

Grandmother Buechler's Russian Rings

Mary Lynn Axtman, Fargo, ND, e-mail message to Michael Miller

14 eggs
1 cup sour cream
1 tsp. baking powder
1 1/2 cups sugar
flour to make a stiff dough

Roll enough dough between hands to make a half-inch thick rope about 6 to 8 inches long. Pinch ends together to form a ring. Cook in boiling water for 10 minutes. Place on baking sheets and bake in oven until brown.

About Grandmother Buechler:

Margaretha Reiter was born in 1869 in Kandel village, the oldest child of Ludwig Reiter and Isabella Duttenhofer. Her mother later died in childbirth and Margaretha took over responsibility for her younger siblings. She was very literate and knew two books by heart from cover to cover--her German fraktor Bible and a medical book.

She married Michael Buechler in Selz Church and accompanied him on construction work in Bessarabia and Roumania, living in crude construction camps along the way. They returned to Mannheim village before immigrating to Orrin, North Dakota, USA in March, 1903 with their 4 sons and Michael's niece, Katie Deringer. Margaretha was a midwife and self taught medical practitioner in Russia and in Pierce County, ND.

Since she frequently was away from home delivering babies and caring for the sick, niece Katie was brought along to the US to cook and keep her house going while she gone. Margaretha delivered about 300-500 babies in the Orrin area, including her own set of twins and all her grandchildren.

She was very busy during area outbreaks of diptheria, typhoid, and the 1918 influenza. She was given a North Dakota Health Dept. service citation for her work in an area that was 20 miles in either direction from the nearest doctors. The Rugby doctor who supervised her work trusted her medical judgement as to what she could do by herself and when to call him for more serious situations. She used local plants, herbs, and roots to prepare treatments for various ailments both in Russia and in ND. Camomile tea and chicken noodle soup also cured many ailments. When medicine failed, her great faith and religious practice were a comfort to the families also.