



# First Catch Your Hare. The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy

*Hannah Glasse*

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## **First Catch Your Hare. The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy** Hannah Glasse

Quite simply, the most important-and the most printed-English cookery book of the eighteenth century which defines for many the food and dining customs of the Georgian era. This is a facsimile edition, for the first time in paperback. The hardback version of this book was published by Prospect in 1994. The facsimile is of the first (1747) edition and preserves its large format. This edition also contains considerable information about Hannah Glasse in a biographical introduction, as well as two essays on the degree to which Glasse was indebted to other authors for her recipes. These essays (by Jennifer Stead and Priscilla Bain) were important milestones in our understanding of the techniques of early cookbook compilation when they first appeared. There is also a detailed and informative glossary, with illustrations where necessary, which help the reader interpret the recipes and the ingredients referred to. The book has a modern index. Hannah Glasse was a remarkable woman. She was not a professional cook, rather her expertise was in dressmaking and mercery. Nor was she born with any natural advantages. As the illegitimate offspring of a Northumberland gentleman lawyer, she had to make her way in the world-not greatly helped by a somewhat ineffective husband and large family. Thus she turned to a variety of moneymaking ventures, among which was this book (sold direct through a list of subscribers and the shops of friends rather than the book trade). She seems to be almost self-taught both in literacy (her early letters are by no means models of grammar or spelling) and in cookery. Even if her recipes are often filched from other people's books, she certainly puts her own gloss on many of them, and there is a definite authorial voice to the text as a whole. Glasse's book is particularly significant both in its attitudes to the influence of French cookery on the English middle classes and in its reflection of the roles of mistress and servant in the running of an urban household. Its recipes are often successful and still capable of reproduction in the modern kitchen. The first curry recipe printed in England appears here. Now available in a more compact format.

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