

Of Pails and Buckets, Boxes and Bags

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ABSTRACT: During the Second Industrial Revolution in America, the population shifted from being mostly rural to slightly more than half urban. Along with rearrangement came the situation that non-farm workers could no longer return home at midday to eat their dinner. The average laborer needed to carry his dinner with him to his worksite. The dinner pail (or dinner bucket) made this possible. As time progressed, dinner supplanted supper as the evening meal. Lunch became the noon meal. Likewise, the lunch box (lunch pail, lunch bucket, or lunch bag) replaced the dinner pail as the means of conveyance for the meal. The dinner pail grew to be more than just a physical object during its existence. It was used as a metaphor for prosperity in two presidential elections and then when suitable for another three decades. At the same time, the dinner pail became the symbol of the blue-collar worker. The dinner pail was represented in poems, songs, and plays. By mid-twentieth century, the metal lunch box has all but replaced the dinner pail, and 35 years later it would cease to be made.

The state of dining remained somewhat constant until the advent of the Second Industrial Revolution in America at the end of the Civil War.¹ During this period, the population shifted from being primarily rural to primarily urban.² One effect of this shift was that more Americans ate their largest meal in the evening rather than midday. Another effect of the shift: the term “lunch” came to indicate the midday meal and “dinner” replaced “supper” as the evening meal.³

This shift was not without cause. Work became distanced from home, reducing the possibility of returning home at midday. In the industrial northeast, factory jobs allowed only thirty minutes for a midday break. This was not enough time to get home, dine, and return to work. Workers needed either a means of transporting their noontime meal to their job or a means of obtaining it within proximity to their job. Both developed during the nineteenth century: the dinner pail and the lunch truck. The dinner pail, and its variants and successors, is the subject of this paper.

Is it a pail or a bucket?

The term “pail,” when used to describe “an open-topped vessel with a hooped carrying handle, typically of slightly tapering cylindrical shape, used esp. for holding or carrying liquids,” is only used by a portion of Americans, and the distribution of usage has varied over time.⁴ It appears that linguists have studied only the eastern portion of the United States, and in the southeast, “bucket” is generally preferred over “pail.”⁵

Preference for “bucket” over “pail” may be related to its use as a compound term. “Bucket” was preferred for a “coal bucket,” but “pail” was preferred for the “dinner pail.”⁶ In one study, “pail” was preferred by a four-to-one margin over “bucket.”⁷ In a later study conducted in a single rural area, the respondents to the statement: “Container in which a man carries his noon meal” were divided as lunch bucket (4), lunch pail (4), lunch box (3), dinner bucket (2), lunch kit (2), syrup bucket (2). By the 1970s, “dinner pail” was no longer being used and “bucket” and “pail” were competing with “box” and “kit.”⁸

What carries the midday meal?

Although this paper is largely about dinner pails, many synonyms or variants exist for this midday-meal carrier: dinner bucket, lunch pail, lunch bucket, lunch box, and lunch bag.⁹ Figure 1 shows the relative popularity of each term over time.

The term “dinner pail” starts to grow at the point that the base metal for tinplate switches from iron to steel in the 1860s and peaks at the end of the nineteenth century, corresponding with the presidential election of 1900, and continues to plateau until the end of the First World War. Use then drops gradually until the late 1970s where it levels off at less than one-tenth of its peak.

The term “lunch box” starts to grow in the 1860s, the same as “dinner pail.” It has a small peak in the 1920, which is about half the size of “dinner pail” in the previous decade. It then peaks during the Second World War at a point about one-fourth above the earlier plateau of “dinner pail.” The frequency of “lunch box” then drops rapidly in the 1970s to a level of about one-fifth its peak. From this time, the frequency continues to grow until 2019, the end of the data, until the frequency is about one-fourth that of the earlier peak and about 25 times higher than that of “dinner pail.”

The term “lunch bag” starts at the beginning of the twentieth century but doesn’t begin to grow much until the 1980s. At this point, it displays steady growth to the end of the data set, ending with a frequency of about half that of “lunch box.”

With these two-part compound words, the adjective is the most influential. The transition from “dinner” to “lunch” for the midday meal in America is reflected in the frequency of the two adjectives. Although patent literature references “lunch box” in the immediate post-Civil War period, it’s not until the Second World War that “lunch” appears to overtake “dinner” as the term for the midday meal.

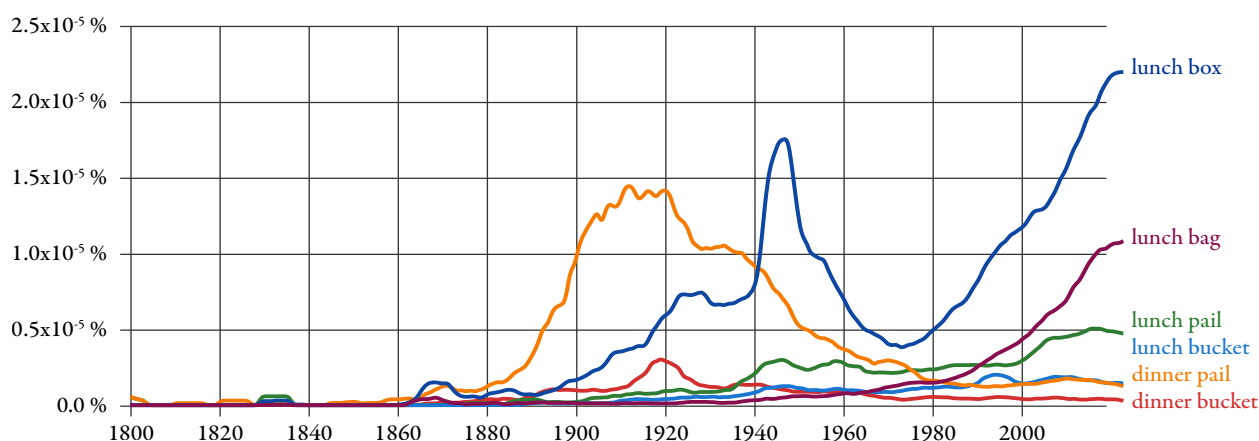


Figure 1. N-gram of “dinner pail”, “dinner bucket”, “lunch pail”, “lunch bucket”, “lunch box”, and “lunch bag” from 1800 to 2019. Source: <https://books.google.com/ngrams>. To recreate, enter the six terms in the search field, select “1800–2019” as the time period, “American English (2019)” as the corpus, “case-insensitive”, and a smoothing level of 3.

From whence they came

Information on the origin of the dinner pail is sparse. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York has three specimens in their collections labeled as “possibly French, possibly mid-eighteenth century, and pewter.”¹⁰ All are labeled in French as *porte-dîners*. Detailed descriptions on a couple of gallery websites indicate that these came in many materials including wood, glazed earthenware, stoneware, aluminum, tinplate, and pewter. Their function was to transport the midday meal into the fields.¹¹ All of these dinner pails appear to be for use in French fields. References to an American variant do not appear to exist.

Lacking a formal carrier, poor farm workers usually carried their meal wrapped in a piece of cloth. In Japan, the process was formalized with the *furoshiki* (風呂敷), but most cultures saw no need to label the piece of cloth.¹²

Another possible precursor is the pasty. Though most often associated with seventeenth- and eighteenth-century tin miners in Cornwall, the pasty may have evolved from the French *chausson*, a type of turnover. When Cornish miners immigrated to the upper peninsula of Michigan to work in the iron, copper, and silver mines, their pasty was decidedly different than the traditional turnover shape.¹³

The pasty crust was actually a crimped sack, to which a noose was attached, so that an underground miner might suspend it from his neck under his shirt to help keep his body warm on the way to the mine on those endless dark winter nights. [...] At noon the pasty would be laid on the scoop of a shovel and warmed by the same candle flame the miner used to light his work.¹⁴

Although the pasty is a convenient way for the miners to carry their dinners to the mines, no direct line appears between the pasty and the dinner pail. The dinner pail was commonly used by Appalachian miners in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Early examples

Early references to dinner pails reflect the functional purpose of the carrier. Later references to the dinner pail were metaphoric rather than descriptive.

An early single use of a dinner pail can be found in a newspaper targeted towards the youth market. “This morning Laura was not on the steps with her dinner pail and sun-bonnet in hand as usual.” Here, both the dinner pail and sun bonnet appear to be parts of this schoolgirl’s uniform.¹⁵

Likewise, in the following example, the dinner pail is part of a day laborer’s uniform, but not the rigger, carpenter, or “operative toilers.”

Cloud after cloud rolled along the street, filled with carts and wagons, while on the margin the day laborer and his dinner pail, and the rigger, and carpenter, and sheather, and stevedore, with a thousand others of the operative toilers, travelled towards their homes.¹⁶

Also, during this period, the concept of using one’s dinner pail for something other than lunch is introduced.

This occupied so much time his fond grandmother often started in pursuit of him, when she would find him returning with his little dinner pail filled full of the various specimens of Natural History and Botany which he had been studying.¹⁷

The use of “dinner pail” in the decades to follow doesn’t exhibit much growth until the start of the 1880s, with real growth at the turn of the century.

The growth of American tinplate

From the earliest days of production in the United States, the dinner pail and its later forms were mostly formed from tinplate.¹⁸ The tinplate industry started in Bohemia prior to 1600. Tinplate manufacturing in Britain commenced in 1720,

and in 1728, a method of rolling the iron plate was developed, “by which the quality of the product was vastly improved.”¹⁹

The advent of cheap steel, brought about by the perfection of the Bessemer blast furnace in the 1860s, meant that tinplate manufacturing switched from iron to steel in the following years.²⁰ This alone did not result in cheap tinplate being routinely manufactured in the United States. The United Kingdom maintained a monopoly on tinplate manufacturing from 1865 to 1887.²¹

In the early 1870s, American manufacturers tried to manufacture tinplate, but foreign makers quashed their effort by lowering their price from \$12 to less than \$5 per box. After the monopoly was sustained, the price increased again to \$9 to \$10 per box. A tariff was imposed in 1883 and a duty of \$7 million dollars was paid, which was passed along to the American consumer. That ended when the McKinley Tariff of 1890 crushed the British monopoly.²² In 1890, before the McKinley Tariff was imposed, virtually the entire 300,000-ton consumption of tinplate in the United States was imported from Wales. Ten years later, the Welsh product was replaced by 400,000 tons of American tinplate. The tariff was successful, and the American industry never looked back.²³

The basic dinner pail

By the start of the twentieth century, the configuration of a basic dinner pail was established (Figure 2). The minimal pail had one section for food and another for coffee. Some form of coffee cup was frequently part of the design. A bail with a turned wooden handle provided a convenient means of carrying the pail. In some designs, the handle also locked the separate portions of the pail so they couldn't accidentally open and spill its contents.

From 1862 to 1920, 73 patents for various configurations and improvements were issued for dinner pail and lunch boxes. Some designs added insulation to keep the food warm with enough insulation to qualify as fireless cookers.²⁴ Some designs included a flame for reheating the food.²⁵ Some designs could be folded into a flat package. These had no liquid storage. Plus, folding designs are technically boxes and not pails.²⁶ Many designs had two to five stacking containers, appearing like the field lunch boxes typical in many countries today.

One common aspect of all these patent designs was the absence of dimensions. To include all elements that some of the designs specified, the dinner pail would be quite large and cumbersome. Remembering that a quart of liquid weighs about two pounds and that tinplate is still mostly steel, one would not want to carry a full dinner pail very far.

Most patent designs never made it into production. One exception is the folding lunch box designed by Charles Moore. On display at the National Museum of American History, shown on numerous web pages, and illustrated in at least one book, this box has been widely referenced. Although the patent makes no mention of lunch, dinner, or food, the label on the top of the box reads “Moore's Patented Folding Lunch Box.”²⁷

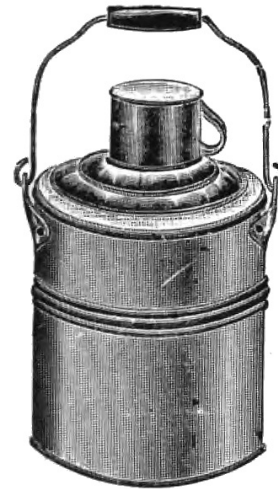


Figure 2. Typical dinner pail with multiple sections and a space for coffee and a half-pint cup. This model was labeled as a “H.M. & S. Round Dinner Bucket.” The four-quart model measured 6 inches in diameter by 6½ inches high and sold for 33¢, and the six-quart version measured 6¾ inches in diameter by 7 inches high and sold for 38¢. Even if the measurements for height include the cup, the capacities of these pails were not large enough to carry the advertised volumes. Source: *Catalogue No. 114* (San Francisco: Holbrook, Merrill & Stetson, 1903), 139.

The price for a folding lunch box in one advertisement is 35¢, whereas the price in another, two months earlier and 400 miles away, is 15¢. A book-shaped version is a full 25¢.²⁸

Folding lunch boxes lack a handle. This would be an inconvenience for the laborer, miner, or student but convenient and possibly desirable for the office worker who carries a briefcase.

What's in a dinner pail?

A newspaper article from the late 1800s describes the dinner pail as a “radiant magazine of dyspepsia.” The article is a fantasy piece about a successful old man being “carried back to old times” by the sight of a dinner pail. It proceeds to describe the pail's contents.

He held the pail between his well-clad knees and, taking up the slab of beef in both hands, began to eat like a half-starved Indian. A chunk of bread, of homemade stability, came next and followed the boiled beef. Then an egg was found.

Two cold boiled potatoes, soggy with much cooking, went the way of the other things. Then a home-made mince pie was poised for a moment in air. It disappeared, and the pail was empty.²⁹

The two main users of dinner-pail meals were the laborer and the student. Although the laborer required more calories each day, the contents of either's lunch pail was similar during early times. The meal was likely to be constructed from leftovers. One description simply states that mill workers

usually rely on the cold meal, and the women take great pains to make it appetizing, especially by adding preserves in a little cup in a corner of the bucket. They try to give the man what he likes the most, apparently half from pity at the cold food and hard work that fall to his lot.³⁰

This meal is only part of the 25¢ per day that the author estimated was spent on food for the miner.³¹

One homemaker described the contents of her husband's dinner pail, which she filled six times a week on a total annual family budget of \$600 per year.

My husband carries a bucket [dinner pail], and he has bread, meat, eggs or cheese—sometimes two or all three of these; pie, cake, fruit, fresh or canned, with, at times, slaw, pickle, a cup of cereal with milk, Saratoga chips, or anything else he likes. He also carries, in a separate bucket, almost four cups of coffee of medium strength.³²

One cookbook author instructed homemakers in how to prepare a meal for serving from a dinner pail or a lunch box. These preparations were directed toward school meals. Some of the concepts covered included the advantages and disadvantages of using a lunch box, in this case meaning alternatives to using a full-blown pail versus a few separate pieces. Another concept was centered around menu planning, with yet another around foods suitable to pack. The foods were sandwiches, relishes, and desserts. The last discussion concerned how to pack the lunch box.³³

Household scientists also had an opinion on children and their lunch pails.³⁴ “The child needs to be well fed if he will get mentally all there is in the school for him to get.”³⁵ For some, a child with a cold lunch indicated poor nourishment.

Hot soup or a hot drink served at school makes a good meal of the cold lunch carried in the lunch box or dinner pail. One cold meal for one day may not mean much, but hundreds of cold meals in the course of the eight years in school may mean the difference between a poorly nourished child and a well-nourished child; poor health and good health; poor digestion and good digestion.³⁶

During the Great Depression, many users had to reduce the quality and quantity of the contents of their dinner pail. “Men who found work carried lunch pails holding only tomato and onion sandwiches, or, Rowley recalled, only popcorn.”³⁷

By the end of the decade, the US Department of Agriculture was more worried about how food was wrapped in lunch boxes than the food itself. This was evident in radio scripts and press release templates.³⁸

As a symbol for labor

Possibly the best example of the dinner pail as a symbol of the common laborer comes from how Upton Sinclair

researched the material for *The Jungle*. After interviewing meatpacking-plant workers in the evening, he joined them the next day at work. “I was not much better dressed than the workers, and found that by the simple device of carrying a dinner-pail I could go anywhere. So long as I kept moving, no one would heed me.”³⁹ By looking the part of a meatpacker, he was free to move around the plant without ever becoming a meatpacker himself.⁴⁰

Many felt that growth in America was dependent on the laborer and the image of a laborer included a dinner pail. “After all, [it is] the man who we meet with his dinner pail, at 7 o'clock in the evening, that builds the cities and adds them their strength and commercial prosperity.”⁴¹ This concept reinforced comments of how the post-Civil War military gave way to “a figure representing industry. He is clothed in blue overalls and wears a workman's jacket. He carries a pick and dinner pail.”⁴²

An advertisement from 1895 stated, “The workingman with his dinner pail, the millionaire with his silk hat [...]” By the start of the twentieth century, the dinner pail had become the symbol of blue-collar labor.⁴³ The street where laborers walked to work in Jefferson, Illinois, was officially named Milwaukee Avenue, but was known locally as Dinner-Pail Avenue.⁴⁴ The city of Fall River, Massachusetts, is used as a stand-in for typical New England mill towns in describing the work of laborers, and it's also given a pseudonym as “The City of the Dinner-Pail.”⁴⁵ The evangelist Billy Sunday was quoted as saying, “Wherever I have gone I have put myself on record as the friend of organized labor. The man with the dinner pail is my friend, for I have been there myself.”⁴⁶

By the 1920s, when the lunch box is slowly replacing dinner pail, the dinner pail continues to represent an entire class of blue-collar labor.⁴⁷ But the dinner pail can also be used as a weapon against laborers. “The workers dinner buckets were taken and a bombardment of bread, butter, bacon, jelly, eggs and other food was begun. The buckets, as fast as they were emptied were smashed by the rioters.”⁴⁸

As a metaphor for prosperity

As early as the Polk-Clay Presidential Election of 1844, one or both political parties adopted a phrase each election cycle to indicate prosperous times were coming.⁴⁹ The depression following the Panic of 1893 was well underway when a Republican strategist formulated a “full dinner pail” campaign for the 1896 election.⁵⁰ William McKinley and the Republicans won the election (beating single term-President Benjamin Harrison) and similar slogans would become part of each election for many years to come. In 1900, “Four more years of the full dinner pail” was the party's slogan.⁵¹ Former President Benjamin Harrison found the slogan to be almost spiritual.⁵²

Judge, a Republican-leaning humor magazine, wrote a campaign song to support the full-dinner-pail campaign. Each stanza ends with “It's McKinley with the full dinner-pail.”⁵³ The depression was over and the “full dinner pail” associated

McKinley with a “happy and well-fed America.”⁵⁴ The importance of a slogan such as “the full dinner pail” has been dismissed by academics decades later but maybe it was effective?⁵⁵

Politicians continued to use the metaphor long past the 1900 election. A New York Representative to the U.S. House discussed “an object lesson on the full dinner pail” in 1912.⁵⁶ Italian immigrants cast their ballots for the Republican Party long after McKinley’s death because they took his full-dinner-pail argument about posterity at face value.⁵⁷ A representative of the glass cutters union told a Congressional Hearing that their high wages were partially a result of the full-dinner-pail campaign.⁵⁸ In the 1930s, labor leaders returned to the full dinner pail rather than follow more social democratic policies.⁵⁹ Samuel Gompers was singled out by Justice Louis Brandeis with

Undoubtedly “A full dinner pail” is a great achievement as compared with an empty one, but no people ever did or ever can attain a worthy civilization by the satisfaction merely of material needs, however high these needs are raised.⁶⁰

The end of the metaphor was possibly signaled by an obscure editorial during the 1932 election that stated, “The dinner pail is empty this year, in fact, there ‘ain’t no sich [sic] animal.”⁶¹

Interestingly, as America’s dinner pails actually filled, the next item many families purchased was an upright piano!⁶²

The dinner pail in the arts

The visual arts, except for political cartoons and pictures in catalogs, seemed to avoid the dinner pail as a subject.⁶³ A poem made it into an Eastern California newspaper.⁶⁴ A Vermonter, possibly during a long winter, wrote a trivial play about *The Dinner Pail Man*.⁶⁵

A late 1800s “comic play” contains a song titled *My Dad’s Dinner Pail*. The first verse ends with “ ’Twas an emblem of labor, was Dad’s dinner pail.” The fourth verse describes the contents: coffee, bread, corn beef, and praties and at times porter, beer, and ale.⁶⁶ The play received an excellent review.⁶⁷ It ran for 176 performances.⁶⁸ Two recordings were made of *My Dad’s Dinner Pail* made in the early twentieth century. Ada Jones made a cylinder recording with only the first and fourth verses and the chorus, probably because of time limitations of the recording media.⁶⁹ Harry McClintock’s version on a ten-inch disc also has only the first and fourth verses and chorus, but he includes two additional verses of his own writing.⁷⁰

John Philip Sousa fared less well with a dinner-pail song. The lyrical comedy that features his song closed after eight performances.⁷¹ A revival in 2002 fared much better.⁷²

L. Frank Baum features both lunch boxes and dinner pails growing on trees in one of his follow-up books to the *Wizard of Oz*.⁷³ Baum’s leaning towards the Democratic Party and issues of the time, such as the monetary standard, appear symbolically in many of the chapters.⁷⁴

The death of the dinner pail, long live the lunch box

Sometime in the first few decades of the twentieth century, the thermos bottle was added to a domed top lunch box and the dinner pail’s obituary was written. Plus, the lunch box was better suited to the sandwiches that now tended to occupy a workman’s lunch. A shelf in a rural Wisconsin school at the end of the 1930s depression still showed both dinner pails and lunch boxes of several different styles (Figure 3), but by the post Second World War period, life is all lunch boxes (Figure 4).



Figure 3. Fifteen lunch containers on a shelf in a rural Wisconsin school, 1939. There are eleven traditional lunch pails of at least three styles, two dome-top lunch boxes, a box-shaped lunch box that may be in the “automat” style, and one paper bag. Source: Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information, *Lunch Pails in a Rural School*, 1939, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

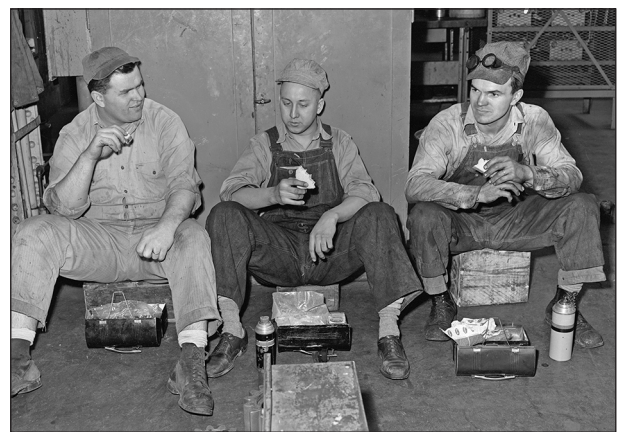


Figure 4. Workers eating from typical black, domed lunch boxes. Two thermos bottles are visible. Source: Russell Lee, *Workmen eating lunch-Diesel repair shop-W. Burlington, Iowa*, May 1948. Courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago, IL.

After a century of midday meals, little girls no longer need be concerned about their dinner pail staying upright as was relayed in this early nineteenth-century children’s magazine: “Please, sir,” spoke a timid little girl, “it’s Fanny Miles under the seat after her dinner-pail. It’s turned over.”⁷⁵

Notes

1. H. Stanley Jevons, "The Second Industrial Revolution," *The Economic Journal* 41, no. 161 (March 1931): 1.
2. Warren S. Thompson, "The Distribution of Population," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 188 (November 1936): 251.
3. This transition can be seen by observing the N-gram for the three terms. To do so, go to <https://books.google.com/ngrams> and enter "dinner", "supper", and "lunch" in the search field. Select "1800–2019" as the time period, "American English (2019)" as the corpus, "case-insensitive", and a smoothing level of 2. "Supper" starts the nineteenth century with a frequency similar to "dinner", but gradually declines until the 1970s, when it has a small resurgence. At the same time, "dinner" has a dip in the 1970s before tripling at the end of the data set. "Lunch" increases gradually from a minimum level in 1860 until it is almost on par with "dinner" in the 1970s. From this time, "lunch" doubles in frequency until it ends the period with a frequency of about half that of dinner. Although the growth in the frequency of the three terms increases significantly past the 1970s, this relationship between the three terms remains relatively constant.
4. *OED Online*, "pail, n. 1," accessed January 7, 2022, <https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.sfpl.org/view/Entry/136047>.
5. William A. Kretzschmar, "Isoglosses and Predictive Modeling," *American Speech* 67, no. 3 (Autumn 1992): 227–49.
6. Arthur G. Kimball, "Sears-Roebuck and Regional Terms," *American Speech* 38, no. 3 (October 1963): 211–12.
7. James A. Drake, "The Effect of Urbanization on Regional Vocabulary," *American Speech* 36, no. 1 (February 1961): 19, 25.
8. Marilyn Hurlbut, "Folk Synonyms from Argyle, Texas," *American Speech* 51, no. 1/2 (Spring-Summer 1976): 69.
9. "Syrup bucket" and "lunch sack" were also noted as variants, but much less frequently than the other terms.
10. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, accession numbers: 16.116.121a, b; 1990.199.5a, b; and 1990.199.9a, b.
11. "Porte-diner: objets de la vie pastorale et agricole," Objets d'Hier (website), accessed January 7, 2022, <https://www.objetsdhier.com/porte-diner-1483>; "A Distinctive French Pewter 'Porte-Diner' (Food Pail with Dish Cover)," Tregagle Fine Art, (website) accessed January 7, 2022, https://www.tregaglefineart.com/en-GB/objets-dart/a-distinctive-french-pewter-porte-d-ner-food-pail-with-dish-cover-/prod_10147.
12. Jean A. Bray, "Please Don't Keep the Furoshiki," *The Rotarian* 131, no. 6 (December 1977): 30; "Furoshiki, Japanese Wrapping Cloth, Could Solve Modern Refuse Problems," *Japan Report* 19, no. 14 (July 16, 1973): 5.
13. Eric C. Nystrom, "Miner, Minstrel, Memory: Or, Why the Smithsonian Has Bill Keating's Pants," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 131, no. 1 (January 2007): 99–100.
14. Clarence A. Andrews and David B. Steinman, "Folk Lore and Legend in the Upper Peninsula: 'The Upper Peninsula Is the Birthplace of Michigan.'" *The Great Lakes Review* 11, no. 2 (Fall 1985): 70.
15. Mary Niton, "The Answer," *Youth's Companion and Sabbath School Recorder* (Boston: N. Willis) 9, no. 19 (September 25, 1835): 75.
16. *The Family of the Seisers: A Satirical Tale of the City of New-York* (New York, 1844), 8.
17. J.C. Lovejoy, *Memoir of Rev. Charles T. Torrey, Who Died in the Penitentiary of Maryland, Where He was Confined for Showing Mercy to the Poor* (Boston: John P. Jewett & Co., 1847), 3.
18. Tinplate is a thin sheet of a base metal coated with tin to prevent the surface from oxidizing. The base metal was originally cast and hammered iron. In 1728, rolling made even, thin sheets possible. The advent of cheap steel made for a harder, thinner, and less expensive material. Besides being easy to roll and bend, the tin surface meant the material could be soldered.
19. J.H. Jones, *The Tinplate Industry with Special Reference to Its Relations with the Iron and Steel Industries* (London: P.S. King & Son, 1914), 1, 5, 6, 8.
20. Robert B. Gordon, "The 'Kelly' Converter," *Technology and Culture* 33, no. 4 (October 1992): 773–77.
21. Jones, *The Tinplate Industry*, 20.
22. Charles S. Olcott, *The Life of William McKinley* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1916), 1:170.
23. Carroll W. Pursell, "Tariff and Technology: The Foundation and Development of the American Tin-Plate Industry, 1872–1900," *Technology and Culture* 3, no. 3 (Summer 1962): 267.
24. J.S. Tibbals. Dinner Pail. US Patent 69,272, issued September 24, 1867; Oscar M. Spiller. Non-Conducting Fillings for the Walls of Dinner Pails, &c. US Patent 144,232, filed July 18, 1873, and issued November 4, 1873.
25. P. Hien. Improvement in Dinner Pails. US Patent 146,906, filed December 30, 1873, and issued January 27, 1874; John H. Sullivan. Improvement in Dinner Pails. US Patent 175,263, filed January 27, 1876, and issued March 29, 1876; D. Wolf. Dinner Pail. US Patent 261,891, filed May 29, 1892, and issued August 1, 1892; C.M & L.N. Thayer. Lunch Pail. US Patent 376,119, filed December 22, 1886, and issued January 10, 1888; C. Heeckstadt & A. Moe. Dinner Pail. US Patent 428,097, filed May 7, 1889, and issued May 20, 1890.
26. C.S. Hurlbut. Folding Lunch Box. US Patent 52,991, issued January 30, 1866; John F. Morgan. Improved Lunch Box. US Patent 70,598, issued November 5, 1867; Franklin B. Parks. Improved Folding Lunch-Box. US Patent 66,881, issued July 16, 1867; Peter H. Niles. Improved Lunch Box. US Patent 75,451, issued March 10, 1868; John Erpelding. Improved Lunch-Box. US

- Patent 101,113, issued March 22, 1870; Charles C. Moore. Improvement in Folding Boxes. US Patent 115,764, issued June 6, 1871; Franklin B. Parks. Folding Lunch-Box. US Patent 309,872, filed August 11, 1884, and issued December 30, 1884.
27. "Folding Lunch Box", American Museum of American History (website), accessed December 22, 2021, https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_892886; Allen Woodall and Sean Brickell, *The illustrated Encyclopedia of Metal Lunch Boxes* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1999), 134.
 28. Davis Brothers" advertisement, *San Francisco Call*, April 21, 1891; "A. Hamburger & Sons" advertisement, *Los Angeles Herald*, February 12, 1891.
 29. "Carried Back to Old Times: The Memories Called Up by an Old Dinner-Pail," *New York Times*, May 18, 1884.
 30. Margaret F. Byington, *Homestead: The Households of a Mill Town, The Pittsburgh Survey: Findings in Six Volumes* (New York: Charities Publication Committee, 1910), 64.
 31. Byington, 80.
 32. D.J. Edington, "Six Hundred a Year," *Good Housekeeping Magazine* 47, no. 1 (July 1908): 35–36.
 33. Carlotta C. Greer, *A Text-Book of Cooking* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon: 1915), 328–31.
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