

Some Curious Engagement Rings.

In choosing engagement rings for their fiancées lovers at times discard the conventional jewelled circlet in favour of the bizarre, fantastic and even gruesome.

Not long since, says Tit-Bits, out of a portion of a horseshoe that he had found a young man had a ring made, which he gave to the lady of his choice on the day of their betrothal. The remainder of the horseshoe was utilised in the manufacture of a brooch and earrings.

Another iron ring, which a short while since was accepted by a young girl as a token of her lover's constancy, was a section cut from the barrel of a pistol, which many years back had played an unenviable part in a family tragedy.

The scion of a wealthy family, whose fortunes owed their existence to extensive tobacco plantations, had a ring made out of the fragrant weed, hardened by some process to the consistency almost of metal, with which to encircle the finger of his innamorata. A single diamond gave relief to the annulet's sombre hue.

Opals, formerly considered so ill-omened, are now not infrequently employed in the setting of engagement rings. One gentleman, a native of Manchester, went, indeed, to an almost extreme length in his reprobation of superstition, the ring which he gave to the lady he has now married being a hoop of thirteen opals, the former possessor of each of which had met with some serious misfortune.

The engagement ring chosen by a well-known actress had once decked the finger of an Egyptian mummy. Disdaining the everyday gewgaw with its vulgar glint of gems, she set her fancy upon this strangely discoloured stone, which had nothing to recommend it but its unconventionality and age.

A wealthy bachelor, whom we will call Taylor, has lately compounded his third threatened breach of promise action by the payment of a sum running well into four figures. To each of the three ladies who have in turn promised to be his wife this gentleman has presented an engagement ring made of a peculiar glass, in the sibilant character of which the eccentric giver places such faith that its fracture presages, in his judgment, some matrimonial disaster.

Recipes.

CAKES, BUNS, AND BISCUITS FOR THE CHILDREN.

All utensils used in making pastry of any description should be carefully kept and appropriated to that purpose only.

The flour should be dried before the fire previous to use. The butter should be sweet and thoroughly washed in a clean cloth in cold water to remove salt, etc.

In making all cakes remember to have the ingredients ready and properly weighed out. The eggs should be well beaten and used at once. If butter is used it should first be beaten to a cream.

The oven must be properly and equally heated.

SPONGE CAKES.

Break six eggs, put the yolks into one pan and the whites into another. Beat up the yolks with six ounces of best white sugar and a tablespoonful of orange flower water.

Beat the whites well with a knife until a snowy froth appears and add them to the yolks quickly. Then sift in carefully five ounces of dry flour and pour the mixture into well buttered moulds and sift over them fine castor sugar.

SHORT CAKES (PLAIN).

Rub into one pound of flour four ounces of butter with the same quantity of sugar, one egg, a teaspoonful of cream and a pinch of carraway seeds, with enough milk and water to make it into a paste. Roll it out thin and cut into oval shapes. Bake a quarter of an hour on tin sheets lightly dusted with flour.

RICE CAKES.

Mix ten ounces of ground rice, three ounces of best flour and eight of pounded sugar; sift all gradually into four yolks and three whites of eggs well beaten. Add the grated rind of a lemon.

SPANISH CAKES.

Take a pound of sugar, a pound of flour, a pound of eggs, leaving out one-third of the whites; mix together, put into buttered moulds and bake in a slow oven.

Turn out when baked carefully.

QUEEN CAKES.

Take a pound each of flour, sifted sugar and fresh butter. Wash the butter in rosewater. Pour the water from the butter and squeeze dry in a clean cloth. Work it, a small piece at a time, into half the flour. Beat well six yolks and four whites of eggs. Then work them in with the rest of the flour and the sugar, to which add three tablespoonfuls of orange flower water, a little beaten mace, and one pound of currants and raisins mixed. The latter must be stoned and chopped small. Butter the hoop, which should be only half filled. Sift over each cake some fine castor sugar. Set in a good oven. When cooked turn out upon straw matting to cool.

A NICE ORDINARY CAKE.

Rub eight ounces of butter into two pounds of dry flour. Mix into a paste with three tablespoonfuls of yeast and a little water. Leave it to rise in a

warm place for an hour and a half. Then mix into it the yolks and the whites of four eggs which have been separately beaten, a pint of water, or enough to make it of a proper thickness, a glass of ginger wine, the grated rind of a lemon, and a tablespoonful of ginger. Then add a pound of antanas, washed, picked and dried. Beat the whole well together. Put into greased moulds and bake in a steady oven. Turn out of the moulds to cool.

CINNAMON BISCUITS.

Take half a pound of dry flour, one pound of crushed lump sugar, one pound of butter, two ounces of powdered cinnamon.

Beat the butter and sugar to a cream. Then stir in the cinnamon and pour into the mixture one glass of brandy. Roll out very thin upon a slab and cut into rounds with a cutter. Bake upon floured tins in a quick oven.

CREAM WAFERS.

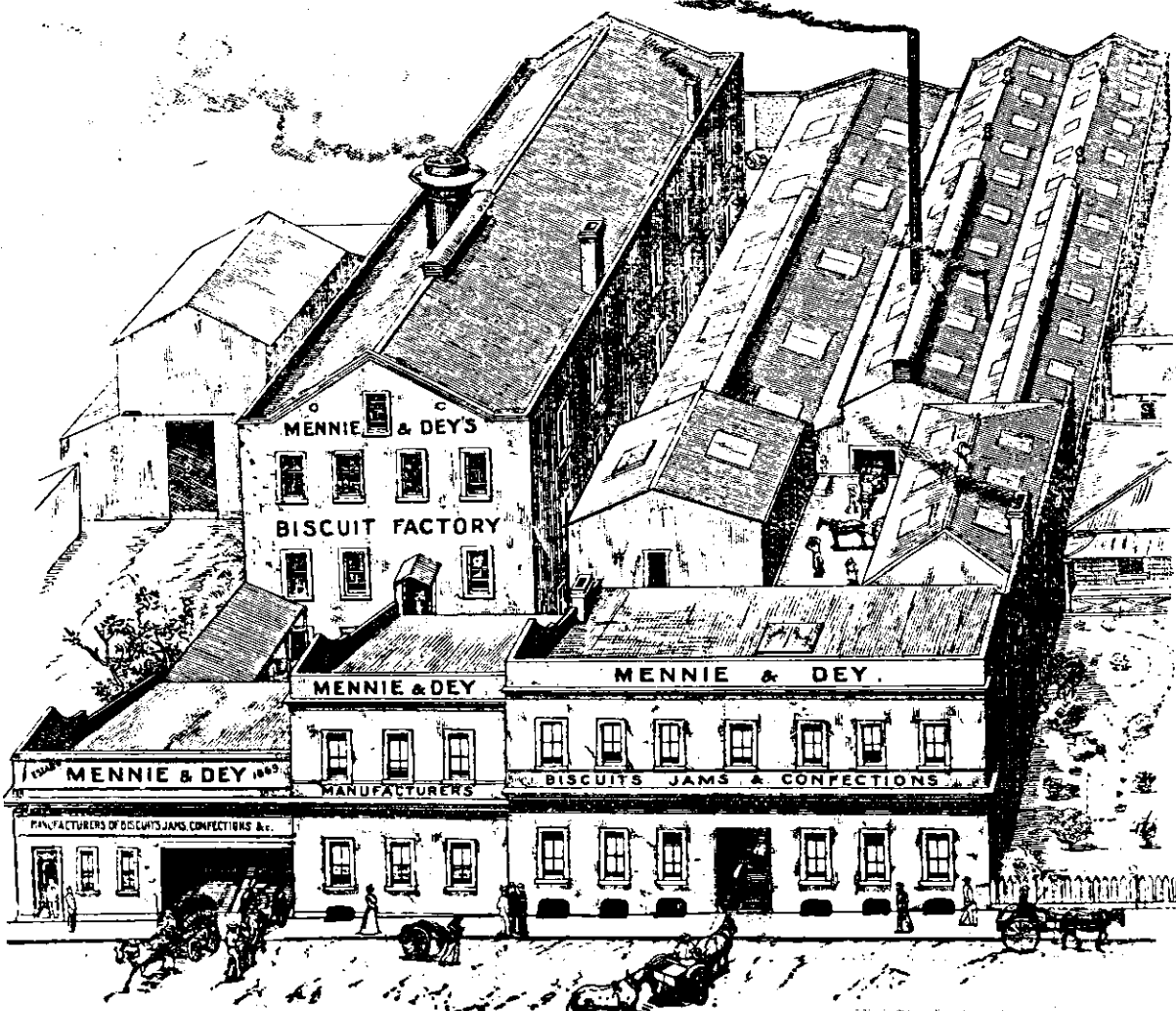
Put into a basin three tablespoonfuls of sugar, three of flour, and two eggs, also a little orange flower water and a little grated lemon peel. Melt two ounces of fresh butter in half a pint of water and make the paste with it. Knead the whole lightly, but well. See that it is not too thin or too stiff. Heat the pan and butter it. Put in a spoonful of the mixture and fry both sides to a fine gold colour. Take it out and roll it upon a roll, and hold it while it takes the form. Then fry another and form in the same manner. Set upon kitchen paper to drain, screen lightly with castor sugar.

SOONES.

Take two ounces of butter to nearly a pound of flour. Mix with skimmed milk until you have a nice smooth dough. Knead lightly and form into round cakes. Prick holes with a fork and bake upon floured tins in a good, steady oven.

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