

And NOW—



THE NEW Hawkins UNIVERSAL ELECTRIC MODEL PRESSURE COOKER

10 1/2-PINT MODEL

Made specially for use on Electric Hot Plates — Aga and similar Cookers. The thick, ground base ensures contact between the cooker and hot-plate, thereby giving phenomenal efficiency. Supplied if desired with three food separators, each with a capacity of approximately 1 pint, at slightly additional cost. The 'Hawkins' is now available in three sizes—7 pt., 8 1/2 pt., and 10 1/2 pt. Made and Guaranteed by L. G. Hawkins & Co. Ltd., London. N.Z. Factory Representatives: Jones Begg (N.Z.) Ltd., P.O. Box 152, Wellington.

3 ins. THICK GROUND FLAT BASE



IRISH BARM BREAD

I AM fortunate in having had lent to me a letter from an Irish woman to a friend in New Zealand telling how to make the real Irish soda bread, often said to be the best bread in the world. It is sometimes called cake bread, and the plain basic recipe is varied by adding wholemeal, treacle, caraway seeds, or fruit. It is made up as griddle bread or tea scones, but the basic recipe remains the same. It must never be mixed to a firm dough. The bread is lightest and spongiest when the dough is neither too firm nor too sticky. It should be just possible to lift safely from table to oven. It should be cooked on the oven shelf, or on a flat tin and not in a loaf pan.

Winter Buttermilk or Barm

The best Irish bread is made with real buttermilk, 3 days old. Ordinary sour milk is not the same thing at all, but it is not easy for ordinary people to get buttermilk, especially in winter when the house cow is dry. So the Irish make winter buttermilk or barm. Mix 1 lb. flour to smooth paste with 1 cupful cold water. Put this in large crock. Add 2 grated raw potatoes and 2 mashed cooked potatoes. Now mix in 7 cups cold water. Cover and leave in warm place at least 2 days. When baking, pour off carefully without disturbing sediment, as much liquid as required. This liquid may be used in exactly the same way as buttermilk, and will give lovely light bread. Add fresh water to make up for what you have used. Stir up contents of vessel, cover, and put it by for next baking. The one lot of potatoes and flour will give a fortnight's supply of winter buttermilk.

Barm from a "Plant"

The "Buttermilk plant" makes almost equally good bread. Make sure the milk and water you mix it with is only luke warm, for heat kills yeast. To start the "plant" you need 1 oz. sugar, 1 quart tepid milk and water, 1 oz. yeast. Cream yeast with sugar, gradually add tepid milk and water. Put mixture in vessel that can be easily washed and scalded, cover and leave it in warm place a few days, or until milk smells and tastes like buttermilk. When you want to use the buttermilk, put a piece of muslin in the bottom of a strainer and strain the milk through this. The funny looking substance like lumpy cornflour which remains will be the "buttermilk plant." Rinse every drop of milk off it by pouring a cupful of tepid water over it. Let water run through strainer into the buttermilk—it will all make excellent liquid for mixing cake-bread. To start a new lot of buttermilk, scrape the plant off muslin and put it back into scalded and well rinsed vessel. Add another quart of tepid milk and water, cover and leave it as before to "grow."

This plant will go on growing indefinitely giving buttermilk all the time. But the plant needs a certain amount of care. It must be strained at least every 5 days. If you don't want the buttermilk for baking, you can always drink it. It is very good for the blood,

particularly in rheumatic cases, and is quite pleasant to drink, too. Cleanliness is very important. That careful rinsing after straining, and the scalding of the container, must be done meticulously if the plant is to live.

Irish Soda Bread

This is the basic recipe. One pound flour, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon sugar, 1 teaspoon baking soda and buttermilk to mix.

Sift dry ingredients several times. Make a well in centre, pour in buttermilk gradually, mixing in flour from sides. The amount of buttermilk needed will depend to a great extent on the quality of flour. In any case, it's a good rule to make dough rather wet than dry. A dry ragged dough gives a tough cake. The dough should be of such consistency that it does not leave sides of bowl clean when turned on to floured board. Knead it lightly for a few minutes, turning sides of dough in towards centre, and working it round and round while doing so. Now turn upside down so that smooth side is on top; pat it to a round, brush it with milk, and cut a cross on it to keep it from cracking in baking. Let cuts go down over side of loaf to make sure of this. Bake it about 45 minutes in hot oven.

Brown Bread

Use half wholemeal and half white flour. Increase sugar to 1 dessert spoonful and rub in, if you like, 1 dessert spoonful dripping or bacon fat. A fistful of oatmeal may be added, too. It gives a lovely, nutty texture.

Griddle Bread

The same mixture as for soda bread. Roll out the dough 1 inch thick. Cut in four cakes. Cook them on a griddle or on a heavy iron fryingpan over a medium heat. If heat is too strong the undercrust will get thick and brown before heat has a chance to penetrate and this will result in a sodden streak in middle of bread which is the sure sign of bad griddle bread. When they have been cooking for about 12 minutes, and a thin skin has formed on top, turn them and give them another 12 minutes.

Treacle Bread

Increase sugar to 1 tablespoonful and add to buttermilk 1/2 cupful warmed treacle. A beaten egg may be added as well, in which case you may also rub 2 oz. butter into the flour. Raisins, currants and chopped nuts make this a real party bread. Give it an hour in a greased tin in a moderate oven.

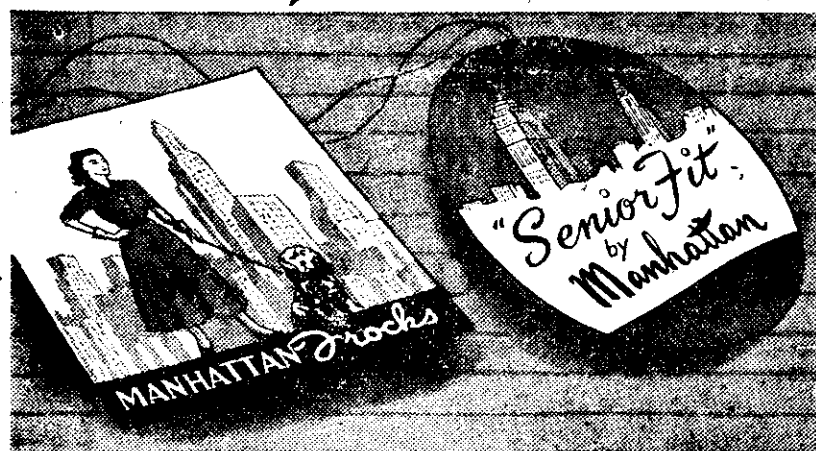
Seedy Bread

Increase the sugar to 1 tablespoonful. Rub 2 oz. of lard into the flour, and add 1 dessertspoonful of caraway seeds.

Tea Scones

Use white flour, or any mixture of flour. Increase sugar to 2 tablespoonfuls. Rub 3 oz. of fat into flour. Add 1/2 pound fruit. Add a beaten egg to the buttermilk if you'd like extra nice scones. Roll 1/2 in. thick, cut in rounds, and bake 20 minutes in hot oven.

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