



## SOLDIERS' PARCELS Cakes And Cookies For Overseas

**S**O many letters come to me asking for information about making up parcels to send overseas to our men in the Fighting Forces, that I think it may be useful this week to devote this page to the subject.

First, about the "duty." Parcels sent through the National Patriotic Fund Board, Brandon House, Featherston Street, Wellington, are not subject to any duty at all; but parcels sent abroad addressed to individuals have to pay duty on cigarettes and tobacco, so that it is better not to include these in parcels to our troops, for we certainly don't like to think of their having to pay duty. We know that they can get cigarettes and tobacco at their Recreation Huts; and that the Y.M.C.A. and Salvation Army and Church Army, and so on, are looking out for them in that way, as well as the St. John Ambulance and Red Cross. Individual parcels are best of all; they give the "personal touch"—the touch of home. That is why thousands of women who have no actual relative on Active Service are making it their business to "adopt" a man or boy who has no sister or sweetheart or wife or mother to send him a parcel, and are seeing to it that he feels that he, too, has someone who cares. A cheery message and a "snap" of some well-known place, or friend or favourite pet, make welcome little additions to a parcel, and take up no valuable space, for no parcel must weigh more than seven pounds.

### Magazines Much Appreciated

Magazines are very much appreciated, and those small "Digests," of which there are now so many, are easily packed. Cheap pipes are very useful—a man can give it away if he doesn't smoke one himself, and to a pipe smoker one cigarette brings as much comfort. Further suggestions for the parcels are soft, washed handkerchiefs, a tin of sweetened condensed milk, or potted meat, a tin of barley sugar, a small tin of fruit, a pack of cards, a toothbrush and a tube of refreshing toothpaste; and if for seamen, warm flannel shirts and under-clothing.

Now for the home-make cakes and biscuits which the troops love to get. The cakes must be wrapped in grease-proof paper, and then sealed in tins with adhesive tape.

### Soldiers' Cake

This recipe was given me by a lady who used it successfully for sending overseas during the last war. It makes just the right weight for the parcel. She was very definite about the use of the two tablespoons of black treacle instead of ordinary golden syrup, which she said added to the "keeping quality" of the cake, and also made the use of the wineglass of brandy unnecessary, though it could be added if desired.

Cream  $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. butter, 10 ounces of sugar, and 2 tablespoons of black treacle. Add three eggs one by one, and beat very thoroughly. Then add a wineglass of brandy, or if you do not want to put brandy you may use 2 tablespoons of water. Another idea is to flavour the water with brandy essence. Then sift in  $1\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. of flour and 1 heaped teaspoon of baking powder, together with the prepared fruit, which is  $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of mixed fruit. Mix lightly together, and bake for three or four hours in an oven which is hot to begin with, and turned down after a little while. The lady who gave us this, said that she always puts almonds in her cakes, and that they had always been all right. This cake will keep for months in an airtight tin.

### Another Cake for Soldiers

This one comes from Christchurch. The sender said: "I made two cakes from this mixture, had the tins made at a tinsmith's, and sealed them down well, and I'll just bet they will smell good when opened up."

Cream  $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. butter and 1 cup of sugar. Beat in one by one 6 eggs. Beat well. Then add 1lb. of flour, 1 teaspoon of ground spice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of ground nutmeg, 2 level teaspoons of baking powder, essence of lemon to taste, and about 4lbs. of good mixed fruit, dredged with flour. This lady said, "No almonds!" When cooked, prick all over with a hat-pin or knitting needle and pour brandy over the top while still hot—about 2 tablespoons. The lady also said that she always makes hers with brown sugar, and adds  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of ground ginger, and cloves, and 1 teaspoon of baking powder, and a little baking soda dissolved in hot water added last of all and stirred well.

### Date Fingers

One cup of fine wholemeal,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of flour,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups of rolled oats, 1 cup of brown sugar,  $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of melted butter,

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of carbonate of soda,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of essence of vanilla, and a pinch of salt. Mix the wholemeal flour, the ordinary flour, the sugar, salt, essence and soda well together; pour over this the melted butter, and mix well; then stir in the rolled oats, giving the whole lot a good mixing. Press half the mixture in a long shallow sponge tin, cover with a date filling, and put the other half on top. Press down with a knife. Bake a light brown for half an hour. The date filling may be omitted—both ways are good. Cut with a sharp knife while warm and store the fingers in an airtight tin to keep crisp.

### Date Filling

Put  $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of brown sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of stoned dates,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of boiling water,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of chopped walnuts,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon essence of vanilla, in a saucepan. Simmer for ten minutes, stirring all the while. Mash with a fork and let it get cool.

### Bran Biscuits

These biscuits are the favourites of Bryan O'Brien of 22B, and he says that there are none like them, so we call them Bryan O'Brien's Bran Biscuits because of the alliteration.

One cup of flour, 1 heaped cup of bran,  $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of butter, a nearly full cup of sugar, 1 teaspoon of baking powder, and 1 egg. Cream the butter and sugar and mix in the usual manner.

### Stuffed Monkeys

Three-quarters of a lb. of flour,  $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of butter,  $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of brown sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of ground cinnamon, and 1 small egg. A little baking powder may be added as well. Cream the butter and sugar and add rest of ingredients. Roll out thin, and cut into rounds. Put the following mixture between two rounds and pinch together:  $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of sultanas or raisins,  $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. lemon peel cut small, 1oz. of walnuts,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of dates, all minced together, and cinnamon or spice to taste. A little grated apple makes it moist.

### Shortbread

This is always popular, and very good. One and a-quarter pounds of flour,  $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of icing sugar crushed fine, and 1lb. of butter. Mix the butter and sugar well then add the flour slowly; rub in with the hands and knead into the baking tin. Cook slowly for about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour. Leave in the tin till cool.

### "O.K." Shortbread

Half a pound of butter, 6oz. of icing sugar, 1 egg, 1 teaspoon of baking powder, 2 cups of flour. Warm the butter, beat in the sugar, then the egg, and lastly add the flour and baking powder sifted together. Knead the mixture on a board until quite stiff. Cut into shapes and place on thin white or brown paper, not greased. Bake in a rather slow oven.

### "Perfect" Shortbread

One pound of butter,  $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of icing sugar, 2lbs. of flour, and some cornflour. Weigh out the flour, then lift out 3 tablespoons of it and put in 3 tablespoons of cornflour. Cream the butter

and sugar, mix the flour and cornflour well together. Add to the butter and sugar in teaspoonfuls, beating well, until all the flour is worked in. Knead on a floured board. Bake in a slow oven for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour.

### Grandma's Scotch Shortbread

Quarter of a pound of sugar (No. 2 is best), 1lb. of flour,  $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of butter. Mix all together on baking board and work with hands until the mixture is a nice dough. This should take about 20 minutes. Roll out and form into rounds. Cut almost through with a knife so that when it is cold it will form wedges. Place on grease-proof paper and put on cold oven shelf in a very slow oven. Cook very slowly until a pale gold colour.

### Eltham Ginger Nuts

This is a very popular recipe indeed and excellent for sending overseas. As a matter of fact, no fewer than 300 pounds of these biscuits were made and despatched by the sender of this recipe during the last war. She sent six of her eight sons, too, and has already sent another son to this war. These quantities make about  $4\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of ginger nuts—perhaps 5lbs. Keep them in tins, of course. Half quantities can be made if desired. It does not hurt to leave the mixture standing over-night, so if you have more leisure for mixing them up in the evening just do so and bake them next morning.

Two and a-quarter pounds of flour, 1lb. of light brown sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of butter, 1oz. of ground ginger, and 2lb. of golden syrup. Rub the dry ingredients well together then mix them with the warmed golden syrup. Make into small marbles and flatten them slightly. Bake in a moderate oven for about fifteen minutes, or less—Regulo 5.

### Chinese Chews

One cup of flour, 1 cup of sugar,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of melted butter, 1 cup of chopped walnuts, 1 cup of chopped dates, 1 teaspoon of vanilla, 2 tablespoons of milk, 1 teaspoon of baking powder, and 2 eggs. Beat the eggs and the sugar, add the melted butter, then the flour and baking powder, and lastly the fruit and essence. Bake in a flat tin till golden brown.

### Bar Biscuits

Three cups of flour, 2 cups of brown sugar, 1 cup of butter, 1 cup of walnuts, 1 teaspoon of baking soda, 2 eggs, and a little salt. Mix the day before, and shape like a bar of soap. Next day cut in slices and bake in a moderate oven for about ten minutes.

### Between And Betwixt

Two tablespoons of currants,  $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of butter and nice beef dripping mixed, 1 large level cup of sugar, 1 egg, 2 large heaped cups of flour, 1 small teaspoon of salt, 2 small teaspoons of cream of tartar, 1 small teaspoon of baking soda, 1 small teaspoon of orange essence. Beat the butter and sugar to a cream, add the beaten egg, flour, etc., and milk, enough to mix to a stiff dough; roll out (Continued on next page)

