

Giant pudding was royal Christmas treat

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Details of a ten-ton Christmas pudding, created to offset the blues of the Great Depression, have been rediscovered by University of Manchester historians.

The gargantuan dessert was part of a general effort to help the unemployed during the economic crisis that devastated millions of people throughout Britain during the early 1930s.

The pudding was presented to the unemployed across the country and its unlikely source was the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals, for which the Prince of Wales was patron.

It was made entirely of [ingredients](#) from the British Empire, and mixed at the charity's annual Christmas Market in the Albert Hall.

Thought to be the biggest ever made, special permission was given so that the pudding could be known as the 'Prince of Wales' Empire Christmas Pudding'.

It was made according to a recipe composed by the King's Chef, with all ingredients given by the High Commissioners of the Dominions and Colonies producing them.

Dr Chris Godden said: "The giant pudding was a remarkable episode in ongoing efforts to help the poor during the Great Depression

"It must have been quite a spectacle. It was carried by four horses from

the Albert Hall to the Army and Navy Stores in Victoria Street where the public had the opportunity to stir in the ingredients.

"It was then divided up into 11,208 smaller puddings, which were distributed amongst the poor throughout the country.

"Both Manchester and Salford, for example, received 512 each."

The spectacle of the giant pud provided comic relief for the British public, at a time of [economic crisis](#) and unemployment. The problems were especially acute between 1929 and 1931 following the Wall Street Crash.

Yet even against this backdrop of economic problems, newly established chain stores – such as Marks and Spencer's and Woolworths – succeeded in attracting a broad range of shoppers offering bargains.

According to Dr Charlotte Wildman, shopping and retail increasingly became a way out for the British to recover from the Depression.

Dr Wildman said: "Though the Depression was raging, retailers invested in in-store events and promotional activities to attract people to their stores.

"Christmas shopping attracted great press attention and anxieties that if people did not spend enough it would harm the economy.

"There was a new emphasis on cheap goods, bargains and promotional discounts and shoppers would increasingly treat this as a form of leisure.

"Shopping was also seen as patriotic: if housewives didn't buy British at Christmas they would be helping – of all people – the Bolsheviks."

Provided by University of Manchester

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