

# [Black Drop] Sarah Creighton Wilkins

**Date:** Late 18th or early 19th century; exact date unknown.

Contributors

Contributor Role

Compiler

Contributor Name

Sarah Creighton Wilkins

Publication Format

Manuscript

Type

Medicine

Ingredients

opium

verjuice

nutmeg

saffron

sugar

yeast

Places

Halifax

Nova Scotia

**Source:** Manuscript Notebook of Sarah Creighton Wilkins

**Institution:** Nova Scotia Archives | **Source Origin:** MacDonald Family Fonds | **Reference:** MG 1 No. 1 / Microfilm Reel 10,618

Description

A recipe for a medicinal syrup with opium. There are a number of extant recipes for Black Drop, which may have been first devised in County Durham in the 1750s.

Transcription

## Black drop

Take ½ a pound of Opium sliced  
3 pints of good Verjuice, 1 ounce & ½  
of Nutmeg, ½ an ounce of Saffron  
Boil them to a proper thickness  
then add a ¼ of a pound of Sugar  
2 spoonful of Yeast set the whole  
in a warm place near the fire  
for 6 or 8 weeks. Then place it  
{...} the open air until it becomes a Syrup

Annotations

### Black drop

"A dark-coloured liquid medicine composed of opium in vinegar or verjuice with various spices" (OED). The first use recorded in the OED is from 1801.

Black Drop recipe from Early Modern Maritime Recipes: <https://emmr.lib.unb.ca/recipes/317>