The family recipes of

Eleanor Mae Whitfield

From Eleanor's Kitchen · 1938 – 2026



"Supper's at six. Bring whoever's hungry."

Gathered by her family

For everyone who ever pulled up a chair

She never measured the vanilla, never let anyone leave without a plate, and never once wrote "serves 4." These are her recipes, in her words, so the kitchen on Orchard Road can keep feeding us.

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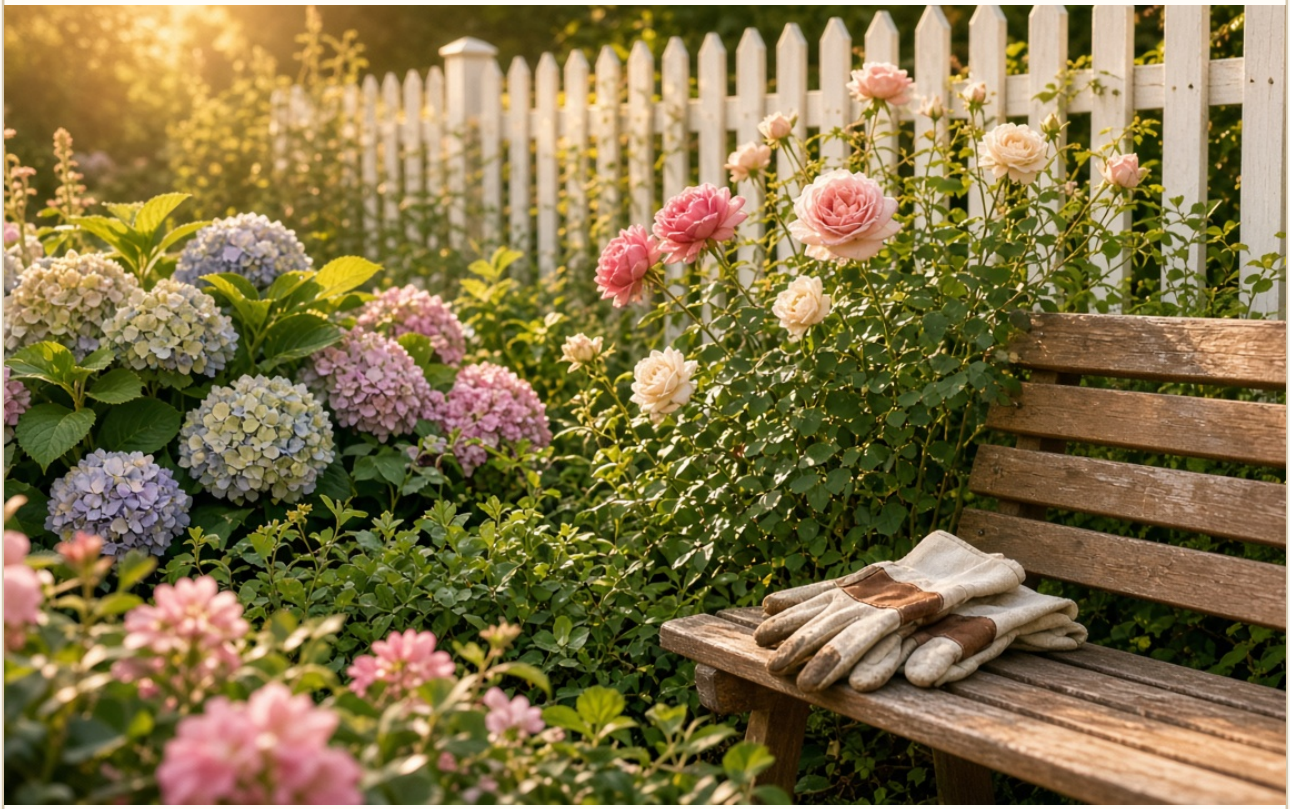
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Her kitchen

Orchard Road



The garden that supplied half her pantry

The kitchen at Orchard Road was never large, but it always seemed to hold everyone. Mom kept a tin box of recipe cards on the windowsill above the sink, most of them in her own looping hand, a few in her mother's, and a handful from neighbors that she had improved "just a little."

Saturdays were for baking. By noon there would be a pie cooling on the porch rail and a tray of molasses cookies on the counter, and by one o'clock the tray would be mysteriously half empty. She pretended not to notice.

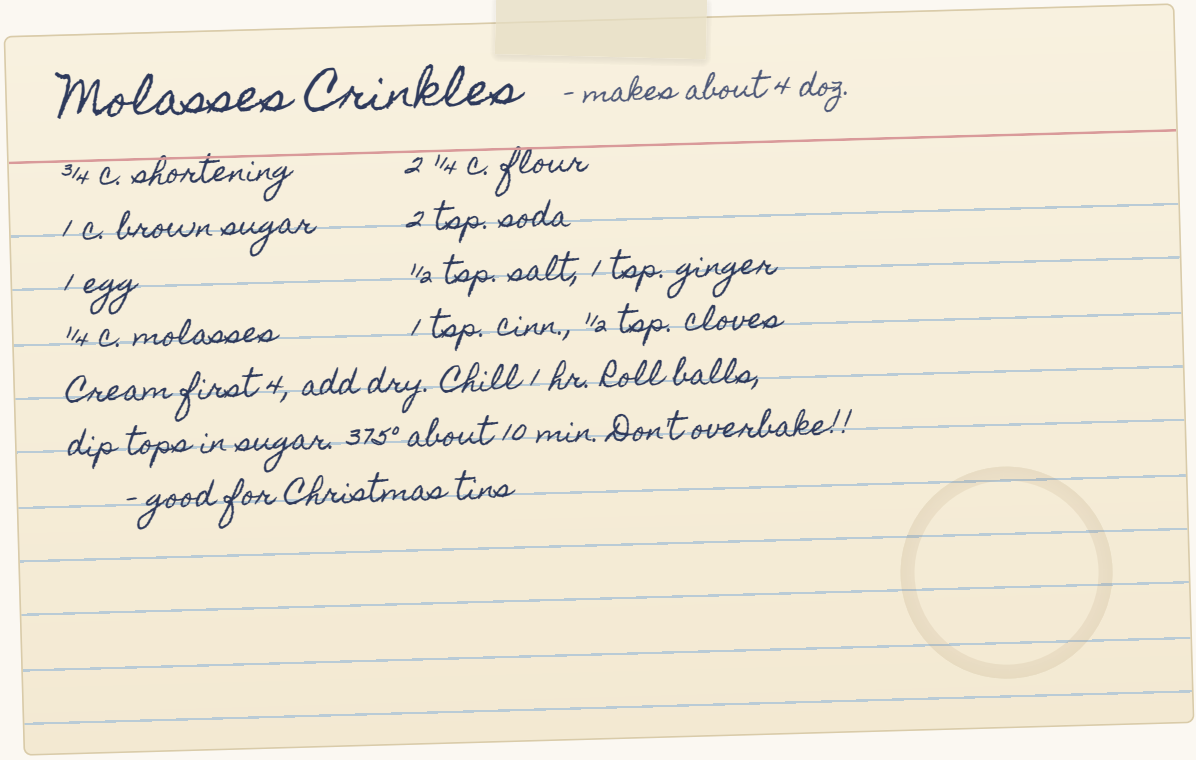
When we sat down to gather these pages, we found cards stained with butter and vanilla, notes in the margins ("less sugar for Hank"), and one card simply labeled "the good one." We have kept her words as she wrote them wherever we could.

We hope you cook from this book, spill on it, and add your own notes. She would want it used, not kept on a shelf.

— Her children and grandchildren

From her recipe box

Molasses Crinkles



¾ cup shortening

1 cup packed brown sugar

1 large egg

¼ cup molasses

2¼ cups all-purpose flour

2 tsp baking soda

½ tsp salt

1 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp cinnamon · ½ tsp cloves

Granulated sugar, for dipping

As she made it

1. Cream the shortening, brown sugar, egg and molasses until fluffy.
2. Whisk the flour, soda, salt and spices together, then stir into the creamed mixture. Cover and chill for 1 hour.
3. Roll into 1-inch balls and dip the tops in sugar. Place sugar-side up, 3 inches apart, on greased sheets.
4. Bake at 375°F for about 10 minutes, until the tops crackle. Don't overbake; they firm up as they cool.

> *"She doubled this every December and hid one tin in the freezer behind the peas." — Sarah*



Pies & Sweets

Blue-Ribbon Apple Pie

One 9-inch pie · Serves 8 · Bake 1 hr

The pie that won first prize at the county fair three summers running. She swore the secret was a mix of tart and sweet apples, and letting the filling sit while the crust chilled.

Crust

- 2½ cups flour
- 1 tsp salt · 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 cup cold butter, cubed
- 6–8 tbsp ice water

Filling

- 6 apples, half tart, half sweet
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 tbsp flour
- 1 tsp cinnamon · pinch nutmeg
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp butter, in bits
- Milk and sugar for the top

Method

1. Whisk flour, salt and sugar. Cut in the butter until pea-sized, then add ice water a spoonful at a time until it holds. Divide in two, wrap and chill 1 hour.
2. Peel and slice the apples ¼ inch thick. Toss with sugar, flour, spices and lemon juice; let stand while the dough chills.
3. Heat the oven to 425°F. Roll out one disk for the bottom of the pan, pile in the apples, and dot with butter.
4. Top with the second crust (or a lattice), crimp the edges, cut vents, brush with milk and sprinkle with sugar.
5. Bake 20 minutes, then lower to 350°F and bake 35–40 minutes more, until golden and bubbling. Cool at least 2 hours.

> *Her note on the card: "Cover edges with foil if they brown too fast. Never serve it hot. Let it set!"*

Your turn

Notes & Memories

Add your own changes, the dates you made them, and who was at the table.

Recipes and stories shared by the Whitfield family.
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Sample book for a fictional family. Recipes are original to this sample.