



Guided by the big Durgin-Park flag, a fixture of the ancient warehouse restaurant, visitors make their way to the upstairs dining room by a circuitous route, often barking an unwary shin on a box of produce or barrel of fish. Regular patrons use the back door which leads directly to the marketmen's pet corner



A customer may bring his own steak or freshly caught fish to be broiled. Arthur the Fishman has dragged his codfish dinner solemnly up the stairs twice a week for 23 years

BOSTON BEANERY

BY ALLAN GOULD AND
EMILE C. SCHURMACHER

Don't look for swank at Durgin-Park, a dingy restaurant buried in a Boston warehouse, but if you're interested in eating good, lusty Yankee food, draw up a chair

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHORS

Beans should be baked for six hours for full flavor, says Chief Bean Man Edward Hallett. Durgin-Park baked-bean recipe is century old

After cutting generous wedges for 45 years, Martha Bence, pie girl, retired for three weeks. At the age of 76 she is back on job. Old-fashioned apple pie is favorite

Like Indian pudding, baked beans and other New England specialties, Yankee hot corn bread follows careful ritual. Blueberry cake or tea cake can be made from basic recipe





Actresses like Abbey Moore (right) and friend are usually overwhelmed by size of meal but nevertheless plow through it valiantly. Red-check tablecloth is an old Durgin-Park tradition



Franklin D. Roosevelt didn't bother with a menu when he sat at this table. Neither did Cal Coolidge. Like other famous patrons they were served by waitress wearing bright green stockings. Joe Cronin, General Manager of Boston Red Sox (right), initiates son Corky into the mysteries of a New England boiled dinner

JAMES HALLETT, owner of Durgin-Park, Boston's gusty, century-and-more-old restaurant opposite sprawling Faneuil Hall Market, had an anxious moment the other evening. A patron of 31 years standing reached for a menu instead of ordering his usual heaping bowl of baked Indian pudding with two large kidney-shaped blobs of vanilla ice cream.

"I think I'll have something different tonight," he said studying it thoughtfully. "I'll take baked Indian pudding with whipped cream."

During the past 75 years Durgin-Park, the home of Yankee cooking, has had only three changes of chefs, practically none in its stout menu. Without pretense it caters to the hearty appetites of straw-hatted, white-aproned market men, visiting celebrities, local characters and tourists from every part of the globe.

In an atmosphere of clattering dishes, conversation and sharp-tongued waitresses, it serves the time-hallowed specialty—roast beef rare—in big, thick slabs. Incredible quantities of Boston baked beans, New England boiled dinners, chowder, apple pie and apple pan dowdy and hot corn bread are consumed between the hours of 10:30 A.M. and 7:30 P.M. each business day. The restaurant is closed on Sundays and holidays.

In winter, bear steak takes its place on the tables along with the turkey, venison pie with the ever-present broiled scrod, and raccoon may appear on the menu along with roast ham. In the summer the demands for blueberry cake, strawberry short-cake and, for some mysterious reason, "bale of hay"—a combination of peas, string beans and potatoes—reach enormous proportions.

Of all the famous eating places in America, Durgin-Park is by far the least prepossessing. The ancient five-story building in which it is housed makes no attempt to disguise its dinginess with an air of quaintness.

Weaving through a confusion of barrels, boxes and crates piled high on the sidewalk to the narrow

entrance, you ascend stairs to the dining rooms one flight up.

The dining rooms, a tin-ceilinged, rambling hall carelessly divided into three sections, are flanked by mustard-colored brick walls of nauseant hue, an interior decorator's apoplexy.

Like the 70-year-old plumbing in the men's room, which is the only entrance to the executive office, the owners have made but grudging concessions to expediency. When electricity came to Durgin-Park some years ago unshaded light bulbs were strung up without anyone bothering to remove the gas fixtures. They are still there. No cash register has ousted the 85-year-old cash drawer. No salesman has ever made progress toward supplanting the plain, old-fashioned tables which seat 20 persons, family style.

No one has ever reserved a table at Durgin-Park, although many have tried. Requests have been received by mail from as far away as New Zealand; telephone calls from Hollywood, New Orleans and Chicago. Jimmy O'Toole, the assistant manager, answers them when he has to. The answer is always, "No," except when the request comes from the snooty Back Bay. Then it is "Impossible."

"There is only one thing worse than serving bad food," explains O'Toole. "That is a vacant table with a 'reserved' sign on it while customers are standing around waiting for seats."

On an average Saturday evening Durgin-Park serves more than a thousand people between 6 P.M. and the closing time of 7:30 P.M. About 600 can be accommodated at a sitting.

You find a place at one of the long tables, push the heavy water pitcher out of your way, reach for a menu, pass a platter of bread to your neighbor, who may be Groucho Marx or Governor Bob Bradford or a Faneuil Hall Market butcher or Joe Doakes or a Cabot or a Lodge. If you're in a hurry you yell for a waitress, who rounds a coffee urn as though it were a pylon and comes toward you at a speed which makes you regret your impatience.

Franklin D. Roosevelt didn't bother with a printed menu at Durgin-Park when he went to Harvard. Neither did his sons. Nor Theodore Roosevelt nor his sons. Nor do a lot of others including ex-Governor Tobin, Jim Farley, Joe Cronin, Lillian and Dorothy Gish, Arthur Godfrey, Helen Hayes or Arthur Treacher.

Waitresses like Edith MacDonald, who has been with Durgin-Park for 38 years, have long and accurate memories. You come in once, and the second time, unless you speak fast, you get what you ordered the first time.

On occasion this may lead to an involuntary habit. The late Cal Coolidge always ate a codfish dinner. The present lieutenant governor of Massachusetts, Arthur W. Coolidge, his fourth cousin, is a more voluble man than Cal was. He likes steak. But he gets the codfish dinner because Edith MacDonald associates him with Cal and he doesn't speak up quite fast enough. He is getting to like codfish dinners.

Annie Green Stockings, who retired after 40 years of service, was F.D.R.'s favorite waitress. To her he was a lobster man. Just as Fred Allen wasn't a comedian but a steak man. Annie had thousands of her customers mentally catalogued.

Despite her name she wasn't an Indian. She simply enjoyed wearing bright green stockings, a sprightly adornment which no one deplored. Such idiosyncrasies are respected if not encouraged at Durgin-Park.

Twice a week for the past 23 years a fisherman known only as "Arthur" has dragged a large cod solemnly up the front steps, just before the rush hour, and told William Bumble, the broiler cook, to prepare it for him. Thrice weekly for the past 41 years Johnny B. Given, a wholesale commission merchant, has brought his own 2½-pound steak to Bumble, and his predecessor, and stood by while it was broiled. Durgin-Park supplies the accompanying French-fried potatoes.

Every morning at eleven, (Continued on page 50)

THE MYSTERIOUS WAY

BY SAMUEL W. TAYLOR

ILLUSTRATED BY EARL BLOSSOM

The Story:

When old MORONI SKINNER came down from heaven to straighten out his shiftless, happy-go-lucky grandson, JACKSON SKINNER WHITETOP, he took a good look around the Mormon community in which he had lived. He found Jackson as lazy as ever, his house gone to ruin, his affairs in a mess. He found that HENRY BROWN, the storekeeper and sheep rancher who had taken over Jackson's sheep while Jackson was away in the Army, had been quietly defrauding him (and the income-tax people) ever since. Henry was unscrupulous in more ways than one: He was about to marry KATE JENSEN, BISHOP WALDO JENSEN'S daughter, even though he was the father of ANITA SMITH'S illegitimate child. Anita was the youngest daughter of old NEPHI SMITH, an apostate whose six girls had brought him nothing but shame, and Henry refused to do right by her; no one in the valley knew his secret. Jackson had been halfheartedly courting BEULAH HESS, who was also being courted by NED HOLT, Henry's shepherd and unwilling partner in crime.

Old Moroni materialized in a vision to MILO FERGUSON, Henry's helper in the store, and berated him for having apostatized after the death of his wife ABBIE. More important, he also appeared to Jackson and gave him a good talking-to and told him to marry Katie. Then, having completed his earthly mission, he returned to heaven.

II

JACKSON was not a little awed. Grandpa Skinner was gone, just gone. Here one instant, gone the next. The wire loop of the door was still hooked over the nail. Overhead the mice were scurrying about. A chicken cackled outside. Jackson looked at himself wonderingly in the piece of mirror fastened to the wall. In a way, his face resembled Grandpa Skinner's. It was squarish, with steady eyes and a firm jaw; he hadn't noticed the resemblance before. He wondered if he could live up to the promise of that face. And then he chided himself. Of course he could; he'd had a visitation, hadn't he? There was nothing to worry about. It would all come true. "Katie Jensen," he said dreamily. "Mrs. Katie Whitetop. Mrs. Jackson Whitetop." It was sure good to know there was nothing to worry about. If it was going to happen, then it would. He cast himself happily upon the bed to wait for it.

The bed had seen better days. The old oak frame was held together by a bit of baling wire and a nail here and there, and except for his bemused state Jackson never would have flung himself upon it with such abandoned ecstasy. It uttered a loud scream and collapsed, and Jackson fought clear, rubbing the back of his head where the oak headboard had hit him.

"Well, all right, Grandpa," he muttered. "I can take a hint."

He shaved, put on his best boots, a fresh pair of levis, a clean shirt, and his big hat. Then he took off the hat

because it hurt the bump on his head. Then he put the hat back on because he thought maybe he needed a reminder, for a little while. He roped his buckboard team in the meadow, hitched up and drove south along the valley road, whistling happily.

At the store, old Milo Ferguson was sitting on the porch smoking a cigar furiously. "Out early this morning, Jack," Milo said in the manner of one uttering a truth with hidden meanings. "For you."

"Got considerable to do today." Jackson got out the makings. "Where's Henry?"

"He's gallivanting around getting ready to leave for Salt Lake in the morning. Why?"

"If you see him before I do, tell him I'd like to settle up. Figure on getting married up."

"Don't say?" Milo observed casually, squinting one eye.

"Yep. Figure on getting hitched to Katie Jensen."

To Jackson's surprise, Milo evinced no surprise at all. "H'm; don't say?" Milo observed. "Nice girl."

"Can't kick," admitted Jackson. His cigarette rolled, he pushed back his hat to lick the paper, and the lump on his head twinged him. He blinked guiltily at the cigarette; been a long time since he'd given a thought to the Word of Wisdom, but the throb of his head was surely a sign. Reluctantly, he poured the tobacco from the paper back into the sack, jerked the string tight and put the sack in his shirt pocket. Milo's sharp old eyes missed nothing. "Seeing you," Jackson said, continuing down the road.

"H'm," Milo mused. "So old Moroni told him to marry Katie, huh? Where do I come in?" He couldn't figure it out. Certainly he wouldn't have had that visitation unless it meant something. Heavenly spirits didn't appear to just anybody, especially apostates, for no good reason. . . .

When Jackson pulled in at the Jensen place, Katie and the old hand, Wishful, were crossing the yard toward the stables. Jackson's eye softened. His little wife! Cute as a button in levis, riding boots and a hickory shirt. He waved. "Hi!"

"Hi, yourself," Katie said. Wishful nodded. Jackson hopped over the wheel to follow them.

"Well, Brother Jackson," the bishop's voice said. Jackson looked about for the bishop, and spotted the eyes peering from their dark pouches from beneath the car standing in the yard.

"Looks like you're busy, sir."

"Always busy. Just checking the car over for the trip." There was the metallic clang of a slipping wrench. "You misbegotten son of perdition!" the bishop cried. "Barked my knuckle. What's on your mind?"

Jackson wondered how badly the bishop had barked his knuckle, and whether it was better to wait until he was in a happier mood or take a chance that the pain had humbled him. He took a chance. "Well, sir, I

come to explain about this morning."

"I'm sure it was just a slip of the tongue, Brother Jackson." The bishop sucked at his knuckle. With help the way it was these days, he couldn't afford to stand on dignity. And he needed a man around the place while he was in Salt Lake. Needed another man steady; Wishful was getting old. "Ready to start work?"

"Well, not exactly. Can I have a word with you in private?"

A DROP of oil fell in the bishop's eye. He rubbed the eye with the barked knuckle. "Speak up, Brother Jackson! I haven't got all day!"

"Well, sir," Jackson said reluctantly; it certainly was the wrong psychological moment. "I guess what I said this morning was sort of a premonition. After you'd left, my grandfather appeared to me."

"Premonition? Fiddlesticks! You're not worthy of it."

"I know; but my grandfather appeared to me."

"Appeared to you? Which one?"

"Grandfather Skinner."

"Old Moroni Skinner? What did he say?"

"He told me to marry Katie."

The bishop looked at Jackson for a long moment, then began worming from under the car. He got up, slapped the dust from his coveralls, stripped them off, folded them, and set them on a front fender. "Come inside."

The bishop's wife was rolling out biscuits in the kitchen. "Sure a baker today, Jack."

"Going to be," Jackson said.

The bishop began washing up in the sink. Sister Jensen said, "Guess you'll be to the dance tonight, Jack."

"Wouldn't miss it."

"Bring Beulah Hess, I suppose?"

"Don't suppose so, Sister Jensen."

"Don't let that shepherd beat your time, Jack."

"I'm not worried about Ned Holt. I'm taking another girl—Katie."

From the sink came a loud spluttering sound from the bishop. Sister Jensen cut a series of biscuits with the rim of a tin can. "You're pretty sure about it."

"Yes'm."

"Come into my office, Brother Jackson," the bishop said sharply, and led the way, wiping his hands on a towel as he went. The office was off the dining room. The bishop sat in the swivel chair at the roll-top desk and indicated a chair for Jackson. The bishop wiped his face and the back of his neck carefully with the towel, studying Jackson steadily. "Brother Jackson, when did you last pay your tithing?"

"Tithing? I guess you'd have the record of that, sir."

"I've got the records, but you ain't on them."

"Well, I guess I never have paid none, sir."

"And I haven't seen hide nor hair of you at church since you got back. Or before you went, either."

"No, sir."

The bishop surveyed the tobacco tag dangling on the yellow string from Jackson's shirt pocket. "And you don't obey the Word of Wisdom."

"I reckon I've been a little lax," Jackson admitted.

The bishop scrubbed his hair with the damp towel, and began combing. He was feeling master of the situation. This visitation business was a problem. It was the sacred privilege of any worthy Saint to receive a visitation; that was part of the gospel. Trouble was that some abused the privilege. All you had was a person's word for a thing like that. You had to draw a line between the genuine, the hysterical, the wishful and the mistaken. Not to mention the pure fabrications.

"Brother Jackson, I've been bishop out here longer than you've been alive. I've lived the gospel as best I could and I've tried to be worthy. But I've never had a visitation in my life, or so much as a prompting. And there's been some high church officials who never had a visitation, neither. Just why do you suppose an angel would appear to you?"

"It beats me, Bishop."

THE bishop took a small mirror from a drawer, looked at his oil-smudged eye, and rubbed at it with a corner of the towel. "Too many people in this church go around claiming to have talked with spirits. Mind you, I'm not a skeptic. I believe in visitations. It would be the greatest thing in my life if I had one myself. But I don't think everybody's worthy. I'm not. And we don't need 'em like we used to. Joseph said that himself. Or I guess it was Brigham—yes, it was Brigham. After Joseph passed on, Brigham Young got up and told the people there'd been too many visitations and he figured he could get along a spell on what was stored up ahead." "But that was long ago," Jackson pointed out. "Maybe we're running short."

"Take Sister Ormand—a good, devout, God-fearing woman, even if she is a terrible gossip and a terrible pest in fast meeting—I'm speaking confidentially, you understand. Hear her tell it, God Almighty don't have nothing more to do, nothing else on His mind, than to supply her with messengers from heaven to tell her she'd better wear her rubbers because it's going to rain, or to show her where she put down her glasses, or to give her a new block design for a quilt. I wish everybody had Sister Ormand's faith," the bishop said, regarding Jackson pointedly. "But I feel that she's—well, you might say she's prone to exaggerate common sense and a hunch into something bigger. Me, I figure the good Lord's got something else on His mind, what with the world in the shape it's in, than to bother with Sister Ormand's glasses." The bishop put the towel on the desk and the mirror in the drawer. "Brother Jackson, I'm going to speak frank. You're a great disappointment

(Continued on page 36)

CONTINUING THE STORY OF A REMARKABLE COURTSHIP