



Valentine Buns “Plum Shuttles”

Sweet yeast-raised bread buns with dried fruit and candied peel formed into the point-ended shape of weaver's shuttles, glazed. Eaten on Saint Valentine's Day in parts of Leicestershire and Rutland.

The 'Leicestershire and Rutland Notes and Queries and Antiquarian Gleaner' of 1889-92. "Curious Old Custom at Market Overton, Rutland.

On the 14th of February every year (Valentine Day) it has been the custom from time immemorial to give away buns to all the children in the village. Some years ago, buns were given from four different houses, also from two houses in the adjoining village of Barrow, and from one house in the village of Teigh; as the old families have died off, or have left, and new ones came in their places, the number of donors has diminished, until at the present time I am the only one left who keeps up the custom, and when I am gone it will probably die out altogether. The buns are now known as "Valentine Buns," but within my recollection they were called "Plum Shuttles," being of an oval shape, like a weaver's shuttle*; and I have heard it said that the custom of giving the buns away has prevailed even since the time when weaving by means of the hand-looms was common in many houses. Market Overton. Edward Costall.

• Plum Shuttles (pronounced " Shittles") are still eaten on St. Valentine's Day, at Uppingham, Rutland. - Ed, " <http://www.foodsofengland.co.uk/plumshuttlesorvalentinebuns.htm>

Original Receipt from the Kingsdown, Lynsted and Norton Parish Newsletter, 2000.

Rutland Plum Shuttles

Ingredients - makes 12:

- 1lb (450g) plain flour
- 2oz (50g) butter
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 4fl oz (125ml) warm milk
- ½ tablespoon caster sugar
- 1 egg (plus some beaten egg for glazing)
- 2fl oz (50ml) warm water
- 8oz (225g) currants
- ½oz (15g) fresh or ½ teaspoon dried yeast

Method:

Sift the flour and salt into a bowl.

Cream the yeast and sugar together and mix with the water.

Leave to stand for 20 mins until frothy.

Melt the fat in a pan with the milk and beat in the egg.

Add the yeast mixture to the flour and salt and mix in the currants.

Mix to a smooth dough and knead well on a floured board.

Cover and leave to rise until double in size (usually about 30 mins in a warm place).

Knock back and knead again.

Divide the dough into 12 pieces and shape into a small oval shape.

Place on a greased baking tray and cover with a damp cloth and leave to rise for 30 mins in a warm place.

Heat oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas mark 6.

Brush with beaten egg and bake for 25 - 30 minutes.

Cool on a wire rack.

Enjoy sharing with family and friends