

I made friedcakes yesterday. Some people call them "doughnuts," but to me, a doughnut is made of a yeast dough--a "raised doughnut." The ones I made are often called "cake doughnuts," but to everyone in our family, they are just plain "friedcakes."

I don't make them very often. They take a little more time than a cake or cookies, and not everybody likes them, anyway. In our house, though, they are a treat.

Part of the reason I like to make friedcakes is in the recipe itself. Or, as she probably wrote it, the "receipt." My maternal grandmother made them, too, and the recipe is hers. It begins like this: *"Two eggs beaten fine as silk; a cup of sugar, a cup of milk. Then add flour, just enough; not too much, or they'll be tough."* There are a few other additions, as well--baking powder, salt, nutmeg, and melted butter. So, that rhyme goes through my mind each time I get out the mixing bowl, egg beater, and ingredients and start a batch of friedcakes.

Actually, though, I almost always make a double batch. They freeze well, and I don't really enjoy the frying part, so it is good to make a lot at one time and store them in bags of a dozen or so, ready to bring from the freezer at coffee time.

The procedure for making friedcakes has a preliminary step in our kitchen. Some people use vegetable oil or shortening or purchased lard for frying. We use our own lard. So, in a way, the friedcakes begin when we butcher our pigs, save the fat, grind it, and render it out on the cookstove, making many glass jars of pure white lard. We store the lard in the freezer, too, where it is available for pie crust and frying friedcakes.

I scraped the contents of a couple of jars of lard into a kettle, and put it on the stove. Then, while the fat melted and heated, I took the chilled dough from the refrigerator and began to roll and cut out friedcakes. I don't have a cutter of the size I want, so I use a ring from a mason jar. I have a little round cutter to make the hole in the middle.

There is a little ritual involved in frying friedcakes. Sometimes, I wonder if it really means anything or if it is just another case of "we have always done it this way." But, my mother said that when the circles of

dough go into the bubbling fat, they should be turned as soon as they rise to the surface, left to cook until brown, then turned again to cook the other side. She thought that the hot fat in that first turning "sealed" the cakes so they did not become greasy.

Whether this is of any value or not, I do not know. But, I do it anyway, and our friedcakes are never greasy.

But, the best part of friedcakes is, of course, the eating. Some people like to frost them or roll them in powdered sugar. We eat them either plain or with a little bowl of granulated sugar to roll them in and give them just a hint of additional sweetness.

So, right now, there are five dozen friedcakes in the freezer. They will make their way to the table at mid morning coffee time for many days. And, when the batch is all gone, if the mood strikes, I may begin to once again hear in my mind---"*Two eggs beaten fine as silk-----*"