

Trivia

THE CRUNCH STARTS HERE

I've got news for you, California. Granola was ours!

James Caleb Jackson co-owned an abolitionist newspaper and lectured on the cause, but poor health forced him into early retirement. He was near death when he decided to visit a spa for a "water cure," a popular alternative-medicine treatment in the mid-19th century. His miraculous recovery made him a believer in the healing power of water—so much so that he went to medical school and then bought a spa of his own in 1858.

The Dansville Water Cure, which Jackson renamed Our Home on the Hillside, became one of the largest spas in the world under Jackson's management. Of course, the first step of any water program is to drink more water, but there were also baths, wet-sheet wrappings, and yes, even water douches. Jackson, whom you might call a historical health nut, took it a step further, encouraging his patients to eat healthier. He had them cut out the bad stuff—red meat, sugar, coffee, alcohol, and tobacco—and eat more fruits, vegetables, and unprocessed grains.

In 1863, Jackson made his most lasting contribution to society, one that lives on in almost every American household today: He invented the first cold breakfast cereal, and the predecessor of granola. It was called "granula."

So, how did we get to granola?

Well, Kellogg caught wind of this new breakfast fad, and crunched out a knockoff of granula, one that was tastier and easier to make. The company changed the name to "granola," to avoid being sued by Jackson.

Dude, are you listening?