



THE  
TEA  
COMPANION  
—  
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# THE HISTORY OF TEA



## CHINESE ORIGINS

**M**ore tea is drunk around the world than any other beverage, and behind this everyday brew, beyond the caddies on the tea-store shelves, lies a colorful and fascinating story that weaves its way through the social and cultural history of many nations.

According to Chinese legend, this intriguing story has its origins in the discovery of tea's beneficial qualities by the Emperor Shen Nung—a scholar and herbalist who, for the sake of hygiene, drank only boiled water. It is said that one day, in the year 2737 B.C., when Shen Nung was resting under a wild tea tree, a slight breeze stirred the branches and caused a few leaves to drift gently down into the simmering water that he was preparing. He found the resulting brew deliciously refreshing and revitalizing, and so, tea was “discovered.”

It is of course, impossible to know if Shen Nung really existed or whether he is simply the mythical embodiment of the agricultural, herbal, and cultural developments of ancient China. Certainly, China was not unified as an empire until the third century B.C. and it is therefore somewhat unlikely that an emperor existed as far back as 2737 B.C. But,



*Shen Nung resting under a tea tree.*

whatever the origins of the beverage, it is an accepted fact among scholars that tea was indeed popular in China all those years ago.

There is, however, no written reference to the leaf until the third century B.C., when a famous Chinese surgeon recommended it

for increasing concentration and alertness, and an army general wrote to a nephew asking him to send some “real tea” because he was feeling old and depressed. But even the appearance of tea’s name, *tu*, in ancient records causes confusion, since the same Chinese character was used for both tea and sow thistles, the only distinction being made by a variation in pronunciation after an emperor of the Han Dynasty, some time between 206 B.C. and A.D. 220, ruled that when referring to tea, the character should be pronounced *cha*. From the eighth century A.D. onward, the tracing of tea’s history became somewhat simpler when one vertical stroke of the character disappeared and tea acquired its own individual character.



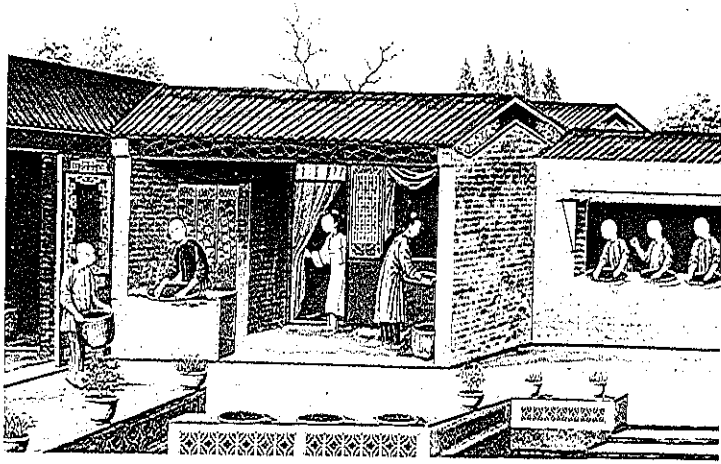
*Chinese character for tea.*

Until the third century A.D., the beverage was prepared as a medicine or tonic with the fresh green leaves gathered from wild tea trees. To match supply to an increasing demand and guarantee a regular crop, farmers

began to cultivate tea bushes on their smallholdings, and a system of drying and processing was gradually developed.

Tea’s popularity throughout China grew rapidly during the fourth and fifth centuries and new hill plantations were established along the Yangtze River valley. Tea was presented as a gift to emperors, began to appear in taverns, wine stores, and noodle houses, and is recorded as having been used (in the form of compressed cakes made from steamed green leaves) in barter trade with the Turkish people in A.D. 476. Tea merchants grew rich, and potters, silver traders, and goldsmiths started to manufacture expensive, elegant tea wares that carried their own significance in terms of the wealth and status of their owners.

The colorful years of the Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618–906) are often referred to as the “golden age” of tea. Tea was no longer drunk simply as a medicinal tonic but was taken as much for pleasure as for its restorative powers. The preparation and service of the liquor developed into an elaborate ceremony, while the cultivation and processing of the leaf were tightly controlled by rigid rules as to who should pluck the crop, when and how it should be gathered, how the freshly picked leaves should be handled, and the personal hygiene and diet of the young female pluckers—garlic, onions, and strong spices were strictly forbidden in case any



*Hand-rolling leaves in seventeenth century China.*

odor on their fingertips should contaminate the delicate leaves.

Tea became important enough during this period for a group of merchants to commission the writer, Lu Yu (A.D. 733–804), to compile the first ever book about tea. His *Cha Chang*, known as the *Classic of Tea*, describes all possible aspects, including the plant's origins and characteristics, different varieties, the processing of the leaf and the tools needed, the brewing of the beverage, tea equipage, the qualities of water in different locations, tea's medicinal qualities, and tea-drinking traditions.

During the Tang Dynasty, the young leaves, once picked, were steamed, crushed, and then mixed to a paste with plum juice

which acted as a natural glue to bind the particles firmly together. The paste was then poured into molds, compressed into cakes, and baked until dry. To brew a cup of tea, the cake was roasted in the fire until it softened enough to be crushed to a powder which was then boiled in water. In some parts of China, salt was added, giving the tea a bitter aftertaste, while the most common flavorings were sweet onions, ginger, orange peel, cloves, and peppermint—added to the water before boiling with the tea or thrown in afterward.

Later, under the Song Dynasty (A.D. 960–1279), the compressed tea cake was ground to a very fine powder and whisked into boiling water to produce a frothy liquid. After drinking the first cup, more boiling

water was added to the powdered tea, whisked again, and the liquor drunk; this was repeated up to seven times using the same tea. The spicy additions of the Tang Dynasty were rejected in favor of more subtle flavorings such as the essential oils of jasmine, lotus, and chrysanthemum flowers.

Until the Ming Dynasty (A.D. 1368–1644), all tea produced in China was green tea. The compressed tea cakes of previous empires had kept well and traveled unharmed as currency for trade in far-flung places. Ming tea, however, was not formed into cakes but left as loose, steamed, and dried leaf which did not keep well but quickly lost its aroma and flavor. As foreign trade increased, and tea had to retain its qualities during journeys as far afield as Europe, the profit-conscious Chinese growers developed two new types of tea—black tea and flower-scented tea. At one time, it was believed that green tea and black tea were the products of different plants, but all types start as the green leaves from the tea bush. Ming producers discovered that they could preserve the leaves by first fermenting them in air until they turned a copper red color and then halting the natural decomposition by baking. So it was that, although Europe's first imports of tea from China were of green loose leaf tea, the fashion gradually changed as Ming tea growers adapted their methods of production to suit the market.

## FROM CHINA TO JAPAN

Japanese history records that in A.D. 729, the emperor, Shomu, served tea to one hundred Buddhist monks at his palace. Since no tea was grown in Japan at that time, the processed leaves must have come from China. The first seeds for cultivation are thought to have been taken to Japan by Dengyo Daishi, a monk who spent two years, from A.D. 803 to 805, studying in China. He returned home, planted the seeds in the grounds of his monastery and, when he served tea made from his first plantings to the Emperor Saga five years later, it is said that Saga enjoyed the new beverage so much that he ordered tea cultivation to be established in five provinces near the capital.

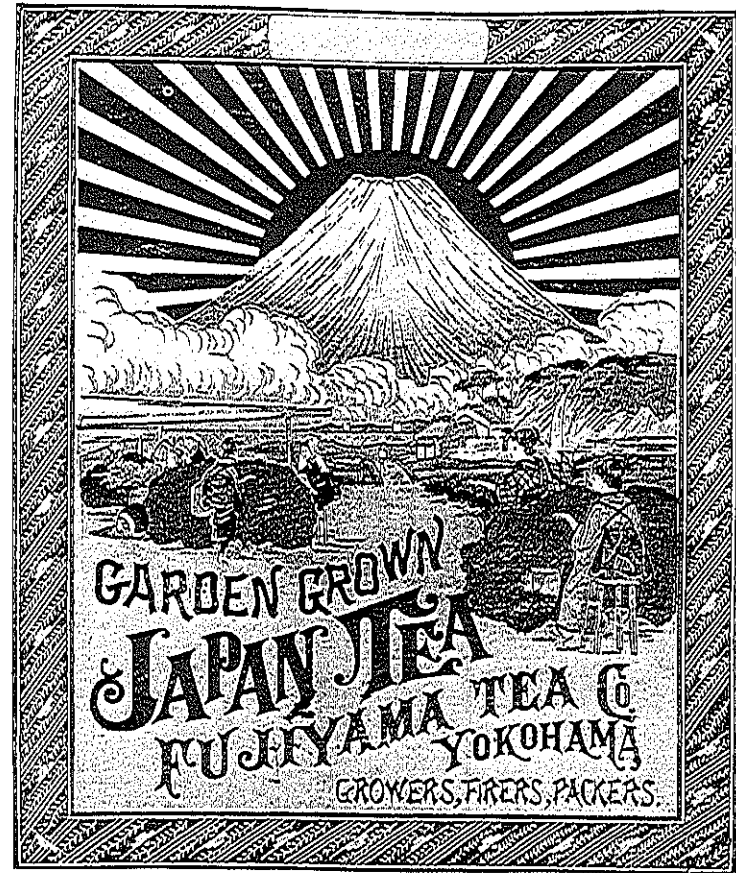
Between the end of the ninth and the eleventh centuries, Chinese-Japanese relations deteriorated and so tea, being a Chinese commodity, fell from favor and was no longer drunk at Court. However, Japanese Buddhist monks continued to drink tea to help them stay awake and to concentrate during periods of meditation. In the early twelfth century, the situation between the two nations improved and a Japanese monk by the name of Eisai was the first to pay a visit to China. He returned with more tea seeds and with the new Chinese custom of

drinking powdered green tea. He also brought back an understanding of the teachings of the Rinzaï Zen Buddhist sect. The tea drinking and the Buddhist beliefs developed alongside each other and, whereas the rituals associated with tea drinking in ancient China died out, the Japanese developed them into a complicated and unique ceremony. Still today, the Japanese Tea Ceremony, *Cha-no-yu*, involves a precise pattern of behavior designed to

create a quiet interlude during which the host and guests strive for spiritual refreshment and harmony with the universe. In 1906, Okakura Kakuzo wrote, in his *Book of Tea*, "Teism is a cult founded on the adoration of the beautiful among the sordid facts of everyday existence. It inculcates purity and harmony, the mystery of mutual charity, the romanticism of the social order." The Tea Ceremony captures all the essential elements of Japanese philosophy and artistic



Takeno Jhooh, a great Japanese tea master.



Advertisement for Fujiyama tea.

beauty, and interweaves four principals—harmony (with people and nature), respect (for others), purity (of heart and mind), and tranquility. As Kakuzo wrote, "Tea is more than an idealization of the form of drinking;

it is a religion of the art of life." The ceremony, which can last for up to four hours, may be performed at home, in a special room set aside for the purpose, or in a tea house.



## TEA REACHES EUROPE

It is not clear whether it was the Dutch or the Portuguese who were responsible for bringing ashore Europe's first tea in the early seventeenth century, for both nations were by that time trading in the China Seas—the Portuguese from a base at Macao on the Chinese mainland and the Dutch from the island of Java. Trade was initially in silks, brocades, and spices, but cargos soon also included tea. The Portuguese shipped China teas to Lisbon and from there, the Dutch East India Company carried goods on to Holland, France, and the Baltic ports. The Dutch transported mainly Japanese teas from Java from around 1610 but, in 1637, the company's directors wrote to their Governor General, "As tea begins to come into use by some of the people, we expect some jars of Chinese as well as Japanese teas with each ship."

The popularity of tea among all social classes in Holland grew and Dutch companies re-exported supplies to Italy, France, Germany, and Portugal. Although the French and Germans showed an interest in tea for a short time when it first arrived in Europe, they never really took to it as an everyday drink except in the northern region of Germany known as East Friesland (where it is still extremely popular today) and

among the higher classes in France. Madame de Sévigné described in one of her letters how her friend, the Marquise de la Sablière, took her tea with milk and that Racine drank tea with his breakfast every day. But, by the end of the seventeenth century, coffee had become the most popular beverage in both Germany and France, and it was only in Russia and England that the market for tea was growing.

The first tea reached Russia as a gift from the Chinese to Tsar Alexis in 1618. A trade agreement, signed in 1689, marked the beginning of regular commerce, and caravans of 200–300 camels trekked to the border at Usk Kayakhta, laden with furs that were exchanged for tea. Each camel carried four chests (about 600 pounds) of tea and so progress back to Moscow was slow—the journey from Chinese grower to Russian consumer taking about 16–18 months. Until the early eighteenth century, the smoky black tea favored by the Russians (a blend still sold today by many tea companies as Russian Caravan) was expensive and therefore a drink for aristocrats. But supplies became increasingly plentiful and, by 1796, Russians were drinking more than 6,000 camel loads of tea every year. The caravan trade continued until the completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway in 1903 which allowed Chinese teas, silks, and porcelain to be transported direct to Russia in just over a week.



## BRITAIN DISCOVERS TEA

Undoubtedly, some people in Britain—royalty, aristocrats, and merchants—must have heard about, and perhaps even tasted, tea well before the first recorded date of its appearance in London in 1658. Thomas Garraway, a general merchant with a store in Exchange Alley in the City of London, was



Thomas Garraway's store in Exchange Alley.

the first to advertise the new commodity for sale by auction. His announcement in the September 23–30, 1658, edition of the weekly London newspaper, *Mercurius Politicus*, read "That Excellent, and by all Physitians approved, China Drink called by the

Chineans, Tcha, by other Nations Tay, alias Tee, is sold at the Sultaness Head, a Cophee-house in Sweetings Rents by the Royal Exchange, London."

Two years later, in order, no doubt, to increase sales, Garraway wrote a lengthy advertising broadsheet entitled "An Exact Description of the Growth, Quality and Vertues of the Leaf Tee" which claimed that tea would cure almost any known ailment and "maketh the Body active and lusty . . . helpeth the Head-ache, giddiness and heaviness thereof . . . taketh away the difficulty of breathing, opening Obstructions . . . is good against Liptitude, Distillations and cleareth the Sight . . . it vanquisheth heavy Dreams, easeth the Brain and strengtheneth the Memory, it overcometh superfluous Sleep, and prevents Sleepiness in general . . . it is good for Colds, Dropsies and Scurveys and expelleth Infection."

Tea's fate in Britain took a lucky turn in 1662 when King Charles II married the Portuguese princess, Catherine of Braganza. Britain's new queen was a confirmed tea drinker long before she arrived for her wedding and she brought with her, as part of her dowry, a chest of China tea. She started serving it to her aristocratic friends at Court, word of the new beverage spread, and more and more people wished to try it for themselves. But, with prices ranging from 16 to 60 shillings (equivalent to \$1.20–\$4.50),





Catherine of Braganza.

per pound it remained, in those early days, a drink for the rich and fashionable.

Ladies enjoyed tea at home, while gentlemen often drank theirs in the coffee houses that had been an established part of city life since the 1650s. Each attracted its own particular clientele—bankers, stockbrokers, politicians, journalists, or poets. The insurance company, Lloyds, started life in Edward Lloyd's coffee house in the City of London where, for the convenience of his customers, Mr Lloyd would prepare a list of ships and their cargos sailing out of the Port of London each day. In 1706, Thomas Twining, the founder of the world-famous tea company, opened Tom's Coffee House just off Strand, outside London's old city walls. In 1717, the business expanded, was renamed The Golden Lyon, and quickly became famous for selling only loose leaf tea and for serving both men and women (ladies had been banned from coffee houses and indeed no self-respecting female would have set foot inside such masculine establishments with their smoke and alcohol, male conversation, and bawdy jokes).

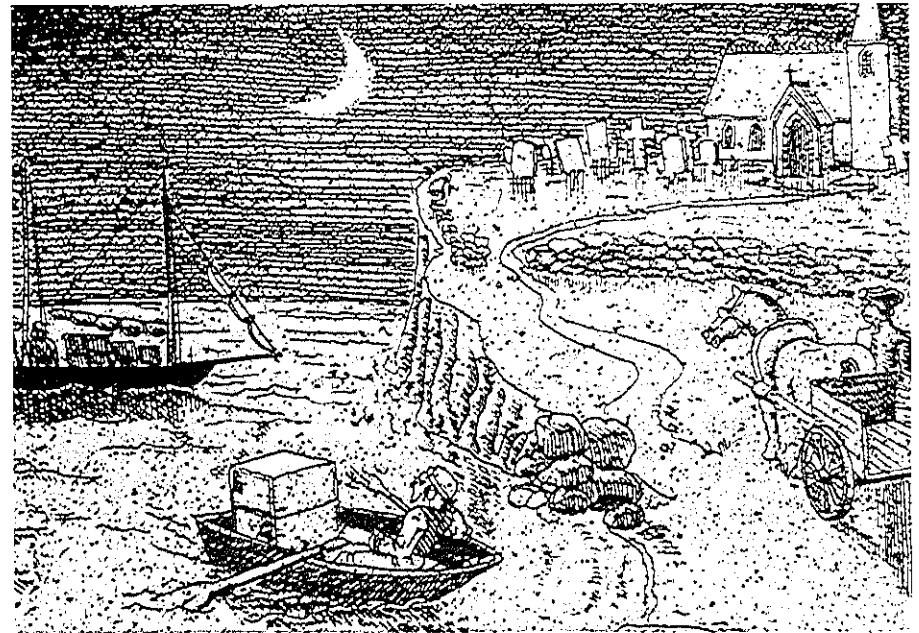
The high cost of tea was due to a heavy tax imposed on various popular commodities by Charles II. Duty on tea, coffee, and chocolate was assessed at 8 pence (6¢) per gallon, and this was raised to 2 shillings (16¢) in 1670. By 1689, the cheapest tea



Thomas Twining, founder of Tom's Coffee House.

cost 7 shillings (56¢) per pound—almost an entire week's wages for an average laborer. But there was a growing demand from both rich and poor, and this led to a healthy black market which smuggled tea in from Holland, and involved entire communities—including politicians and priests—in the clandestine storage and distribution of supplies. To make the limited quantities of the genuine article go further, and thus increase profits, the tea was often adulterated with other leaves (licorice and

sloe were regularly substituted), used leaves were dried and stained with molasses or clay, and ash leaves were dried, baked, trodden on the floor, sifted, and steeped in sheeps' dung. A government act of 1725 fined smugglers and unscrupulous traders the sum of £100 (\$150) and, in 1730, this was increased to £10 (\$15) per pound. In 1766, imprisonment became an additional penalty. Green tea was easier to pollute than black, and so, to avoid adulterated supplies, consumers turned more and more to the



Tea being smuggled ashore in eighteenth century Britain.

black, processed teas that Ming Dynasty growers had begun to produce for their foreign markets.

During the eighteenth century, tea became Britain's most popular drink, replacing ale for breakfast and gin at any other time of day. Consumption of 66,738 pounds in 1701 increased to 4,915,472 pounds by 1781, and a huge decrease in the tax in 1784 (from 119 percent to 12½ percent) led to a massive increase, reaching a total of 15,096,840 pounds in 1791. People drank tea at home and (al fresco) in London's newly fashionable Tea Gardens. The coffee houses had closed down in the early eighteenth century (by which time they had become the haunts of the idle and disreputable), to be replaced by pleasure gardens, around the outskirts of London, where people from all walks of life and all social classes, including royalty, could take the air, drink tea, and enjoy a variety of entertainments. The most famous, at Marylebone, Ranelagh, and Vauxhall, offered evening concerts, firework displays, spectacular illuminations, horse riding, gambling, bowling greens, boat trips, ballrooms with orchestras, and flower-lined walks, as well as tea and other refreshments. However, the rapid expansion of London in the early nineteenth century, and a growing taste for more sophisticated and exciting pleasures, led to the eventual closure of all the gardens.

## THE BEGINNING OF AFTERNOON TEA

Until the early nineteenth century, tea was drunk at all times of the day and particularly as a digestif after the main evening meal. There was no formalized "afternoon tea" as we know it today. The credit for the invention of this truly British institution is given to Anna, the seventh Duchess of Bedford who, because of the long gap between a light luncheon and a late evening meal, is said to have experienced what she called "a sinking feeling" in the middle of the afternoon. To satisfy her pangs of hunger, she asked her maid to bring a pot of tea and a little light refreshment to her room, and she found this arrangement so agreeable that she quickly started asking her friends to join her for afternoon tea. Very soon, all of fashionable London was indulging in these gatherings to drink tea, eat dainty sandwiches and delicate cakes, and exchange gossip and general conversation. As the fashion caught on, so silversmiths, porcelain companies, and linen manufacturers began to produce all the equipage necessary for elegant teas. Cookbooks began to include instructions on how to brew and serve tea, how to organize tea receptions, which foods to serve, and how to create tea parties for all occasions. An elegant, stylish afternoon tea (also at one

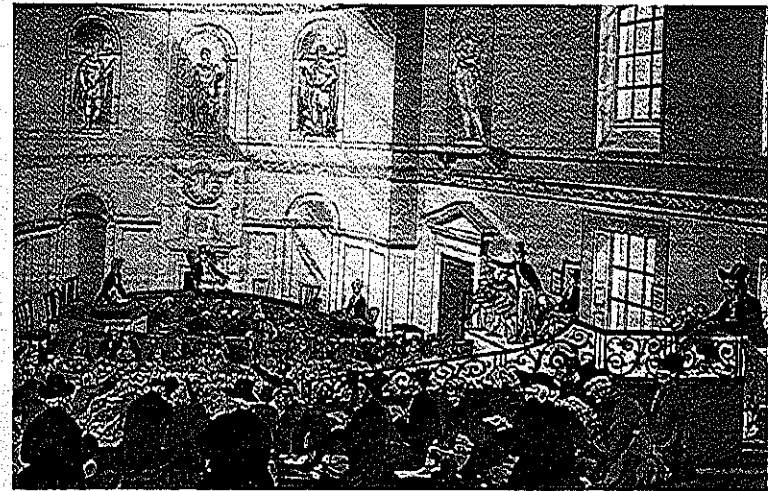
time called low tea) should not be confused with high tea (also known as meat tea in the early days)—a robust, family meal of hearty, filling savory and sweet foods that was eaten at 5.30 or 6pm by the working classes when they returned from a long hard day in the factories, mines, and offices.

## OPIUM WARS AND EMPIRE TEA

As tea consumption in Britain grew, annual imports from China were costing the country dear and China did not need or want the one export, cotton, that Britain had to offer. By

1800, opium had provided the answer to the problem. The Chinese wanted opium (despite its importation being banned by a Chinese law of 1727) and the British, and later the Portuguese, started adding to the local stock. The British East India Company grew the drug in Bengal (by then part of the British Empire), sold it, via wholesale merchants in Calcutta, to China for silver, then paid the same silver back to the Chinese for tea.

Despite more and more severe penalties from the Chinese government for the use and importation of opium, the illegal trade continued until, in 1839, a Chinese official, Lin Zexu, deposited 20,000 chests of it on

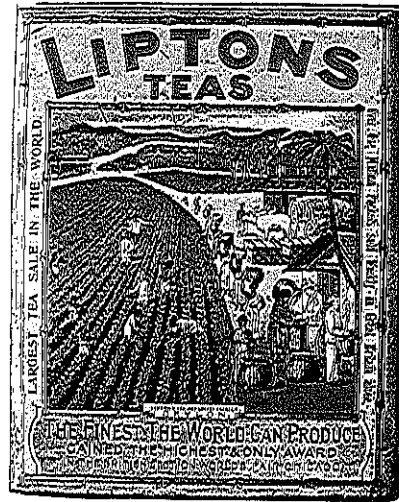


East India Company auction room.

the beach near Canton where a flood of sea water turned it into unusable sludge and washed it out to sea. A year later, Britain declared war on China and China retaliated by placing an embargo on all exports of tea.

In the light of the continuing difficulties in trade with China, Britain had, for some time, been considering other locations for the production of tea. Northern India was particularly promising because of the climate and altitudes and, when native trees were discovered growing in Upper Assam in 1823, small plantations were established by Charles Bruce, an employee of the British East India Company. He eventually persuaded his employers (who had persevered in their belief that only China seed was good enough) to cultivate the Assam variety of the tree on a commercial scale. The first shipment of Assam tea reached London in 1838, and the Assam Tea Company was set up in 1840 and soon expanded into Darjeeling, Cachar, Sylhet, and other North Indian areas.

In the 1870s, Ceylon also became a major British tea-producing area after the coffee crop failed in the 1860s and planters decided that tea was the most suitable alternative. One of the earliest planters was the Scot, James Taylor, whose pioneering efforts helped establish the crop as Ceylon's major export. Then, a visit to the island by a newcomer to the tea trade guaranteed its



Advertisement for Lipton's Ceylon teas.

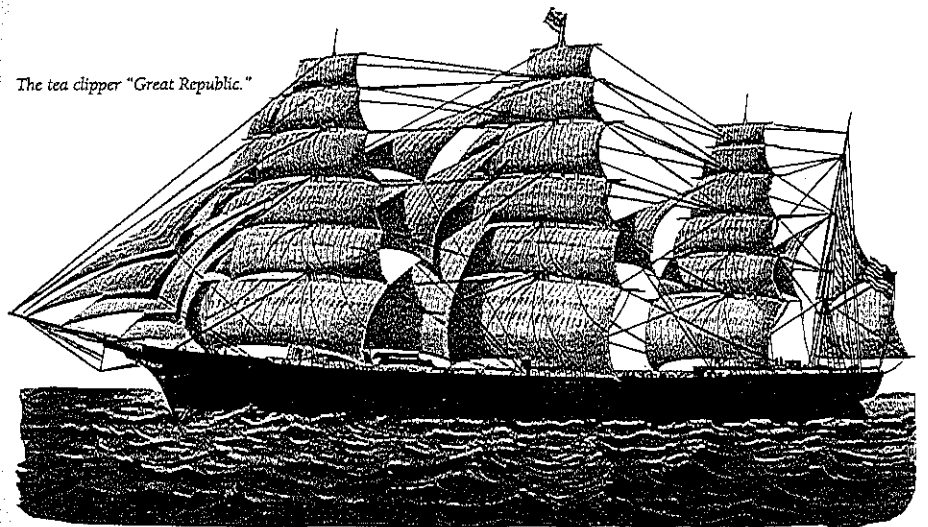
success. At the age of 40, Thomas Lipton was already a millionaire from his grocery business—famous for its hams and cheeses, and with stores all over Britain and more than 70 in London alone. Lipton had always had a keen eye for business and, during a visit to the island's hill country, bought several plantations. He realized that by producing his own tea and marketing it direct to the British public in his own stores (thus cutting out the middle men), he could cut the cost of tea and still make a healthy profit. His slogan "Direct from the Tea Gardens to the Tea Pot" became famous and his colorful advertising campaigns ensured that the name of Lipton became synonymous with tea throughout the world.

Britain's consumption of tea rose from 23,730,000 pounds in 1801 to 258,847,000 in 1901, and imports of Indian and Ceylon teas gradually took over from China. Imports of mainly China teas reached a peak of 170 million pounds in 1886, then fell to 13 million pounds in 1900—only 7 percent of Britain's total imports. By 1939, China imports had fallen as low as 1.3 million pounds. However, by the 1970s, they had started to rise again and in 1978, Britain consumed 15 million pounds of China tea. Today, China's largest markets are Morocco and the U.S., the latter doubling its imports between 1978 and 1983, and still increasing its purchases today.



## THE CLIPPER SHIPS

The ships of the East India Company generally took between 12 and 15 months to sail from China with their heavy cargoes of tea and tea wares to the Port of London. In 1845, the first American clipper ship was launched and made the round trip from New York in less than eight months, posing a huge threat to British ship owners. In 1850, the first British clipper, the *Stornaway*, was built in Aberdeen and was followed by the launching of more of these sleek, yacht-like ships, some of which achieved record average speeds of up to 18 knots. The clippers



The tea clipper "Great Republic."



could each carry more than a million pounds of tea, the chests being intricately packed by native stevedores in the Chinese ports. The stability and solidity of the cargoes helped increase the strength and performance of the ships so that monsoons, fast currents, reefs, storms, and attacks by pirates presented less of a danger on the voyages home.

Several clippers would set sail from China on the same tide and race back to London where bets were placed on who would win. A higher price was paid for the first tea home, and prizes were awarded to the winning crew. The most famous of the races was in 1866 when 40 vessels took part and headed for home, almost neck and neck. The *Aerial*, the *Taeping*, and the *Serica* all docked on the same tide, 99 days after setting sail.

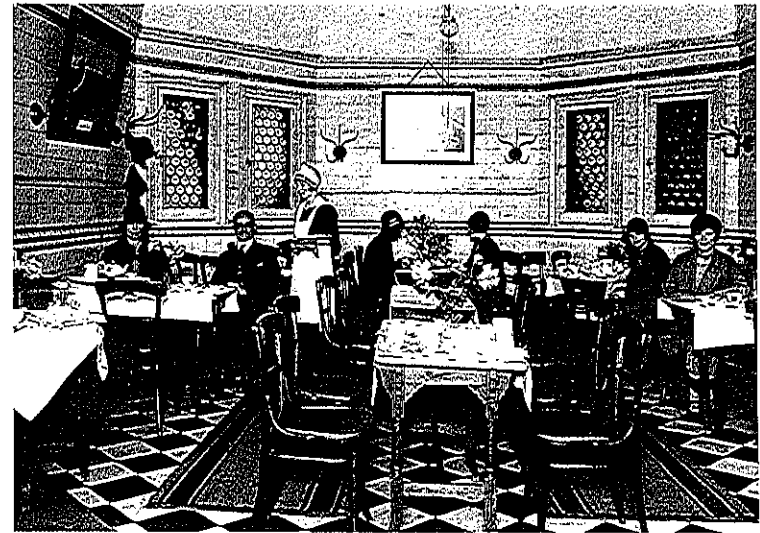
The last of the tea races was in 1871, by which date steamships had taken over the work of most of the clippers and the Suez Canal had opened, knocking several weeks off the voyage between Europe and Asia.

### TEA-SHOPS AND TEA DANCES

After the closing of London's pleasure gardens, there was really nowhere to go for tea except home—until 1864, that is, when the manageress of the London Bridge branch of the Aerated Bread Company had the

inspired idea of opening a room at the back of her store as a public tea-room. Her venture was so successful that other companies (selling a variety of products ranging from milk to tobacco, tea, and cakes) quickly copied her idea and suddenly, all over London and Britain's provincial towns, tea-shops opened. These popular establishments drew customers of all ages and from all classes. They served a variety of hot and cold, sweet and savory foods, cheap pots and cups of tea, and often provided music for the entertainment of the mixed clientele.

Going out to tea became a fashion that reached its heyday in the Edwardian period (1901–1914) when newly opened, exclusive hotels in London and elsewhere started serving stylish three-course afternoon teas in their lounges and palm courts, where string quartets and palm court trios created a calm and elegant atmosphere for their leisured patrons. In 1913, afternoon tea acquired a colorful additional element when the eccentric fashion for tea dances was born with the arrival of the sultry and risqué tango from Argentina. The trend for organizing dancing at teatime is thought to have originated in the French North African colonies and, as the tango, which had taken London's dance world by storm in 1910, became everyone's favorite, the two fashions coincided. Tango clubs, classes, and tea dances were organized all over London, in



The Tea House at College Farm, London.

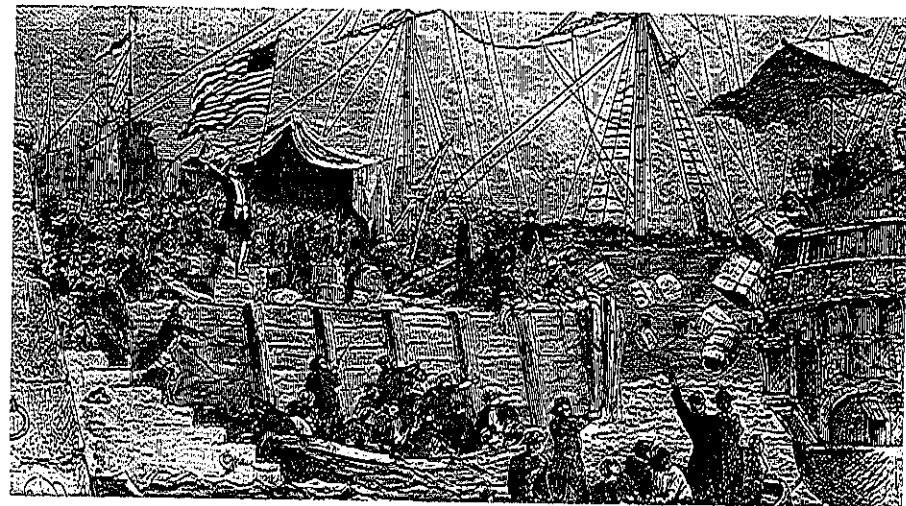
theaters, restaurants, and hotels, and became the "place to be." London's newspapers reported the "Growing Craze for Tango Teas," announcing "Tango Teas for 1500" and "Everyone's Tangoing Now."

Changes in social patterns and life styles, due to the First and Second World Wars, the new trend among the smart set for cocktails rather than tea, and the onslaught, in the 1950s, of fast food outlets and coffee bars, led to a gradual decline in the fashion for going out to tea. The British continued, of course, to drink tea at home and in the workplace, but it was not until the early 1980s that there was a new surge of interest

in tea and teatime that led to a revival of the British tea-shop, tea-room, and tea-lounge.

### TEA IN NORTH AMERICA

It was inevitable that tea would find its way to North America with colonizing groups from Europe. New York (initially New Amsterdam under the Dutch and later renamed by the British) was a tea drinker's haven with all the same traditions and rules of etiquette, and the same favorite tea wares as in Britain, Holland, and Russia.



Chests of tea being thrown into Boston harbor.

Good quality drinking water was not readily available and so special water pumps were installed around Manhattan. Coffee houses and tea gardens became popular and New York had three Vauxhall Gardens, one Ranelagh, and others that took the same names as London's favorites.

In the cities, tea was drunk in the same elegant fashion as in Europe. In Philadelphia and Boston particularly, tea and expensive silver and porcelain were symbols of wealth and social status, and among less affluent families, the drinking of tea represented breeding and good manners.

In the early 1700s, the Quakers drank their "cups that cheer but not inebriate"

with salt and butter, while in New England, scented green China teas were popular. In rural areas, tea was brewed in a more simple rustic way and a pot kept hot on the stove all day, ready for pouring whenever visitors arrived or for the family when they came in from work in the fields.

The Boston Tea Party ended America's liking for both the British and their tea. The origins of the trouble lay in the passing of an Act of Parliament in 1767 which attempted to tax the American colonies. A 3 pence (2¢) in the pound duty on tea was to go toward the support of the army and government officials in the colonies and, since the only tea that could legally be imported and



purchased in America was from the British East India Company, there seemed no way out of paying the new levy. Within two years of the passing of the act, most American ports were refusing to allow any dutiable goods ashore, and when the British sent seven shiploads of tea from London, feelings ran high. In New York and Philadelphia, demonstrations forced the ships to turn back, while in Charleston, customs officials seized the cargo. In Boston, general unrest

over several weeks was followed by the boarding of the *Dartmouth* by a band of men disguised as Native Americans, to cries of "Boston harbor a teapot tonight" and "The Mowhawks are coming." In the course of the next three hours, they threw 340 chests of tea overboard. The British government's closure of Boston harbor and the arrival of British troops on American soil marked the beginning of the War of Independence and America's coffee-drinking tradition.



## WHAT'S IN A NAME?



Until the name "tea" was accepted into the English language, the leaf was variously called *tcha*, *cha*, *tay* and *tee*. The English name derived, not from the standard Mandarin Chinese word, *cha*, but from the Chinese Amoy dialect name *te* (pronounced *tay*). This resulted from the early contact between the Dutch traders and Chinese junks out of the port of Amoy in China's Fujian Province. The name became *thee* in Dutch and, since it was the Dutch who were mainly responsible for transporting the first tea to Europe, the new product also became known as *thee* in German, *te* in Italian, Spanish, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Hungarian, and Malay, *tea* in English, *thé* in French, *tee* in Finnish, *teja* in Latvian, *ta* in Korean, *tey* in Tamil, *thay* in Sinhalese, and *Thea* to scientists.

The Mandarin, *cha*, became *ch'a* in Cantonese and passed as *cha* to Portuguese (during trade at Cantonese-speaking Macao) and so also to Persian, Japanese, and Hindi, becoming *shai* in Arabic, *ja* in Tibetan, *chay* in Turkish, and *chai* in Russian.