

This leather-bound cookbook contains the personal recipes of Elvira McClelland Henry (1808–1875). Elvira was the daughter-in-law to Patrick Henry, the Founding Father and orator who proclaimed, “Give me liberty or give me death!” in 1775. She lived with her husband John, Patrick Henry’s youngest son, at Red Hill after their marriage in 1826 until her husband died in 1868. She compiled and used the cookbook during these years at Red Hill. Handwritten cookbooks by women are rare and valuable artifacts that highlight the critical role that women played in the preparation of meals for their families in the 19th century. During her time at Red Hill, Elvira oversaw the construction of a greenhouse near her home, and she passed down her knowledge of gardening and cooking to her children. Elvira’s daughter, Elvira McClelland Jr, later inherited this book and added her recipes. It was donated to Red Hill by Elvira Henry’s great-granddaughter in 1976.