by a range of different people, which suggests that she had no particular advocate in her business dealings. London, UCL Routledge & Keegan Paul Ltd Archives, Contracts 1853-1873, ROUTLEDGE/1-17/1.

²⁴ H. Notaker, 'Printed Cookbooks: Food History, Book History, and Literature,' *Food & History*, 10(2012), 131-159 (pp. 135-6); M Beetham, 'Of Recipe Books and Reading in the Nineteenth Century: Mrs Beeton and her Cultural Consequences,' in *The Recipe Reader: Narratives, Contexts, Traditions*, ed. By J Floyd and L Forster (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 15-30. See also D. Attar, *A Bibliography of Household Books Published in Britain 1800-1914* (London: Prospect, 1987), p. 13.

²⁵ A. Bullock, 'The Cosmopolitan Cookbook: Class, Taste, and Foreign Foods in Victorian Cookery Books,' *Food, Culture & Society* 15 (2012): 437-454.

²⁶ A. Broomfield, 'Rushing Dinner to the Table: The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine and Industrialization's Effects on Middle-Class Food and Cooking, 1852-1860,' *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 41 (2008), 101-123.

All these changes were consciously associated with the middle classes, whom Eliza Acton, for example, addressed directly: 'it is from these classes that the men principally emanate to whose indefatigable industry, high intelligence, and active genius, we are mainly indebted for our advancement in science, in art, in literature, and in general civilization.'²⁷ In so saying, she was giving some of the credit for the nation's success to the wives, and the servants, of these middle-class men. Hill and Beeton, each in her own way, wrote with two audiences in mind. While their respective tones placed them at opposing ends of a spectrum of cooking as pleasure and cooking as chore, they each, like the majority of their contemporaries in the field, addressed themselves at once to both mistresses and their servants. For Beeton, cookery was part of a raft of 'duties' and 'responsibilities' women undertook in order to ensure their families' success. For Hill, by contrast, cooking stood alone, outside of the mundane considerations of housekeeping and domestic economy, in this sense, she can be seen as an early example of the female gastronomic writer, a genre which was more fully established at the end of the century by Elizabeth Pennell in her *Diary of a Greedy Woman*. Like Hill, who asked 'why should I not, as a good gastronomer' publish some of what she knew, Pennell asked 'why should not the woman of genius spend her time in designing exquisite dinners'?²⁸

Whatever their recipes, Victorian cookbook writers were always conscious of addressing at least two audiences: the mistress and her servants. This sometimes

²⁷ E. Acton, *Modern Cookery, For Private Families, Reduced to a System of Easy Practice in a Series of Carefully Tested Receipts*. Newly Revised and Enlarged Edition, (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1861), p. viii.

²⁸ Pennell, *Feasts of Autolycus*, p. 12.

meant conceiving of the home as a workplace more than a site for aesthetic enjoyment. The introduction to Beeton's *Book of Household Management* began: '[a]s with the Commander of an army, or the leader of any enterprise, so it is with the mistress of a house'.²⁹ This thrusting tone placed women's work in parallel with men's public, economic role, and was in keeping with Acton's claims about the importance of the domestic kitchen to the wellbeing of the nation. Because Hill wrote a number of books, it is sometimes possible to see where one is addressed more to servants and another more to their employers: while *The Cook's Own Book* addressed the need for housekeepers to understand the technical side of cooking, *Everybody's Pudding Book* consciously mocked the idea that instructing a housekeeper needed to be a challenging job for middle-class women.

Mrs Beeton was very clear about the need to address two types of readers in one book. The *Book of Household Management* had two introductions; one was titled 'The Mistress' and the other 'The Housekeeper,' though it is worth considering that many so-called middle-class wives may have had to do much of the cooking themselves. This meant that for Beeton, and others, there was a blending of aspirational fiction, whereby lower middle-class women could read about a more elegant lifestyle than they could afford, and cautious, financially sound advice for mistresses and their servants who wanted to run a tasteful home on a budget.³⁰

Beeton evoked a home where the mistress changed for dinner, and directed a

²⁹ Beeton, *Household Management*, p. 80.

³⁰ S. A. Leavitt, *From Catherine Beecher to Martha Stewart: A Cultural History of Domestic Advice*, (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

large staff of servants, while her readers were probably part of the aspirational middle and lower-middle classes, who ran homes with the help of only one servant, and for whom social mobility fostered a desire for domestic advice.³¹

Flattery often went side-by-side with fault-finding in cookbook introductions. To many authors it seemed that modern life was rendering women incapable of carrying out their natural tasks as homemakers and nurturers. Mrs Beeton worried that 'a housewife's badly-cooked dinners and untidy ways' were a 'fruitful source of family discontent.'³² It seemed to her that men were 'so well served out of doors, at their clubs, well-ordered taverns, and dining-houses,' that wives needed to master all the arts of domesticity in order to keep their husbands indoors.³³ In the same tone, Eliza Warren blamed wives' 'incompetent management' for their husbands' irritability and ill health. Warren worried that this was leading to 'a sickly race, and the lives of both husbands and wives soured for all happy purposes.'³⁴ The suggestion that incompetence in the home was a threat to family happiness also meant that women were in a position to undermine the stability of the nation if they did not improve themselves.³⁵

³¹ Similar forms of address were present also among male cookbook writers. See for example J. Armstrong, *The Young Woman's Guide to Virtue, Economy and Happiness*, (Newcastle: Mackenzie and Dent, c.1803), n.p; R. Murray ed. *The Modern Householder: A Manual of Domestic Economy in all its Branches*, (London: Frederick Warne and Co. n.d). p. 1.

³² Beeton, *Household Management*, p. 78.

³³ A similar point is made by M. de Joncourt in *Wholesome Cookery*, (London: Keegan Paul, 1895), p. x. See also H. Day, 'A Common Complaint: Dining at the Reform Club', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 36 (2008), 507-530.

³⁴ E. Warren, *How I managed my Household on £200 (1000 dollars) per Year*, (Boston: Loring, 1866), p. 6.

³⁵ This was a commonly held view among cookery writers, as discussed by H. Day in 'A Common Complaint', pp. 507-530.

When cookery writers made recipes part of domestic advice, they placed women's leisure in opposition to their duties and responsibilities. Mrs Beeton addressed this by suggesting duties for women to carry out at every moment of the day, and intimating that friends should be selected only if they were part of the domestic ambitions of the family.³⁶ In 1820, Elizabeth Hammond had posited accomplishments in opposition to the home's 'interior economy':

[W]e...often discover an amiable and accomplished woman, who possesses a general knowledge, with the exception of domestic cookery, which, I must be suffered to remark, is a subject of infinitely greater importance to her than superficial acquirements... Indeed, she can never be properly the mistress of a family, unless she makes herself acquainted with its interior economy.³⁷

Another author of the 1820s worried that: '[F]emales, whose families move in the higher circles of life, frequently despise family arrangements, their whole time and attention being absorbed by mere ornamental accomplishments.'³⁸ The dangers of impractical education, always imagined as coming at the expense of culinary knowledge, also worried the author who suggested that '[O]n the abandonment of domestic duty came the useless piano, which robbed girls of their time, but enabled carpenters to realize fabulous gains.'³⁹ Domesticity—which included but was not limited to cookery—was the real accomplishment women needed to strive for.⁴⁰

³⁶ This element of Beeton's approach is also discussed in R. Rich, "If you desire to enjoy life, avoid unpunctual people": Women, Timetabling and Domestic Advice, 1850-1910"; Marion Lochhead, *The Victorian Household*, (London: John Murray, 1964), pp. 30-44; Pamela Horn, *Pleasures and Pastimes in Victorian Britain*, (Sutton Publishing 1999), pp. 29-30.

³⁷ E. Hammond, *Modern Domestic Cookery, and Useful Receipt Book*, (London, A. K. Newman and Co, 1820), p. 5.

³⁸ Anon, *A Modern System of Domestic Cookery or the Housekeepers Guide*, (Manchester: J. Gleave, 1822), p. 1.

³⁹ Anon. *The Gentlewoman*. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1864).

⁴⁰ See also Mrs Pullan, *The Modern Housewife's Receipt Book*, (London: D. M. Aird, 1856), pp. 1-11; E Muir, *Dinners and Dinner Parties*, (London: Chapman and Hall, 1862), pp. 16-19.

In *Everybody's Pudding Book*, first published in 1862, Hill distanced herself from this way of writing common among her contemporaries, by parodying their writing style. Eschewing the typical tone, which criticized and cajoled women who were imagined as resistant to the need to learn to cook, Hill satirized the custom of inventing a conversation in which an older woman learnt that she needed to write a book of advice through a conversation with an inept younger woman. While all the anecdotes writers offered up were clearly fictions, it was only Hill who was very overt about this, by inventing a story too silly to be even remotely plausible. Hill invented a hostess who preferred to eat insipid apple pudding every day for six months, rather than to try to train her cook to prepare anything more difficult. The narrator of the introduction asked the hostess if she was 'partial to apple puddings', to which the hostess replied 'no, indeed...but of all the troubles in life entailed by housekeeping, that of having daily to appoint pies or puddings proper to the season is the worst.' The hostess therefore had a system whereby her cook produced 'apple puddings for one half of the year and gooseberry puddings for the other half', and continued: 'If I can persuade you to remain with us till May, you can then count upon a change.'⁴¹ This was Hill's way of making fun of contemporary narratives about women's unwillingness to do their duty.

The vast majority of mid-Victorian cookery books used as a starting point the idea that women had lost their traditional domestic skills and abilities. There

⁴¹ Hill, *Everybody's Pudding Book*, p. 17.

seemed to exist an imagined 'golden age' in which women had happily fulfilled their intended role, followed by the modern age in which experts were required to provide advice to women who were not convinced that fulfillment lay in the kitchen. As Mary Jewry wrote: 'One great fault of modern female education is the omission from it of the knowledge of household management and a *practical* acquaintance with cookery.'⁴² This practical acquaintance did not entirely relate to cooking, since an underlying assumption of Hill, Beeton, and their many peers, was that middle-class women instructed their servants about what to cook. The imagined housewife, who was enjoined to be both frugal and elegant, needed auxiliary knowledge: being in tune with the seasons, understanding the relationship between nutrition and health, and also knowing a bit of French.

The mid-Victorian British kitchen was quite a cosmopolitan place. French was the language of fine dining; Eliza Acton included a glossary of French terms for those who needed it, while Nancy Lake's *Menus Made Easy* offered an easy guide for the socially aspirational to the French words for everyday English dishes.⁴³ April Bullock has pointed out, too, that cosmopolitanism in the kitchen was not just European, but also included the foods of Empire, and in particular of India.⁴⁴ As we shall see, both Hill and Beeton (along with many of their contemporaries), included recipes for curries as a matter of course. Indeed the flavours of Empire,

⁴² M. Jewry, ed. *Warne's Model Cookery and Housekeeping Book*, (London: Frederick Warne and Co. 1868), p. 3.

⁴³ E. Acton, *Modern Cookery*, pp. xxxi-xxxii; N. Lake, *Menus Made Easy, or How to Order Dinner and give Dishes their French Names*, 8th ed. (London: Frederick Warne and co, 1894); also K. Herbert, *Common Sense Cookery*, 3rd ed. (London: Edward Arnold, c. 1894), p. 3. On French as the language of food in this period see A. Trubek, *Haute Cuisine: How the French Invented the Culinary Profession*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

⁴⁴ Bullock, 'The Cosmopolitan Cookbook'.

as much as the drinking of tea, had become, by this point, almost inherently British.⁴⁵ Describing the contents of her book, Eliza Acton claimed that along with English dishes she had ‘intermingled many foreign ones which now so far belong to our national cookery as to be met with commonly at all refined modern tables.’ Yet in spite of their attempts at sophisticated cosmopolitanism, very few authors could match Hill for the range of European countries that can be traced in her recipes.

2. Miss Hill and Mrs. Beeton

Because of the place she holds in the history of eminent Victorians, Mrs. Beeton has been taken as the pioneer of Victorian household management and of a more modern way of writing recipes.⁴⁶ While her biographers are quick to point out that she ‘borrowed’ or plagiarized the vast majority of her recipes, this was neither shocking nor unique, since a certain amount of borrowing was common among advice writers in this period.⁴⁷ One of the things that makes Mrs Beeton so appealing to both scholars and the public is her uncommon life story: her name has come to stand for Victorian values: upright, efficient, scientific and forward looking. Yet far from living the life conjured up by the name ‘Mrs

⁴⁵ On tea drinking, see E. Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017). See also L. Collingham *The Taste of Empire: How Britain’s Quest for Food Shaped the Modern World*, (New York: Basic Books, 2017).

⁴⁶ Hughes, *Short Life and Long Time*, p. 213. Scholars in a range of fields consider the unique place of Beeton’s *Household Management* in the emergence of the modern mode of self-management. See for example I. Lennie, *Beyond Management*, (London: Sage, 1999), p. 128; R. Wensley, ‘Isabella Beeton: Management as “Everything in its Place,”’ *Business Strategy Review*, 7 (2006), 37–46; K. Guest, ‘Mrs Beeton Organises: Professional Domesticity in Household Management,’ *Nineteenth-Century Feminism* 7 (2003), 8–22.

⁴⁷ For a detailed discussion of the origins of the recipes in the *Household Management* see Hughes, *Short Life and Long Time*, p. 198–9.

Beeton', Isabella, one of several children of the manager of Epsom racecourse, spent part of her childhood being raised in the spectator stands. Later, married to the publisher Samuel Orchard Beeton, Isabella worked as a journalist for the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, in which much of what became the *Book of Household Management* first appeared. Thus while Beeton can be considered to have belonged to the middle classes, she worked outside of her home, and was not wedded to the conventional role of 'Mistress of the House' about which she wrote so forcefully.

Beeton wrote about the culinary arts as part of the progress of civilization: '[a]s in the fine arts, the progress of mankind from barbarism to civilization is marked by a gradual succession of triumphs over the rude materialities of nature' including in 'the art of cookery.'⁴⁸ She was not alone in equating cookery with progress. Colin Mackenzie, wrote in 1823 that:

In truth, the present volume has been compiled under the feeling, that if all other books of Science in the world were destroyed, this single volume would be found to embody the results of the useful experience, observations, and discoveries of mankind during the past ages of this world.⁴⁹

While an anonymous recipe writer, from 1837, had it that:

The Collection of Domestic Receipts now presented to the public could not have been formed in any age but the present. The wisdom of this age has been to bring science from her heights down to the practical knowledge of every-day concerns' and the number of its inventions and discoveries have kept pace with the increasing wants of man.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Beeton, *Household Management*, p. 39.

⁴⁹ Anon. *Five Thousand Receipts in all the Useful and Domestic Arts, Constituting a Complete and Universal Practical Library and Operative Cyclopaedia*. (London: Whittaker, 1823), p. iii.

⁵⁰ Anon. *The New Family receipt Book, Containing One Thousand Truly Valuable Receipts in Various Branches of Domestic Economy*, New edition, Considerably Enlarged, (London: John Murray, 1837), p. vii.

In this sense, Mrs Beeton's interest in the science of cookery, most evident in her introductions to the natural science of each animal and vegetable, was in keeping with the modern sense that food, cooking, digestion and home economy were all part of a wider way of understanding the contemporary world in scientific terms.⁵¹ For the middle classes, this approach to knowledge was a component of the self-improving morality that underpinned their class identity.⁵²

Far less is known of Georgiana Hill than of Isabella Beeton, and there is little archival evidence from which to piece together her biography. Hill was born around 1825, in Bristol, the second daughter of George Hill, a civil engineer. In 1841, the census listed the family—mother, father and two daughters—living at Brunswick Place in Weston-Super-Mare. Hill lost her mother between 1841 and 1851, and her father in the following decade; by 1861 she was living alone with her elder sister Sophia, at Browning Hill, in Tadley, Hampshire. Neither sister married. In 1871 Hill appears to have been working as a ward sister at Guy's hospital, while Sophia remained at Browning Hill.⁵³ Georgiana died in 1903, after living alone, back at Browning Hill, according to the 1901 census. Beyond this, she left no traces, though her recipes provide some clues to her taste, character and experience.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Beetham, 'Good Taste and Sweet Ordering,' p. 392.

⁵² C. Lieffers, "'The Present Time Is Eminently Scientific': The Science of Cookery in Nineteenth-Century Britain," *Journal of Social History*, 45 (2012), 936–959.

⁵³ Martha Vicinus has suggested that the challenges of industrialisation and urbanisation in Victorian England made it unlikely for any woman to live her entire life in 'static' domesticity. *A Widening Sphere: Changing Roles of Victorian Women* (Oxford: Routledge, 1977), p. x.

⁵⁴ On the possibility of reading cookbooks as a form of autobiographical writing see Theophano, *Eat My Words*, pp. 117–154.

The European flair of Hill's recipes, and in particular the large number of French, Spanish, and Italian recipes, suggests that she may have spent time abroad, probably in her mid twenties. In her 'Italian Pudding' recipe, Hill wrote that 'I first tasted this dish in Tuscany on the 27th April, 1850, and I have commemorated the event by having a like pudding annually on that day ever since.'⁵⁵ In one census, Hill was recorded as a 'professor of languages,' which along with the many European recipes she wrote, gives weight to the idea that she had spent time on the continent. She may also have worked as housekeeper at Baughurst Rectory, which was close to Browning Hill, since a number of her recipes—for example 'Lapereau Enragé as at Baughurst Rectory'—suggest she had spent time in the rectory's kitchen.⁵⁶ On the whole, though, we know little about Hill's life beyond her publications.

Hill and Beeton's careers both ended abruptly, for different reasons, in each case highlighting an aspect of women's powerlessness in the world of publishing. Beeton, who at 24 was the author of the most successful cookbook in British history, died at the age of 27. Her book—or the brand that her name became—then lived on, passing eventually from her husband's publishing firm to that of Ward, Lock and Co. While the Beeton name may have made a lot of money, Beeton herself did not earn her living or negotiate her contracts autonomously. Hill, by contrast, made her own way in the world and undertook a variety of

⁵⁵ Hill, *Everybody's Pudding Book*, p. 71.

⁵⁶ Hill, *Gourmet's Guide*, p. 50; see also 'Apple Cheese as at Baughurst Rectory', *How to Cook Apples*, p. 62.

occupations. She was probably 34 years old when her first book was published, and 45 when her last appeared. In those ten years she was impressively prolific, and after she stopped writing her books continued to be re-issued until at least the 1890s. The longevity of her publications seems to suggest that it was not the lack of a market which caused her to stop writing. The poor contracts she was offered, and therefore the difficulty in earning a living from her books, may have been part of the answer to Hill's decision to change careers. Hill's last contract with Routledge was in 1870, and according to the 1871 census Hill was a ward sister in London. It seems likely that she was back in Tadley by 1878, possibly working in the local shop. There is probably no way of knowing why she made these changes, or why, given her literary skill, she gave up on writing, but her book contracts were not lucrative, and as with Beeton, the bulk of the profits ended up in other, male, hands.

Aspects of Hill's character, as well as her approach to cooking, can be discerned through her writing. Hill's first book appeared under the well-chosen pseudonym, 'An Old Epicure,' on the cover of the *Gourmet's Guide to Cooking Rabbit* when it first appeared in 1859.⁵⁷ Her chosen *nom de plume* obscured Hill's age, class and gender and allowed her to use a more playful tone than was usual among her contemporaries.⁵⁸ The character of epicure, as well as the notion of the gourmet, in a period when fine dining remained a masculine preserve,

⁵⁷ The book originally appeared as *The Gourmet's Guide to Cooking Rabbit*, By an Old Epicure, and was published by W. Kent & Co. in 1859.

⁵⁸ B. K. Wheaton discusses the difficulty of ascertaining cookbook writers' identities in books published in this period in 'Cookbooks as a Resource for Social History,' p. 282.

created the impression of an older, wealthy man. Hill's name first appeared on her book covers when she began publishing with Routledge in 1860, coincidentally also the time at which periodical articles were increasingly published with credited authors, rather than anonymously.⁵⁹ While female-authored manuals tended to stick to the notion of food preparation as chore and duty, The Old Epicure referred to herself as a 'good gastronomer', and to her book not as a household manual, but as a *Gourmet's Guide*. When Hill wrote about her 'experiences in the "social science" of cookery' she was consciously pointing to all those books of recipes in which cookery was referred to as a modern science. In terms of how the recipes themselves were written, Hill bucked the trend for writing in a scientific style, choosing, instead, the more traditional prose style. This created a more intimate and conversational style for communicating with her imagined readers.⁶⁰

Georgiana Hill's way of writing recipes was different to Mrs Beeton's. Beeton was an early adopter of the modern mode of presenting recipes with lists of ingredients, measurements and timings. Yet Henry Notaker points out that it has been a mistake to credit Beeton as an innovator for listing ingredients and quantities at the start of each recipe, a practice he argues was already 'in the air' and had indeed been practiced elsewhere in Europe from the fourteenth century.⁶¹ There were other differences. Hill tended to emphasise the pleasure of food, rather than the difficulty of preparing it. Beeton placed recipes within a raft

⁵⁹ A. Easley, 'Making a Debut,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Women's Writing*, ed. by L. H. Peterson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 22-3.

⁶⁰ Hill, *Gourmet's Guide to Cooking Rabbit*, p. 1.

⁶¹ H. Notaker, 'Printed Cookbooks' p. 137.

of other forms of advice about running a home. Hill also did some of this kind of advising, especially in her first Routledge book, *The Cook's Own Book: A Manual of Cookery for the Kitchen and the Cottage*. Here Hill set out her rules for the kitchen, offering up advice on, for example, what could be boiled and for how long:

Q. What kinds of meat require a good deal of boiling?

A. Pickled pork, veal, and lamb should be well boiled.

Q. What is the usual time allowed for boiling to each pound of meat?

A. Pork and veal, from the time they fairly began boiling, need twenty minutes to each pound, and lamb nearly as much.

Q. Is it necessary to boil beef and mutton so long?

A. A quarter of an hour for each pound is considered enough for mutton, unless the weather is very cold; beef, if salted, takes from seventeen to twenty minutes for each pound.

Q. What else is put into *boiling* water?

A. Puddings of all kinds, whether of paste, batter, or rice; but plain boiled rice should be put into *cold* water.⁶²

The Cook's Own Book was more didactic in tone than Hill's other books. It differed, though, from what many contemporaries were writing, in avoiding the temptation to criticise housewives for their ignorance of basic domesticity. Hill's intention was:

[T]o contribute her mite in aid of a movement, now happily taking place to some extent in various parts of the country—that of training young people intending to go out to service in a practical knowledge of the duties they may be respectively required to perform.⁶³

Hill wrote *The Cook's Own Book* in the form of a dialogue. All her other books of recipes followed the traditional practice of presenting recipes in prose, rather than as a more modern list, the form preferred by Isabelle Beeton.

⁶² Georgiana Hill, *The Cook's Own Book: A Manual of Cookery for the Kitchen and the Cottage*, (London: Routledge, Warne, and Routledge, 1860), p. 15.

⁶³ Hill, *The Cook's Own Book*, p. 4.

There is a wealth of recent scholarship tracing the appearance of the Empire on the plates of the middle classes. Both Hill and Beeton, along with many other, published curry recipes. Curry was a catch-all term, applied to recipes brought home by returning Anglo-Indians as well as to commercially available spice mixes and published recipes which offered locally available alternatives to the ingredients used in India. In 1847, Eliza Acton included eleven recipes for curries in *Modern Cookery*, including curried oysters and curried macaroni. A taste for Empire and a taste for Europe were both becoming part of the normal diet of the middle classes, but not, perhaps, always in ways that were particularly loyal to a dish's supposed country of origin.

Isabella Beeton had recipes including a mangoless 'Mango Chutney' and a rabbit curry.⁶⁴ Georgiana Hill had four takes on the rabbit curry: 'Curried Rabbit Balls', 'Plain Curried Rabbit', 'A Richer Curried Rabbit', and 'To Curry Cold Rabbit'. Beeton's Curried Rabbit recipe was structured in the modern style. Like all the recipes in the *Book of Household Management* this one included an ingredient list, and clear instructions on timings, quantities and cost:

INGREDIENTS—1 rabbit, 2 oz., of butter, 3 onions, 1 pint stock No. 104, 1 tablespoonful of curry powder, 1 tablespoonful of flour, 1 tablespoonful of mushroom powder, the juice of ½ lemon, ½ lb. of rice.

Mode.—Empty, skin, and wash the rabbit thoroughly, and cut it neatly into joints. Put it into a stewpan with the butter and sliced onions, and let them acquire a nice brown colour, but do not allow them to blacken. Pour in the stock, which should be boiling; mix the curry powder and flour smoothly with a little water, add it to the stock, with

⁶⁴ For a great discussion about what Mrs Beeton's Mango Chutney can teach us about English diets and the British Empire see E. Rappaport, 'Spicing up the Victorians: Teaching Mrs. Beeton's Recipe for Mango Chutney,' *Recipes Project* (<https://recipes.hypotheses.org/6558>) [Accessed 11 November, 2019].

the mushroom powder, and simmer gently for rather more than ½ hour; squeeze in the lemon-juice, and serve in the centre of a dish, with an edging of boiled rice all round. Where economy is studied, water may be substituted for the stock; in this case, the meat and onions must be very nicely browned. A little sour apple and rasped cocoanut stewed with the curry will be found a great improvement.

Time.—Altogether ¾ hour.

Average cost, from 1s. to 1s. 6d. each.

Sufficient for 4 persons.

Seasonable in winter.⁶⁵

This way of structuring a recipe was designed to appeal to those with very little knowledge or confidence in the kitchen, and included a level of detail that Hill assumed her readers would not require.

Hill's recipe for Plain Curried Rabbit was simple:

Cut up a young rabbit, and roll it well in a mixture of two ounces of flour and half an ounce of curry powder; fry it till it begins to turn brown, when add a little white wine, and enough good stock to cover it. Let it simmer for half an hour, and serve either with sippets of fried bread, or a rim of plain boiled rice.⁶⁶

There was no list of ingredients, and there were choices left to the reader, such as how to serve it. Some quantities ('half an ounce of curry powder') were precise, while others relied on the cook's own judgment ('a little white wine'). A greater assumption of knowledge about how to cook, and the simpler presentation of Hill's recipes might also inspire confidence, by making cooking seem straightforward, rather than as something with a great deal of science and rules underpinning it. It was not that Hill intended her book to be read by a more elite audience—this same recipes appeared in both the *Gourmet's Guide*

⁶⁵ Beeton, *Household Management* p. 487.

⁶⁶ Hill, *Gourmet's Guide*, p. 46.

and *How to Cook Rabbits*—but rather that Hill was old-fashioned, and imagined that anyone in charge of preparing food would learn some basic rules (such as those offered in *The Cook's Own Book*), and then be able to apply them to any recipe put before her.

There were other differences in how Hill and Beeton wrote about rabbits which reveal how one was intent on the pleasure of good eating, while the other was interested in making cookery a part of the modern, scientific way of running a home. Beeton scattered facts about rabbits into her chapter of rabbit recipes, informing her readers that 'Rabbit-keeping is generally practised by a few individuals in almost every town, and by a few in almost every part of the country', and that the rabbit 'breeds seven times in the year, and generally begets seven or eight young ones at a time.'⁶⁷ Hill focussed, instead, on the many ways to cook the rabbit, bringing in variations from across England, France and Spain.⁶⁸ Beeton's inclusion of sections on natural history fit with the Victorian commitment to self-improvement through education, but had little to do with producing good food for the table.

As a rule, Hill's asides were more aesthetic than Beeton's. Because Hill's books were short and Beeton's was long, there was also less room for Hill to provide information or observations beyond the recipes. Sometimes there was little to

⁶⁷ Beeton, *Household Management*, p. 489.

⁶⁸ Of 124 recipes in the *Gourmet's Guide to Rabbit Cooking*, there are 13 specifically Spanish titles, two with Portuguese in the title, as well as numerous clearly French recipes and a smattering of Italian.

distinguish between a chatty aside and a recipe, for example when Hill offered this under the heading of 'Boiled Rabbits and Bacon':

As rabbits invariably appear in conjunction with the fine flitches of our Hampshire hogs, upon the counters of the "charcutier," so these two comestibles are usually united upon the dinner table, the more than "Byzantine meagreness" (speaking artistically) of the one requiring to be qualified by the unctuous assistance of the other. Each should, however, be dressed separately, or the colour of both will be spoilt.⁶⁹

There is not much here in terms of an actual recipe. Hill offered some thoughts on the qualities of rabbit and pig meat, and suggested that 'artistically' they went well together; choices about how to make this happen were left to the reader. This way of writing a 'recipe' was common to many of Hill's works. In *How to Cook Apples*, the first was 'Pommes au Naturel,' consisting of advice to readers that a ripe raw apple can be eaten in its natural state. Hill's style was often to present food preparation as something simple, but where variety could bring pleasure. Her approach appears at odds with the more widespread one of constructing the role of the housewife as a highly difficult and responsible one, with the necessity of providing tasty meals presented as a strategy with which to keep a husband out of the inns and taverns of London. Where Beeton might be said to have written defensively, offering advice readers could use to arm themselves against the threats of modern life, Hill by contrast, wrote in a way that suggested women's natural environment was the kitchen. Her assumption of this natural fit led her to reject some of the newer, more modern conventions of cookery writing, but also to write more generously, offering suggestions rooted in a belief in her readers' own ability to prepare and enjoy good food.

⁶⁹ Hill, *Gourmet's Guide*, pp. 17-18.

3. Cookbook Writing as a Career

The difference in style of Hill's writing and Beeton's came in part from the different ways each came to be a cookbook author. Of the two, Hill was the one who had most direct experience of cooking. She was also older when she began publishing recipes, and perhaps therefore more confident in herself and other women. This confidence, sadly, was not reflected in Hill's business dealings. In order to round off the comparison between the two women's careers as recipe writers, it makes sense to end this discussion by looking at Hill's experiences of the publishing industry, in order to consider what this might tell us about cookbook writing as a career for women.

The best way to compare Hill's and Beeton's working lives is through Hill's numerous publishing contracts with both Bentley and Routledge. Beeton never had to negotiate a contract, while many other women authors who did had husbands or male relations to assist them. For Hill, being unmarried seems to have hampered her ability to obtain the kinds of financial arrangements usual for cookery writers. Hill's Routledge contracts were witnessed by a number of different people, and it is not clear what their various relations to her were, if any.⁷⁰ In 1866 Hill signed four separate contracts with Routledge, of which two were signed by Robert Sampson, who also witnessed three of Hill's contracts in 1867, while the other two were each signed by a different witness. Hill's first Routledge contract, for *Cook's Own Book*, in 1860, was signed by David Williams,

⁷⁰UCL Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd Archives, ROUTLEDGE/1-17/1-5 Author Contracts.

Rector of Baughurst, giving weight to the suggestion that she may have worked in the kitchen there for a time in the 1850s.

Cookbook contracts usually stipulated an initial fee for the first edition, and then subsequent payments for further editions, a sensible arrangement for authors of works that were generally re-issued numerous times. For Hill, a confident authorial voice was not matched by successful business dealings; for each of her titles she sold the publishers the copyright and made no money from further editions, meaning that her success made profit only for the owners of the publishing firms. Given that each of her books appeared in multiple editions, there were precedents to suggest she ought to have had been more highly remunerated. Bentley paid Hill £20 for *Everybody's Pudding Book* in 1862, and £25 for *The Breakfast Book* in 1865. But in 1863, they paid Miss Renny, author of *What to do with Cold Mutton*, '£21 for first edition of 3000 and £5.5.0 for each subsequent thousand' and in 1865, Miss Renny's next book was deemed worthy of '£25 for every 1000 copies'. Alexis Soyer, the most famous chef of his age, got £5 per thousand copies for *Shilling Cookery*. Hill's first Routledge title earned her only £10 for the copyright, which went up to £15 for the next ten titles. Quite apart from the numerous American editions of her work, most of Hill's publications were reissued by Routledge several times. Her most commercially successful volume was *The Cook's Own Book*, appearing in seven editions between 1860 and 1879.⁷¹ Selling a copyright outright meant agreeing on a book's value before knowing how it would sell, leading to situations such as the

⁷¹ UCL Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd Archives, ROUTLEDGE/1-17/6-11, Publication Book Vol. 3 1858-81.

sale of the *How to Cook Onions* copyright for £15 and it only appearing in a single edition, while *How to Cook Rabbits* was sold for £10 and appeared in four editions.⁷²

Each of Hill's Routledge manuals was small, especially when compared to the compendium style of domestic manuals popular at the time. While Beeton's book was expensive, and recipes for anything and everything, each of Hill's books had around 100 recipes, all centered around a particular dish or ingredient, and costing only 6 d. Routledge published many cookbooks, by men and women, including John Walsh's *The English Cookery Book*, a thick, compendium-style book with over three hundred pages of recipes and suggested bills of fare. This book, a more expensive and more durable item than the Household Manuals, logically earned its author more than Hill earned for any of her publications. Yet the disparity of Walsh's fee of £350 for his copyright in 1836, when compared to Hill's highest fee of £15 hints at the ways in which the value of a book may have been judged partly based on the author's gender and, therefore, perceived authority.⁷³ In his preface, Walsh thanked 'several ladies' for their assistance and for he credited with being 'good authorities on the value of the receipts they have furnished.'⁷⁴ Indeed Walsh earned money from their free labour, while Hill earned much less for a greater amount of work. Even in the field of domestic cookery, where women's expertise was recognized and rewarded, an unmarried

⁷² Routledge Publication Book Vol. 3 1858-81.

⁷³ UCL Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd Archives, Routledge Archives, R-Z, p. 298.

⁷⁴ J. H. Walsh, *The English Cookery Book*, fifth edition, (London, G. Routledge and Co, 1859), p. iii.

woman like Georgiana Hill struggled to make a living, while less qualified men were well rewarded.

Judged according to their sales figures both Hill and Beeton were successful cookbook writers. Hill published numerous volumes and Beeton achieved impressive brand longevity; yet neither achieved personal financial success. The language of middle-class respectability which Hill and Beeton used to communicate with their imagined reader was in itself part of the structure that allowed the male business owners who profited from their work to marginalize them from these profits. Indeed the tone most commonly used by cookery writers in the nineteenth century was one that reinforced patriarchal structures by creating a sphere of domestic labour which was so complex as to involve the whole of a woman's time and effort. Those women who earned their livelihoods by writing in this way had to somehow obscure their own experience of the business world, often by presenting invented conversations and scenarios which suggested that the idea of writing a book of recipes had emerged from a conversation with a friend or relative who needed help running her household and pleasing her husband. That Mrs. Beeton's name became emblematic of Victorian housewifery is the perfect example of how this worked; through her authorial voice the young Isabella Beeton obscured her own unusual upbringing and journalistic career, and became Mrs. Beeton, the master of domestic economy and moralizing self improvement.

4. Conclusions

Georgiana Hill and Isabella Beeton, along with Eliza Acton and numerous other female recipe writers, addressed themselves to an affluent and growing market in the 1860s. This article has focussed on Georgiana Hill's contribution, to argue that the authorial voices that could be deployed to address the desire of middle-class housewives for instructions about how and what to cook were more diverse than Victorian scholars have previously appreciated. Hill's publications reveal how she intertwined continental and British recipes to offer advice to readers with adventurous tastes. This is in contrast to the better-known compendium style of cookery book, epitomised by Mrs Beeton's *Book of Household Management*, in which food preparation was cast as a necessary chore rather than a sensory pleasure. As well as looking at different types of recipe books, this article has explored how Georgiana Hill fared in her dealings with publishers. Tracing Georgiana Hill's publishing contracts opens up new ways of thinking about cookery writing in women's history. Food and cooking belonged to the feminine private sphere, so it made sense that women both wrote and read about them. Victorian women could communicate knowledge about cooking to their peers, without sacrificing respectability. But their earning power did not equal that of men writing on similar subjects, and among women, earning power was determined by the availability of male relations at the negotiating table. Hill and Beeton wrote for a thriving market of aspirational housewives learning how to cook, clean, raise children, and entertain guests. Understanding the experiences of the women who wrote, and the ways in which they addressed their imagined readers, opens up new ways of thinking about the complex construction of respectable Victorian femininity.

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