

## Wilderness House Literary Review 4/3

C.S. Glines  
R. R. 2  
Meadowville, Pictou Co.  
Nova Scotia, Canada

November 14, 1969

Mr. Donald MacAusland  
Gourmet, Inc.  
777 Third Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10017



Dear Mr. MacAusland:

Here is an account of one of my recent experiences as a transplant from New Canaan, Connecticut to rural Pictou County, Nova Scotia.

As New Canaan continued to lose its small-town charm, I dreamed of living on a farm surrounded by many acres of fields and woods. After several years' search, I found Meadowville.

Meadowville has a population of approximately three hundred people and is situated five miles from the Northumberland Strait. It boasts a one-room elementary school, a community hall, a general store with the post office in the rear and a gas pump in front. One blacktop highway and many gravel roads winding through farmland and dense forest comprise the transportation network. Everyone is, of necessity, neighborly. It is, as they say here, "wonderful altogether" for anyone seeking to escape the complexities of urban or suburban life.

My children and I moved to our one-hundred-acre farm at the end of June, 1969. The children are now attending the consolidated high school twelve miles away. I continue to have amusing experiences which I should like to share with the readers of Gourmet, The Magazine of Good Living.

North Country Saga will also include articles on:

- Gathering and freezing mushrooms
- Cranberrying
- Meadowville Accepts Me (Pumpkin recipes)
- Dulse, a supermarket staple Irish Moss, an economic asset
- Soul Food, Scotia style
- A dollar's worth of cucumbers
- A plethora of cows' tails (cow's tail raised in ream and coffee - a success

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- Church Suppers, Big Business  
recipes for small cakes and squares
- The woodpile or tossing the cabers requires stick-to-the-ribs food,  
i.e., dried legumes

Other articles will be based on the **Mic** Mac Indians whose confidence I hope to gain with the help of Mrs. Carrie Best, a director of the United Negro Front in Nova Scotia; hunting and fishing in the area; the “unexpected” during our first winter in the North.

I really believe, Mr. MacAusland, that there are many readers of Gourmet who would, as I do, delight **in** the “simple life” I am now leading.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience in communicating with me.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. E. Stanley **Glines**



*memo from* JUSTINE VALENTI

11/20/69

Dear Mrs. Glines:

Thank you for letting us see your article on tripe, but I'm afraid we won't be able to use it. Nor can we encourage you regarding any of the other ideas you have suggested. Although some of them are interesting, they do not fit our needs.

We appreciate your interest and wish you success in placing your material with another outlet.

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Justine Valenti  
Managing Editor

*777 Third Avenue New York, N.Y. 10017 Area Code 212 421-1900*

Catherine S. Glines  
North Country Saga

### Tripe

*Beef tripe is usually made from only the first three chambers of a cow's stomach: the rumen (blanket/flat/smooth tripe), the reticulum (honeycomb and pocket tripe), and the omasum (book/bible/leaf tripe). Abomasum (reed) tripe is seen much less frequently, owing to its glandular tissue content. Tripe is also produced from sheep, goats, pigs, and deer. Unwashed (or "green") tripe includes some of the stomach's last content, giving it an unpleasant odor and causing it to be considered unfit for human consumption. However, this content is desirable to dogs and many other carnivores and is often used in pet food. Though it is called "green," because it has a high chlorophyll content a green substrate, in reality it is often grayish brown as a result of other undigested compounds. — Wikipedia*

The odd couple we certainly were, hoes in hand under the cool northern sun. Eben, bent with back-wearying toil patiently hoeing earth up to his potato plants to keep the tubers from greening in the sunlight; and I, a refugee from suburban Connecticut, plucking young lambs quarters for my evening meal from among the other weeds caught by my hoe.

"Lady," he said in his Gaelic brogue, "I am going to butcher next week. Would you like a quarter of veal?"

The idea of buying meat on the hoof had not occurred to me. "What would I do with a quarter of veal?"

"Hoch! Lady," he replied, "you could put it in your freezer for winter."

That seemed reasonable. "OK," I said "let me have a hindquarter." "What do you do with the innards when you butcher? Could I have the sweetbreads?" I said all in one breath.

"Hoch! All that is taken care of", he replied.

"What do you do with the tripe? I haven't seen any in the stores here."

"I used to sell all that stuff to a fox farmer hereabouts," he answered; "but he gave up the business so now I take it all out to the woods and bury it."

"Bury it" I exclaimed, " Why tripe is delicious." He shrugged his shoulders and went back to hoeing.

I had forgotten our conversation when the following week he called up one evening.

"Lady, can you come up here for a few minutes

"Yes, What's cooking?" I interjected?

"and bring a pail" he continued.

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I felt foolish walking up the road with my shiny new galvanized pail, and was glad to be enshrouded in darkness; and glad that no car passed by. What on earth does he have, I wondered as I hurried up the road.

His wife was making "curds" and the warm cluttered kitchen smelled strongly of souring milk. She laughed her twinkling laugh as I sat down and Eben took my pail from me. She would not tell me what he had for me, but she was enjoying my bewilderment thoroughly.

I saw him out the window returning from the barn and thought that perhaps he had some cracked eggs for homemade noodles. I had made them here and found then to be a novelty, in this potato country.

What I saw in the pail as Eben came through the door startled me. It looked like a huge true sponge swollen with water. A seemingly eternal silence ensued as my jaw fell open in wonderment.

"Here is you tripe, it should keep in cold water until morning," he said laughingly. All I could say was, "Gosh, what a lot of tripe - Wow! I had better go home and get out the cookbooks to see what I am going to do with it."

The children greeted me with shouts of: "What did Eben have for you?" I showed them my pail. "How repulsive," cried Jimmy; and "O Mom," Vicky said, "take it out and bury it deep."

I had never had such a challenge. I began taking down cookbooks from the pantry shelf one after another looking for a method of coping with the contents of my pail. Each book that mentioned tripe said: "Take cleaned tripe and ....

Nowhere could I find how to clean the stuff. "Well I'm just going to try anyway," I said aloud to myself.

Although it was 10 P.M., I began to scrape a piece of tripe which

I literally hacked off the whole "thing." I scraped until my arm ached and managed to get a few spots cleaned, but most of the brown lining stayed welded to the total mass. Parboiling may be the solution, I reasoned. An electric kettle is a godsend for quick short cooking or long - all day - cooking when there are other things to do besides put another stick in the wood stove. Before long, a *mephitic miasma* began to emanate from the kettle. I could almost see this noisome mist wend its way up through the hole in the ceiling above the stove, which until recently had been a major source of heat for the upstairs, and hoped that the children had gone to sleep. My pot watching and hopeful incanting were rudely interrupted by door banging scurrying feet, and then, a muffled cry, "Ye Gods, Mom!

Are you trying to kill us?" Jimmy had taken a stack of clean towels from the linen closet and piled them over the hole. Well past midnight, I gave up trying and sloshed the whole mess into a covered pail on the back porch to be used for dog food.

Several days later, still bothered by my failure, I went to town to consult with the local butcher. After buying an unusually large amount of meat and refraining from begging for dog bones, I broached the subject of tripe tentatively. "Do you ever have any lovely, fresh, white honeycomb tripe? It is delicious, you know." "No," he said, "I have no call for tripe."

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As an afterthought he added, "I think they must bleach that commercial stuff." "Oh," I said brightening, "How does one clean tripe?" "Well now," he began, "I had a Chinese friend about thirty years ago who liked tripe and I used to take him some occasionally. I think he boiled it in water with soda."

My mental computer clicked and I thought that, at least, the soda might kill the smell. With renewed confidence, I left the shop.

"Eben," I said the next time I saw him; "I'll lighten your load to the woods the next time you butcher. I'll take another tripe." "Good, Lady," he said, I butcher again next week." Again he called me in the evening, but I told him that I couldn't collect until after the children left on the school bus because if they knew what I planned to do, they would disown me completely.

The morning was sunny and warm with just a hint of fall in the clean breeze. The darkness in the barn blinded me momentarily but I heard Eben's greeting and then saw him come iron behind the drawn carcass of prime baby beef which was hanging from the rafters.

"Lady," he said, I left the manure in the stomach about two hours last night, and now the lining seems to pull away better. Could be that the inner heat worked on the lining."

I swallowed hard, took my full pail and walked home where I decided to start cleaning the tripe on the stone steps at the kitchen door. These could be easily scrubbed. Another neighbor who is a veritable fount of lore (one must always scrub a stovepipe with a spruce bough) had said that her mother used a sharpened stick to scrape tripe with. I thought, however, that the dull side of a heavy knife might do as well. Leaving the pail on the steps I entered the kitchen to get the knife. When I came out, Puppy, our old lovable dog, was trying to chew off a piece of the tripe which was sloping over the side of the pail. "Well," I thought, "all this may end up as animal food anyway."

The wet, brown, fur-like lining came off in sheets, even from the honeycomb; which by the way, seems to be a rather small part of the entire stomach or stomachs. I never could picture the "thing" as a living organ. Somewhat satisfied with my progress, I decided to remove the remaining "brown" by boiling it off in a strong solution of bicarbonate of soda.

As this was to be a major effort which must be completed before the children's return at three-thirty, I lit a good, fast fire in the wood stove and took the precaution of refilling the woodbox from the woodshed behind the house. While waiting for the pots of water to boil on the stove, I scrubbed the scraped tripe in the dishpan with the pot brush and rinsed it several times.

By two o'clock in the afternoon, after several boilings with and without soda, I found that the tripe was becoming tender without having been blended with the necessary wines, herbs, spices, onion and garlic. Quickly, I hitched up the electric kettle - the only clean pot available. While the kettle was warming, I cut the tripe into earthworm size pieces; then sautéed a large chopped onion and two cloves of garlic in a good two ounces of butter. To this I added the tripe and giving it a stir, poured in half a bottle



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of sauterne wine. While this simmered gently, I washed the pots, pans, cutting board and cutlery and put them away. Then as a precautionary measure, I opened all the doors and windows downstairs. No complaints this time I assured myself.

I caught a glimpse of my head in the hall mirror and suddenly realized that I was not only completely disheveled, but also bone tired from my day's occupation. I was grateful that I had now only to satisfy my olfactory nerves and my taste buds.

Back in the kitchen, I added a bay leaf and a small pinch of powdered thyme; then went to the garden for a large bunch of parsley and a fresh carrot or two. I noticed, when I came back that my "plat" smelled slightly pungent so I added several Rosemary leaves for piquancy; salt and pepper; chopped carrot; a bag of frozen sautéed mushrooms. I snipped the washed parsley directly into the mixture. The flavors, I thought, were melding nicely; and I had just added some "beurre, manie" when the children came home.

"What stinks," they chorused as they proceeding upstairs without stopping for a snack? "When will they get out of the hamburger and pizza stage," I wondered slightly hurt.

The dogs came barking down the stairs to announce someone knocking at the door. "O zut alors!" I thought. "Who can that be, I am tired." At the door were the minister and his wife come to call. No sooner had he got through the door than he said, "My gracious, are you pickling?" Before I realized that a simple "Yes" would do, I launched into an explanation of my day's activities.

They did not stay long, not wishing to keep me from my project. As they left, he said, "May I presume that you have had previous experience with tripe?"

Thoroughly disheartened, I packed my day's work into four quart containers and hid them at the bottom of the freezer to await their fate.

In Other Times and Other Places Recipes I have used for cleaned Tripe.

### Preparation of Tripe

Take 3 lbs. of cleaned tripe and place it in a pressure cooker with 2 cups of water, add several onions (depending on size), 1/2 tsp salt and 6 crushed peppercorns.

Cook at 10 lbs. pressure from 1 ½ to 2 hrs.

I cool the cocker and test the tripe after 1 1/2 hours as some trips seems to cook more rapidly than other. When cooked, save the broth.

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Cut about one third of cooked tripe in narrow ribbons and freeze it in three separate containers with a small amount of broth. Place the containers in an accessible part of your freezer.

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You may now decide how to dress the remaining tripe to please your palate at the moment. I usually follow the recipe for one of the following sauces using the reserved broth as stock: Bordelaise, Poulette with Cream, Veloute, English Parsley or Curry.

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### Mock Snails

Defrost tripe, marinate briefly in soy sauce to give color. Cut in short lengths and place one length curled in a mushroom cap. Fill mushrooms with parsleyed garlic butter and heat until sizzling. - Serve with crusty rolls to sop up juices.

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### Tripe Tempura

Defrost your ribbons of tripe and cut into 2" (inch) lengths.

Pat dry and dip in

#### Batter

- 1 rounded cup of rice flour (preferably) or all-purpose flour
- 1 egg
- 1 Cup of water

Beat egg and water together, add flour and mix very lightly. There will be lumps. Heat oil in your fondue or electric kettle until a small ball of flour and water dropped into the hot oil bobs to the surface immediately. Cook the morsels individually.

### Dipping Sauce

- ¼ cup shoyu (Japanese soy Sauce)
- ½ cup bottled clam juice
- 1 Tbs (more or less) ginger marmalade, a sprinkle of MSG

Serve sauce warm with a side dish of grated horseradish for those who like it "hot".

We like to use chop-sticks when serving oriental food. When we serve curried tripe, we sometimes use chapatis instead of forks. Don't try this with guests as it is extremely difficult to achieve the graceful dexterity needed to get sauced tripe from plate to mouth.



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*NOTE: From the Internet we were able to find the definitive and short method of cleaning tripe:*

### **How To Clean Beef Tripe**

(<http://chestofbooks.com/food/household/Practical-Housekeeping/How-To-Clean-Beef-Tripe.html>)

Empty the paunch; rinse it thoroughly in cold water, being careful not to let any of the contents get on the outside. Make strong cleansed water or white lye, let it heat a little, too warm to hold the hands in, pour it over the tripe in a tub, let it stand two or three hours, then tack it up against a board, and with a knife scrape downwards, taking off the inner skin, or rinse it clean in cold water; sprinkle lime over, put in a tub, cover with warm water, and let it stand two or three hours, then scrape it with a knife; if the dark does not all come off easily, sprinkle more lime on, and let it lie for an hour longer, then scrape again, and rinse in cold water until clean. Place it in water enough to cover with a large handful of salt, let it remain in the salt water three days and nights, changing it each day, then take it out, cut in pieces about six inches wide and twelve long, lay in buttermilk for a few hours to whiten; then rinse it clean in cold water, and boil until tender; it will take from four to ten hours, as it should be done so that it can be mashed with the fingers. After thus prepared it can be cooked as preferred.