

When Mother Cooked With Wood

I do not quarrel with the gas,
Our modern range is fine,
The ancient stove was doomed to pass
From Time's grim firing line,
Yet now and then there comes to me
The thought of dinners good
And pies and cake that used to be
When mother cooked with wood.
The axe has vanished from the yard,
The chopping block is gone,
There is no pile of corkwood hard
For boys to work upon;
There is no box that must be filled
Each morning to the hood;
Time in its ruthlessness has willed
The passing of the wood.
And yet those days were fragrant days
And spicy days and rare;
The kitchen knew a cheerful blaze
And friendliness was there.
And every appetite was keen
For breakfasts that were good
When I had scarcely turned thirteen
And mother cooked with wood.
I used to dread my daily chore,
I used to think it tough
When mother at the kitchen door
Said I'd not chopped enough.
And on her baking days, I know,
I shirked whene'er I could
In that now happy long ago
When mother cooked with wood.
I never thought I'd wish to see
That pile of wood again;
Back then it only seemed to me
A source of care and pain.
But now I'd gladly give my all
To stand where once I stood,
If those rare days I could recall
When mother cooked with wood.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)