

until thickening over a gentle heat, then add the milk and bring to the boil. Simmer about 5 minutes, add the cream and shrimps and adjust the seasoning.

Turn out the fish creams, and spoon over the sauce.

HERRINGS WITH MUSTARD

¼ lb. onions; ½ pint water; ½ oz. flour; 4 herrings; 2 oz. butter; 1 oz. grated cheese; 1 large teaspoonful French mustard.

Slice onions finely. Melt 1½ oz. of the butter in a stewpan, put in the onions, cover and simmer until soft. Have the

herrings split and boned, lay them in a buttered dish, season well with salt and freshly ground black pepper, cover with a piece of buttered paper and cook in the oven 15-20 minutes.

Melt the remaining butter in a saucepan, add the flour off the fire, with the mustard, seasoning, and a pinch of sugar. Pour on the water, stir until boiling, simmer 4-5 minutes, add the milk and half the cheese off the fire.

Take the herrings from the oven, remove the paper and scatter the onions over the dish. Spoon over the sauce, sprinkle with the rest of the cheese and glaze under the grill.

PRINCIPAL WAYS OF COOKING FISH

BOILING

This term is applied to cooking whole or large pieces of fish but is misleading as no fish should really be allowed to boil. Barely simmering or poaching (see below) is the correct temperature. 'Boiled' fish, however, is a traditional English dish; cod, skate, turbot or halibut and salmon are the most suitable. They should be accompanied by an appropriate sauce, egg, shrimp, oyster or parsley sauce for cod and turbot; Hollandaise, shrimp or green sauce for salmon. Skate is best served with a butter sauce.

When cooking a thick steak or piece of fish one should make a special stock or 'court-bouillon'; this adds flavour and keeps the colour of the fish. This stock should not be thrown away after use, but strained and kept in a cool place. It will keep several days, and may be used again for poaching or as a basis for a soup or sauce. Times of cooking

are approximately the same as for poaching small whole fish. Allow approximately 12 minutes per lb. for a thick steak of fish.

POACHING

The term poaching means cooking in liquid just below boiling point. This may be carried out either on top of the stove or in the oven according to the type of fish being cooked and the dish for which it is intended. For example fillets of fish are invariably poached in the oven as the liquor provides the basis for a good sauce to finish the dish.

When poaching fillets always skin them and fold each end underneath. Have the side that came nearest the bone uppermost as this is whiter in appearance.

Sprinkle fish with salt, but do not

pepper as this discolours it. Add instead 5-6 peppercorns to the poaching liquid.

The amount of liquid is usually given in a recipe, and should be just enough barely to cover. Certain fish, cod and haddock, for example, need less liquid than sole or plaice.

The liquid may be water with a few drops of lemon juice, cider and water, or white wine and water. Proportions are a wineglassful (¾ gill) of cider or wine to ½ gill of water.

All poaching should be done in a very moderate oven, Reg. 4 or 350 degrees F.

APPROXIMATE TIMES

FILLETS Haddock, plaice, sole 10-15 minutes.
Cod, hake, etc. 15-20 minutes.

SMALL WHOLE FISH
Whiting, haddock, 25-35 minutes,
sole, trout, etc. according to size.

Fillets or steaks when cooked will be white in appearance, and firm to the touch. If the backbone in a cutlet can be easily removed it is a sure indication the fish is done.

All fish to be poached should be first washed and dried (see frying).

FRYING

For most fried foods a deep fat bath is the simplest and most economical provided care is taken to have fat at correct temperature and to keep it well strained and clean.

Here are a few simple rules:—

1. Fats to use:
Vegetable oils. Lard.
Fats such as Spry. Clarified dripping.
2. Have a proper pan and basket. Fill it approximately two-thirds full with the chosen fat.
3. Heat when everything is prepared

and the food ready to be fried, not before. A light blue haze should rise from the surface when frying fish coated with crumbs or batter. For food already cooked, i.e. fish cakes, a stronger haze is desirable.

4. If using the frying basket, dip first into the liquid fat.
 5. Drain fried food on a rack or on crumpled kitchen paper before dish-ing. Avoid covering or keeping it warm in the oven with the door closed; it will lose its crispness at once. If it has to be kept for a time it is better to leave it out on a rack to cool and when wanted put into a hot oven for 5 minutes.
 6. Allow fat to cool and then strain through a muslin placed in a strainer. Store in a cool place.
 7. Avoid over-heating. After frying it is some times necessary to put in a crust of bread to prevent this.
- All food to be fried must have a coating of some kind; such as flour, batter, egg and dry white crumbs.

It is convenient to have a jar of these crumbs in the kitchen ready for use. To prepare, rub stale white bread through a sieve. Lay the crumbs on paper and put in a warm place, the stove rack for example, for a day or two until perfectly dry, then store in an airtight jar.

These give a much better coating both in flavour, colour and texture than the browned bread raspings.

It is most important that all fish to be coated should be thoroughly dried in a cloth. This ensures that when the piece is rolled in flour a light film adheres instead of a sticky mass; this is especially important when frying in shallow fat. The cloth should be kept specially for the purpose.