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Article Title: Postscript: A Pan of Fudge

Full Citation: John Carter, "Postscript: A Pan of Fudge," *Nebraska History* 88 (2007): 108

URL of article: <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/full-text/NH2007PSFudge.pdf>

Date: 2/08/2013

Cataloging Information:

Nebraska Place Names: York

Photographs / Images: six York College students and their chaperone preparing fudge

A Pan of Fudge



SIX GIRLS AND THEIR BEMUSED-LOOKING chaperone posed for this photograph in a pennant-bedecked room, possibly at York College, York, Nebraska, in about 1910.

Many food historians trace the origins of fudge to the dormitories of Ivy League colleges in the mid 1880s. The earliest written account of the treat appears in a letter written in 1886 by a young woman from Vassar.

The origins of the name are obscure, but the word was used as a verb meaning “to surreptitiously adjust data to produce the desired

conclusions” or “to cheat” long before it became the name of a simple, usually homemade candy. The word probably derived from, “fadge,” meaning “to adjust,” which came from the old English word “fadge,” meaning “deceit.”

According to some, the candy got its name from students who would use the making of it as an excuse to stay up past curfew and thus “fudge” the rules.

This photograph is one of thirty from the NSHS collection now on display at the NSHS headquarters building at 1500 R Street in Lincoln. 📷

JOHN CARTER