



The Hand-Book of Carving (American Antiquarian Cookbook Collection)

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According to the unknown author, “Without a perfect knowledge of the art of Carving, it is impossible to perform the honor of the table with propriety; and nothing can be more disagreeable to one of a sensitive disposition, than to behold a person, at the head of a well-furnished board, hacking the finest joints, and giving them the appearance of having been gnawed by dogs.”

This slim volume provides the dinner table host with detailed instructions and drawings for carving various fish, “joints” (mutton, lamb, beef, veal, pig), poultry, and game. It also contains handy advice for the host (“The brief interval before dinner is announced may be easily filled up by the common-place inquiries after health, and observations on the weather”) and the guest (“You will probably have to wait a little time before dinner is announced. During this short period, render yourself as agreeable as possible to the assembled company.”) Charming and disarming, this clever little treatise provides a fascinating window on dining culture and etiquette of the day.

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