

Volume 5. Wilhelmine Germany and the First World War, 1890-1918 The Exalted Song of the Rutabaga (1917)

Praising the value and abundance Of our beets with many fine speeches, A multitude of German housewives once stood At a local city market In the early morning's grey light.

"I used to stick to *carrots*," Said one woman, thin and pale, "Oh, you mustn't jest about this, There is something beautiful in *these roots*, Especially when they're both young and tender!"

When another woman raves about that beet Which makes sugar oh so sweet, The whole crowd cries in response That she should keep quiet about sugar since "Everyone is now stewing up *beet juice*!"

And when a third woman extols the "*red beets*" That were once grown in Teltow near Berlin, A chorus of voices answers her, "Who cares today about such delicacies When we are crying out for *potatoes*!"

But the beet of all beets Has now indeed replaced that root. Nothing can dim its fame As a giant among root crops: it has "Yellow lard" and is as white as cabbage!

Yes, the *rutabaga* should be praised With this song throughout the land, Since we here on earth are beginning To resemble it more and more In our faces and also "round about".--

So it became the German Imperial vegetable Both marmalade and salad. You should dry it and then cook it For both civilians and soldiers In these sour weeks of war! Look, the fat is already in the name When the root is praised to be just "like lard," And even if the brave wartime women Can not quite accept this wisdom, Has anyone tried it out in the countryside?

With rutabaga, and with swede The dear old bread was spread. And this coddles both bowel and stomach Which cannot quite endure That it does not taste just like heavenly manna!

Once long ago in earlier times The hymn to beets resounded merrily: "Oh, what a nice topping we find On the pastor's plate of cabbage!" But this it seems was kidney lard, not rutabaga.

One may well refer to us in the German world as "Barbarians," because of such a special dish, Since with this kind of "stomach paving" Even John Bull with all his loot Simply can *not* compete with us.

On the gas stoves in all the big cities The pots of rutabagas never grow cold: They are already boiling for breakfast— At lunch they serve rutabagas with noodles, And in the evenings there's rutabaga compote.

And so when sliced into well-shaped cubes, The rutabaga nourishes us from dawn till dusk. On these tasty golden yellow slices One should inscribe these words: "Our grace and evening prayer!"

Hurray for Michel, the German soldier, who can not fall And stands solid like a tree! Whoever needs to tumble over, should tumble, But Michel is indeed stuffed full of roots, And stands "as if rooted" in the ground!

When the World War finally ends, Not only laurel will adorn the victor's steel helmet— Crown everyone who has stayed at home With cabbage and with beets, So the wish of the mythical mountain spirit, Rübezahl!

Translation: Richard Petit

Das hohe Lied r	on der Kohlrübe.
Preifend mit biel ichonen Reben	Seht, bas Gett fist ichon an Ramen,
unferer Ruben Bert und gahl	wo man fie "wie Schmalg" belobt;
ftanben biele beutiche Frauen	wenn die tapfern Kriegerfronen
einft ichon früh beim Morgengrauen	auch ber Bolfchaft nicht tranen.
:: bor nem ftabtifchen Lotal. ::	hat man's auf dem Land erprobi?
"Früher hielt ich's mit ben Dohren",	Mit ber Rube, mit ber Brute
iprach bie Eine, ichlant und bleich -	ward das liebe Brot gestredt.
"O, ihr burft barob nicht ipotten,	Und berwöhnt find Darm und Magen,
"a ift mas Echancs mit Carotten,	die dies tonnen nicht bertragen,
wenn fie jung und gart zugleich!"	weil's nicht grad nach Manna [chmedt!
Ruhmt die Undre jene Rube,	Biumal ichon in frühern Beiten
die des Juders Ekhe ichafft:	flang bab 206 ber Ruben iroh:
ach, vom Juder jollt' fie ichweigen,	"Och, watt fünd ba Raub'n nette",
rief alsba der gange Reigen —	boch bas fam bom Nierenfeite
"Jeder focht jest Ruben faft!"	"bon unf' herrn Raftor fich' Rohl"
Lobt die Dritte "Note Beeten",	Bobl uns deutschen Belt-, Barbaren".
die man einft in Zeltow 30g —	die mir folche "Bortoft" han
"Ach, was sollten heut Ledereien,	benn mit diefem Dagen bilafter
wo wir nach Kartoffeln schreient"	tritt John Bull bei all dem Joster
ihr's im Chor entgesenflog.	ficher mit uns doch nicht an!
Doch die Rübe aller Rüben	Nuj der Broßftadt Gastachherde
ward Ersah balür ja wohl.	ward der Rübentopf nicht falt:
Nichts foll ihren Ruhm verdankeln,	Echon jür's Frühftüd muß er brodeln —
wo fie riefig wie die Runkeln:	Mittags Rüden gibts mit Rubeln —
"Gelbe Echmaly" und weiß wie Rohl!	Ndends in Kompott-Gestalt! —
Ja, der Stedrüb' foll man fingen	So in wohlgeschnittnen Bürfeln
diejes Lied im Laub rumbum,	nährt die Rübe früh und spät.
weil wir ihr auf diejer Erden	Auf die goldgeld-lectren Scheidem
immer ähntlicher jeht werden	follt man diefe Borte schrieben:
im Geficht und sonst "ringörmm". — —	"Unser Tisch- und Rachgedet!"
Sie ward beutiches Reichsgemuje,	Michel fanu ja gar nicht fallen.
Marmelabe und Calat.	Bie ein Bann ficht er — Hurra!
Und geborrt follt ihr fie tochen	Bas ba purjeln will, mag purjeln,
in ben fauren Kriegeswochen	Michel ftedt ja voller 18 urgeln ;
fur Sibil und für Colbat!	ficht "wie angewurgelt" ba! —
3ft ber Beltfrieg eini uicht nur Lorbeer ichm Jeber, ber baheimgebli fränze ihn mit Kraut u alfo wünscht es - Ru	int ben Stahl
12. SRårj 1917.	3ris Gille.
3m Gelbfiverlage bes Ber	affers.

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