

FROM THE MAILBAG

Waterproofing Raincoats

Dear Aunt Daisy,

In a recent *Listener* I read how to waterproof raincoats. Could rubber and oilskin raincoats be waterproofed by that treatment, or is it for a particular material? Would an ordinary cement tub do instead of a wooden one? I would also like to know if the method could be safely used on any fabric, as I want to try it, but do not want to risk spoiling. The treatment described was to stir ½lb. sugar of lead and ½lb. powdered alum into a bucketful of soft water, preferably rain water. Stir every now and then until mixture becomes clear. Then strain off into another vessel, preferably a wooden tub, keeping back any sediment. Immerse article to be waterproofed in this solution, adding more water if necessary. The article must be saturated for 24 hours. Then hang up to dry, without wringing, in a shady breezy place.

"Margaret," Sydney, N.S.W.

This well tried old method of waterproofing is known as *Siever's Process*, and is excellent for tweed and cloth, and even for doing a tent, but it must not be used for rubber-lined raincoats, nor, of course, oilskin. When rubber lining has perished nothing can be done about it, and a new coat is called for. As regards using a wooden tub, I think the recipe was devised long before the days of cement ones, and a tub was specified because it was found that the mixture spoilt the surface of the galvanised iron baths which were much in use then for laundry.

Preserving Carrots

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Could you tell me an easy way of preserving carrots? I have plenty of lovely carrots, but once they are dug they rot. I have several quart size preserving jars, so would like to make use of them. Is there a way of just using salt?

"Stewart Island."

No, you must sterilise your carrots just as you would any fruit or vegetables. Wash and peel (or scrape) the carrots. Slice them thickly. You could also do them whole, or sliced in halves or quarters lengthways, but they take up a little more room that way. Arrange in hot sterilised jars, cover with boiled and cooled salted water, add a tablespoon of vinegar to each quart jar, and sterilise in water bath in usual way. The water should come to the boil slowly, and be held at boiling point 2 hours. Vinegar is added because carrots, like peas and beans, are non-acid, and vinegar prevents growth of bacteria. You might also like to try these—

CARROT PICKLE: Put very young, brightly coloured carrots into boiling, salted water. Cook gently till 3 parts done. Remove, put into cold water, rub off skins. Cut into even slices, pack tightly into jars and pour over spiced vinegar made with 1 quart vinegar, 1½lb. sugar, ½oz. cloves, 1 tablespoon cinnamon, and 1 teaspoon each of mace and allspice, scalded together.

CANDIED MINTED CARROTS: Parboil sufficient washed and scraped carrots for 10 minutes in boiling salted water. Split them lengthwise, unless very small and young. Arrange in casserole, sprinkle with brown sugar, and finely chopped mint. Dot with generous knobs of butter. Bake in hot oven half an hour.

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