



Meet a Special Mother – Ella Veronica Casey Healy



My sweet Irish grandmother, Ella Veronica Casey Healy, was born in Havre de Gras, Maryland, a little town on the northern shore of the Chesapeake Bay. She was the 12th of thirteen children. Her father fought for the north in the Civil War in the cavalry and was wounded in the wrist. Ella married Joseph Healy and moved to Harrisburg, PA, where she had four children. Her grandchildren, and then her sons-in-law and daughter-in-law, called her Moner, a sweet name for a very sweet person. The name Moner came about because the first grandchild was a baby, living in her house during WW II while his father was flying

bombers in Asia. The grandchild heard Ella's children call her mother and ended up calling her Moner.

As she was making the dough for fried bread one night, her son held a measuring cup under her hand as she put in each ingredient, so now the family has her fried bread recipe. It is from the northern part of Ireland and is a smaller version of the French beignets in New Orleans.

Fried Bread

Ella's recipe from Ireland

1 pkg. dry yeast powder or fresh yeast
1-pint lukewarm water
1 Tablespoon sugar
6 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon. salt
1 heaping Tablespoon Crisco or lard
Confectioner's sugar as desired

- In a small bowl, dissolve yeast powder in warm (between 100°F and 110°F) water, stir in sugar. (If using fresh yeast, rub in with fingers or pastry whip.) Set aside until mixture bubbles, for about 10 minutes.
 - Place yeast mixture into a large mixing bowl; Slowly add half of flour and salt; then add remaining flour until it won't take up any more flour and forms a soft dough.
 - Grease a large bowl with lard. Put in dough, turn over once, and put a little lard on top of dough. (Crisco can be used instead of lard.)
 - Wrap bowl in a warm blanket or loosely cover with plastic wrap; let rise in a warm place overnight.

 - The next morning, take some dough out of bowl; roll out on flour dusted bread board.
 - Cut into 4" by 2" strips, place on piece of parchment paper; roll remaining dough into strips.
 - Fry in 375-degree F. hot oil for about 5 minutes; flipping once during cooking.
 - Place on paper towel after frying.
 - Sprinkle with lots of confectioners' sugar on top. Serve warm.
 - (We placed confectioners' sugar in large plastic bag; toss in warm fried bread to coat with sugar.)
- Yield: about 4 dozen (2 dozen for half of the recipe).

Note from Mary Ann Penney: Serve warm and let family members sprinkle lots of powdered sugar on top. Continue until everyone has had their fill. (My grandmother stood rolling dough and frying it while the family enjoyed eating. Then my grandmother would sit down and have a couple pieces herself. A great quantity of

powdered sugar is an absolute necessity, especially if you have a shaker with a handle and lots of holes.)

Cook's Note: We halved the recipe and made 24 fried breads. Since this was an old family recipe, we added some of the information such as providing cooking temperature and times. The Fried Breads should be about 2x4 inches, however, some of our dough decided to stretch into other shapes. Since the cooked breads have a hole in the center, we thought a nice serving suggestion might be some jelly, cream cheese, or butter spread.

About the Recipe: Fried bread is a typical Irish specialty and uses local roll made dough. Cooking it in oil, and with this recipe a little yeast powder, makes it puff up with a doughnut-like appearance. The Irish usually sprinkle it with powdered sugar or serve them with jam. Our Fried Breads had very crisp crusts and were filled with tender soft bubbles of dough inside.