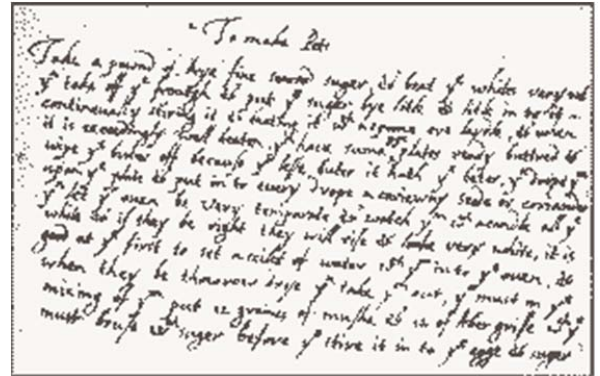


Pets From Lady Rachel Fane

In 1630, a recipe for a baked beaten-egg-white-and-sugar confection is given in a manuscript of collected recipes written, by Lady Rachel Fane (1612/13 - 1680). At that time, Lady Fane was single, eighteen and living in West Kent at Knole, one of the largest private houses in England, and, since 1566, the home of Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset, and his descendants who have lived there ever since. The recipe by Lady Fane appears to be the second earliest recorded recipe of a baked beaten-egg-white-and-sugar confection. It is reproduced here with the kind permission of the Centre for Kentish Studies in Maidstone, Kent, U.K.,



Where it is archived, an annotated transcription of the recipe follows the figure:

"To make Pets

Take a pownd of Drye fine searsed [sifted] suger, & beat the whites very wel then take off frouthg [froth] & put your suger, bye litle & litle in to it — contineually stiring it & beating it with a spoone ore laydle, and when it is exceedingly well beaten, then have some pye plates ready buttred & wipe the buter of because the lesse buter it hath the beter, then drope them upon the plate & put in to every drope a carieway seede or coriander then let your oven be very temparate and watch them with a candle all the while & if they be right they will rise and looke very white, it is good at the first to set a scilet [skillet] of water, with them in to the oven, & when they be thowrow [thoroughly] drye then take them out, you must in the mixing of them put 12 graines of muske & 12 of Abergrisse [Ambergris] which you must bruse with suger before you stire it in to the egge & suger."

Redacted recipe

Ingredients

6 egg whites
225 g caster sugar
25 g butter
1 teaspoon lightly crushed coriander seeds
1 teaspoon lightly crushed aniseeds

Method

Beat the egg whites until they are really stiff and then add all but 2 tablespoons of the sugar, a spoonful at a time beating as you go until the meringue is glossy.

Mix the coriander and aniseed with the remaining sugar, crushing it gently, and fold it carefully into the meringue mixture. Take a couple of baking sheets and lightly butter them or cover with baking paper. Place a tablespoon of mixture on to the surface, leaving at least an inch around each one for spreading. Bake in a low preheated oven, 140 degrees, for 1 to 1 ½ hours. They're really meant to dry out rather than bake and should remain white through out. Allow to cool before lifting off. They will store in an air tight container for 3-4 days.

Source-Old English Recipes by Michael Barry (Jarrod Pub., 1995) (p. 64 - 65).

http://www.inmamaskitchen.com/FOOD_IS_ART/meringue2.html