

Patron: Lord Cobbold DL  
Ivry, Lady Freyberg

## A RAINBOW PALATE

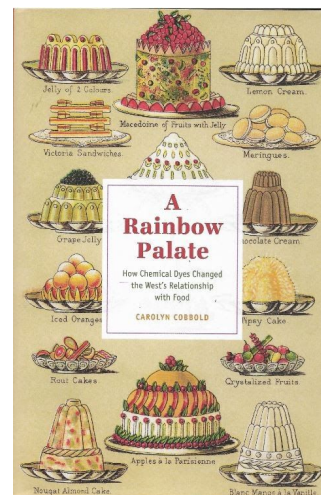
Back in May 2017 I wrote about Carolyn Cobbold (1962) #644 on the web family tree, who has achieved much whilst remaining pretty much under the radar. Following a degree in Mechanical Engineering and raising a family we found her at the forefront of a campaign to provide one of the first Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plans in the UK for the Manhood Peninsular in Sussex. This was followed quickly by an MSc dissertation on the use of yeast in bread leavening technologies which was published in *The Silence of Science*. Later in 2017 she was awarded a PhD for her contribution to the understanding of the use of coal-tar derived dyes in foodstuffs from which came a Research Fellowship at Clare Hall, Cambridge and an appointment to a Fellowship of the Royal Society.

Her book *A Rainbow Palate – How Chemical Dyes Changed the West's Relationship with Food* was published last month. Hasok Chang, who is Professor of History & Philosophy of Science at Cambridge University writes:

*"If you thought food coloring was not a serious subject in the history of science, this engaging and accessible book will show you very quickly just how wrong you were. Cobbold tells a wonderful story of complex and fascinating mutual interactions of science, commerce, industry, government, journalism, and law, about how powerful interests jostled around the use and regulation of potentially hazardous synthetic chemical dyes in food. This is a neglected aspect of the celebrated developments in organic chemistry and the dyestuffs industry in the late nineteenth century. In Cobbold's detailed account, reaching across several countries, we witness how political and legal systems were at a loss to know how to manage and regulate the impact of a formidable and fast-moving field of science, while scientific experts found themselves unable to control the use of their creations or the narratives told about them. A Rainbow Palate is an illuminating cautionary tale of how an important unintended consequence of cutting-edge science can work itself into the very fabric of our daily lives without a clear plan on anyone's part."*

If you are fortunate enough to have access to this book, please read Final Words on page 198 even if nothing else.

October 2020



Carolyn Cobbold.