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FOREWORD

Rationing in Britain during the Second World War was seen as a necessary evil, but the government at the time went to great lengths to ensure that everyone had enough to eat. They were determined, as the official leaflets reproduced in this book demonstrate, that the people in Britain should be fit to carry on the fight and for many this meant adopting a far healthier diet than they had ever enjoyed before. Even today we can learn a great deal about health and nutrition from the efforts that were made during the war years.

At the end of the First World War, the government took stock of the food problems faced during that period. This led to extensive technical investigations into food preparation, preservation, storage and transport, and to increased research into the scientific aspects of food and nutrition. During the great depression at the end of the 1920s, when unemployment exceeded two million, the poorest people could just about afford to buy sufficient calories to stay alive, but not to buy the milk, fruit and vegetables that would ensure they had sufficient protein, minerals and vitamins. In the 1930s a study organized by the British Medical Association showed that only the richest part of the population received a surplus of these basic dietary constituents; all the rest, some forty million people, were deficient to some extent, and four-and-a-half million were deficient in all constituents. Calcium deficiency was one of the biggest problems, which prompted the government to promote the drinking of milk in schools.

MAKING THE MOST OF THE Fat Ration

TRY THESE FAT SAVING HINTS AND RECIPES.

M.F

FAT FOR SPREADING

Butter Extender No. 1

8 oz. margarine or butter
1 level tablespoon flour
½ level teaspoon salt
¼ pint milk

Put 6 oz. margarine into a bowl and cream with a wooden spoon. Melt 2 oz. in a saucepan, work in the flour and salt and add the milk. Heat carefully, stirring until smooth and thick. Boil 5-7 minutes. Cool and add to the margarine in the bowl. Mix well until smooth and allow to cool before using.

Butter Extender No. 2

Melt margarine and add it to an equal quantity of mashed potato. Mix and use cold.

Dripping Spreads

Use dripping from the joint alone, or mixed with any of the following: Salt and pepper, chopped pickle, meat extract, chopped onion or leek, bottle sauce or chutney, herbs, vinegar and grated cheese.

COLLECTING EXTRA FAT

Trim all surplus fat off cooked or uncooked meat and render it down. Firm fat may be grated or chopped finely and used instead of suet.

Bacon Rinds

Bake or fry these until crisp and all the fat has been extracted. Strain off the fat and use in place of dripping. The crisp rinds may be chopped and used for flavouring scrambled eggs, sandwich spreads, soups, stews or stock.

To Render Down Fat (Method 1)

Cut the fat in small pieces and put into a pan. Add sufficient water to cover the bottom of the saucepan and bring to the boil. Skim well. Boil gently on a low heat, stirring occasionally to prevent the fat from sticking. Continue cooking gently until all the water has evaporated

The outbreak of war in 1939 made it imperative to apply the findings of nutritional science to feeding the population, and plans

for rationing and distribution were drawn up, based on the experience of the Great War. The Ministry of Food was run very effectively by its scientific adviser, the nutritional biochemist Sir Jack Drummond, and the Minister, Lord Woolton, who had seen the effects of malnutrition and neglect in Liverpool and was determined to use his position to stamp them out. The two men set out to improve the nutritional content of the nation's diet. It was the first time modern theories of nutrition were applied to feeding a nation. Drummond's organizational flair, together with Woolton's determination to simplify rationing, confining it to goods whose supply could be guaranteed, led to a national food policy that promoted adequate nourishment and the economical use of foodstuffs.

Between 1940 and 1941, British agriculture was expected to supply about a third of the nation's food energy requirements, two thirds of the calcium, a third of the vitamin A, two fifths of the vitamin B1 and, as a result of increased potato production, all the necessary vitamin C. It was decided to increase home production of milk and vegetables and to increase supplies of imported dried and condensed milk, canned fatty fish and pulses, although imports of fruits, except oranges, were reduced as being wasteful of shipping resources.

It was, of course, essential to increase agricultural production to compensate for the loss of imports. Yet in spite of significant efforts, the energy value of home-produced food rose only from the pre-war level of 900 calories per head per day to 1200 (about forty per cent of the total) in 1943–44. The level of imports dropped to less than half the pre-war level, and became increasingly uncertain due to the threat from German submarines, which sank some 2,500 merchant ships during the course of the war. The emphasis for food production was on those with the highest energy values: oilseeds, oils and fats, canned meat, cheese, processed milk and boneless or compressed meat carcases (which made it hard for cooks to know what part of the animal they were dealing with). Sugar imports fell to about half their pre-war level in the years

DRIED EGGS

The Ministry of Food dried egg is pure fresh egg with no additions, and nothing but the moisture taken away. It is pure egg, spray dried.

Eggs are a very highly concentrated form of food. They contain first-class body-building material. They also help us to resist colds and other infection because of their high protective properties.

Eggs are easily digested, and for this reason are especially good for children and invalids.

Dried eggs are just as good as fresh eggs, and should be used in the same way. They are very useful for main dishes. Here are some recipes for a variety of appetising dishes in place of meat, fish or cheese and which are particularly suitable for dried egg.

HOW TO RECONSTITUTE DRIED EGG

1 level tablespoonful egg powder
2 ,, ,, water
} equals 1 egg.

Methods.

1. Mix the egg and water and allow to stand for about five minutes until the powder has absorbed the moisture. Then work out any lumps with a wooden spoon, finally beating with a fork or whisk.
2. Mix egg to a smooth paste with half the water. Beat till lumps have been removed. Add the remaining water and beat again.
3. For plain cakes and puddings, batters, etc., the egg can be added dry and mixed with the other dry ingredients. When adding the liquid to the mixture an additional 2 tablespoons per dried egg used must be allowed.

USE AT ONCE.

After reconstituting the egg use at once. Do not reconstitute more egg than necessary for immediate use.

METHOD OF COOKING

Use in recipes exactly as fresh eggs, beating as usual before adding to other ingredients.

STORAGE

Keep the egg powder in a tin with a tight fitting lid, and store in a cool place. Do not keep dried egg in a refrigerator.

MINISTRY OF FOOD
WAR COOKERY LEAFLET 11
Number

BACON AND EGG PIE

2 eggs (reconstituted);
2 rashers of grilled bacon;
8 oz. potato pastry;
2 oz. mashed potato;
Salt and pepper.

Method.—Beat the egg. Line a plate with half the pastry. Mix the egg, potato, salt and pepper, and chopped bacon together. Pour this mixture on to the plate, cover with the rest of the pastry. Bake in a moderate oven for ½ hour. Serve hot with vegetables or cold with salad. (Sufficient for 4.)

EGG CUTLETS

1½ lbs. mixed cooked vegetables (chopped finely);
1½ ozs. oatmeal;
4 dried eggs in powder form;
Salt and pepper.

Method.—Mix all ingredients together. Heat a little fat in frying-pan till smoking hot and fry spoonsful of the mixture till golden brown all over. Serve sprinkled with chopped parsley. (Sufficient for 4.)

OMELETTE

2 eggs (reconstituted);
½—¾ oz. margarine or fat;
Salt and pepper.

Method.—Beat the egg and salt and pepper. Heat fat in the pan, pour in the egg and work it with a fork in the usual manner. Fold over and serve immediately.

SPANISH OMELETTE (Variation)

2 eggs (reconstituted);
8 ozs. grated mixed vegetables;
A small piece of chopped leek or parsley;
2 tablespoons water;
Salt and pepper;
1½ oz. margarine or dripping.

Method.—Beat the eggs. Heat the fat in a frying pan and fry the vegetables and leek until tender. Add the eggs, water and seasoning. Stir until the eggs are set, then shape into a crescent, and serve immediately. Or serve flat without folding. (Sufficient for 4.)

SCRAMBLED EGG

1 egg (reconstituted);
½ oz. fat;
1 tablespoon milk.
Salt and pepper.

Method.—Add the milk and seasoning to the reconstituted egg and beat lightly with a fork. Melt the fat in a saucepan, add the mixture and cook over a very low heat, stirring as little as possible until it just sets. Serve at once.

Note. To make this dish go further, diced cooked vegetables can be added.

"ONE-POT" Meals

MENU 1

SAUSAGE ROLL

GRAVY

CARROTS, CHOPPED PARSLEY, POTATOES

STEAMED PUDDING WITH JAM

SAUSAGE ROLL

8 oz. *sausagemeat*
2 *tablespoons finely chopped onion or leek*
1 *tablespoon chopped pickle*
3 oz. *breadcrumbs*
Pinch of mixed herbs
Pinch of pepper
1½ *teaspoons salt*
2 *tablespoons stock or milk*

Mix all the ingredients together thoroughly. Turn into a greased tin. Cover with lid and steam 1½–2 hours.

UTENSILS REQUIRED
1 LARGE SAUCEPAN WITH A LID
2 8-OZ. COCOA TINS WITH LIDS

MENU 1

CONTINUED

GRAVY

3 tablespoons flour
Pinch of pepper
½ pint vegetable water
1 meat cube
Gravy browning

Blend the flour and pepper with a little cold water, pour on the vegetable water and return to the pan with the meat cube. Bring to the boil, stirring all the time and boil for 5 minutes. Add gravy browning and salt if necessary.

STEAMED PUDDING WITH JAM

6 oz. plain flour and
3 teaspoons baking powder
or *6 oz. self-raising flour*
Pinch of salt
1½ oz. margarine or cooking fat
1½ oz. sugar
Just over ¼ pint milk and water
2 tablespoons jam

Mix together the flour, baking powder if used, and salt. Rub in the margarine or fat and add the sugar. Mix to a dropping consistency with milk and water. Put the jam at the bottom of a greased tin and add the pudding mixture. Cover with lid and steam for 1½—2 hours.

ALL QUANTITIES FOR 4 - ALL SPOONS LEVEL

METHOD

Method to have dinner ready by 1 p.m.

Preparation: Make up the roll, put into a tin and place the lid on.
Make the steamed pudding and put into a tin, put the lid on.
Prepare the vegetables.

11-0 Put the 2 tins into the saucepan with enough boiling water to come half-way up the tins. Put on the lid and keep the water boiling gently.

12-0 Add 2 teaspoons salt to the water and put 1 lb. carrots, cut in small chunks, in the pan round tins.

12-15 Put 1½ lb. potatoes in the pan with the carrots.

12-50 Dish up. Sprinkle carrots with coarsely chopped parsley. Keep hot while making gravy with the vegetable water.

1-0 Serve.

COOKING TIME 2 HOURS