"...With Mayt, Turmit and Tatey"

by

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I dearly luv a pasty, a 'ot leaky one;
With mayt, turmit and tatey, h'onion and parsley in 'un,
The crust be made with suet, shaped like 'alf a moon,
crinkly h'edges, freshly baked, e' es always gone too soon.

During the mid-1800's, each ethnic group that descended on the Upper Peninsula enroute to greater depths in her iron and copper mines clung fiercely to old-country customs as long as grandchildren and American temptations permitted. As in any new country, there was a gradual merging of nationalities and now that this cultural booyaw has been simmering for over a hundred years, it's pretty tough to pick out the original flavors . . . but there are a couple of notable exceptions.

The Finns' beloved sauna which knew only Scandinavian sweat for hundreds of years has been adopted

Mrs. Pearl Brailey, champion pasty baker, tempts the reader with a panful of her best. Read on, hungry one, for instructions and a recipe.

Frank Mathews, mine historian of Negaunee, introduces himself to one of Mrs. Brailey's superior pasties in the proper way — by holding vertically and breaking off an end. Mathews created and operates the free Jackson Mine Museum between Marquette and Negaunee.

by our entire country and although the Cornishman's saffron bread and scalded cream never made it with the throngs, his pasty has become the Upper Peninsula's family crest . . . or crust. It's been said that the pasty has mined more copper and iron than anything else, for even above his agility at the table the Cornishman was respected as a miner — the world's best. **Uncover an old mine anywhere and at the bottom you'll find a Cousin Jack* and he'll probably have a pasty in his pocket.**

When Michigan's first copper and iron explorations got under way in the 1840's the tin and copper mines of Cornwall County, England, had already been mined to depths beyond all reason, and Cornish miners, lacking work, turned eyes to the West. Between 1851 and 1891 approximately 170,000 Cornwall residents emigrated overseas — some to the gold mines of South America and some to our copper mines in the southwest. But the bulk of them planted their hollyhocks in the Upper Peninsula.

The Cousin Jack miner has a nose for minerals, the mathematics of a mole and a pure love of work. Thanks mostly to him, underground mining in the Upper Peninsula got off to a spectacular start. Every mine boasted at least one Cornish shift boss or mine captain, despite the fact that few of them had any formal education. This situation aggravated the mine engineer no end because he himself a high potentate in deep mine country, arrived at conclusions through technical approaches and sound reasoning. The Cornishman just saw'em. The mine superintendant, who had to choose sides, usually believed the Cousin Jack.

Some mining communities were almost entirely Cornish, and old country expressions and words lingered to such an extent that a native American almost needed an interpreter to communicate with the townfolk. A mine was a **bal** and it had a **hore** body that must be got **hout** of the ground. Person-

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**A Cornish motto: "One and all", suggests a friendly, hospitable, neighborly people and in 1600, centuries before Michigan was even a name, Richard Corey wrote that all Cornish gentry are cousins — the first inkling, perhaps, of the origin of the expression "Cousin Jack." Appropriately enough, his wife was a Cousin Jenny.*

al pronouns were applied to inanimate subjects and a shovel or pick was always an **'e**. An old Cornish story says, **We call all things 'e 'cept ol' Tom Cat and we calls she 'er.**

Needless to say the Cousin Jacks' dialect was the source of many good yarns, and the dry, subtle humor has endured along with the pasty:

Jan 'enry lived over the neighborhood saloon he operated so that even when he wasn't actually presiding, he was always convenient to pass judgment on the solvency of a thirsty patron along to the bartender downstairs:

Jan 'enry, be you oop there?

Yes, I be 'ere.

Is boy Billy good for a drink?

'as 'e 'ad it?

'e 'as.

'e is.

Jack Penhaligan was attending night school in an effort to cope with the larger words but was having a bit of a struggle until friend Billy cleared things up:

W'en you don't h'understand a word, you got to h'analyze it. Now take "category" — h'everybody knows wot "cat" means and "e", that's a 'e cat. Gory is understandable too, so "category" is nothing but a "bloody tomcat".

Or easing back to the main character of this article we might recall the winter when Jenny Phillips attempted to stretch the family budget by scrimping on the beef and pork which went into 'usband Jack's daily pasty. It didn't go unnoticed:

Jenny, let's be 'aving a little more mayt in me pasty and not so much turmit and tatey — me stummick's no bloody root cellar, y'know.

Actually, pasty pies with meat were a long time arriving in Cornwall, for the original pie ingredients were whatever was handy and cheap — tin miners' families were large and wages small. Nothing was too common for a Cornish pie and an old story related that, because a Cousin Jenny will make a pasty out of anything, the devil never visited Cornwall for fear of getting personally involved.

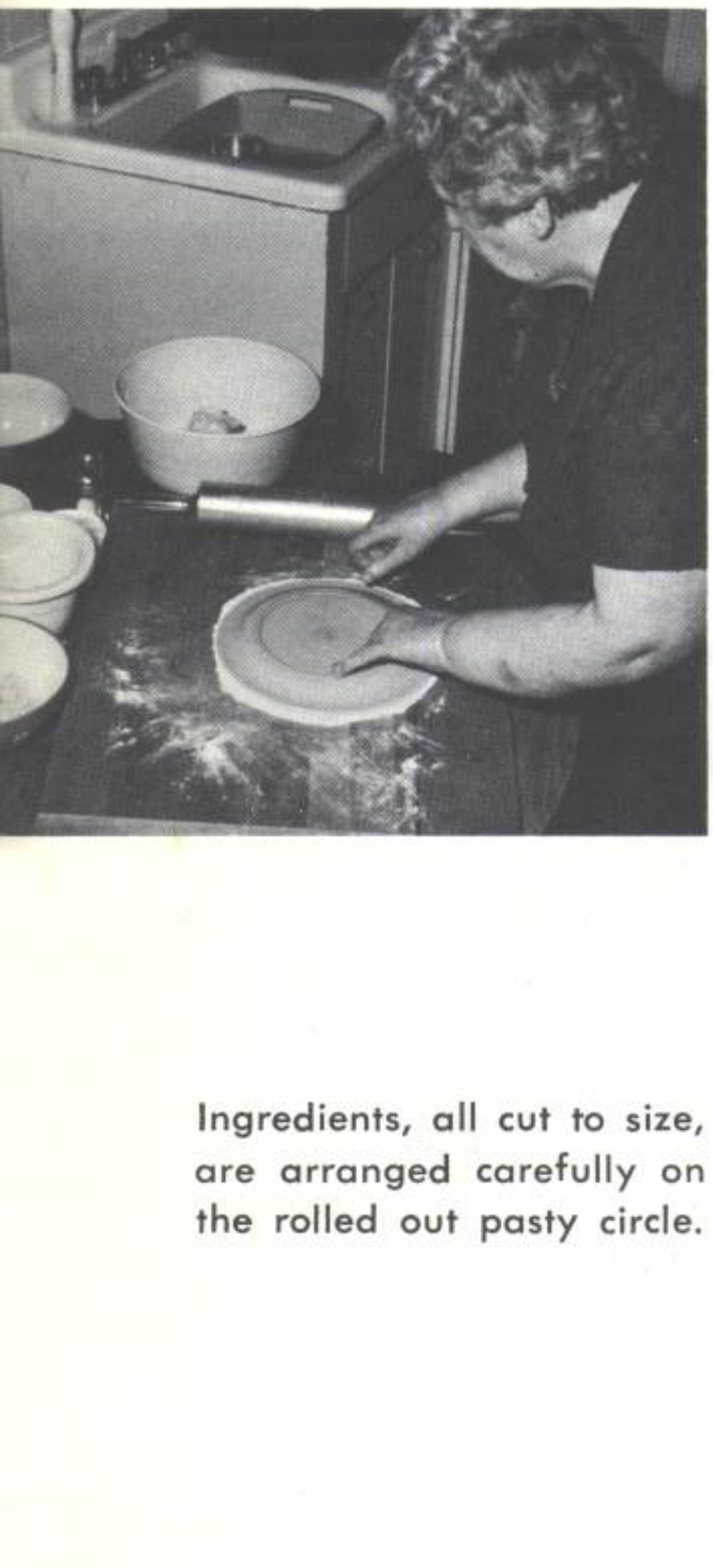
There were mackerel pies, pilchard pies, conger pies, bream pies, ram pies, muggety pies, curlew pies, taty pies, lammy pies, leek pies, and herby pies. There was even a variation of the pilchard pie called the "starry-gazy" in which whole sardines were introduced to their final resting place in a vertical position so that their heads protruded through the top crust, enabling them to watch their own last rites. The "seasoned pasty," still popular amongst some of the U-P Cousin Jacks, is stuffed with raisins or meat and onions and cooked in a kettle of pea soup, sort of a Cornish dumpling with real lasting power.

But the pasty which has inspired poetry, songs, eulogies, and dozens of north country shops is that lovely creation of meat, potatoes, turnips and onions, wrapped in a suet crust and handled with reverence by all involved.

If an old Cousin Jenny from Central Mine or Cornishtown could look down over the edge of her cloud to see Finns, Irishmen, Italians and Croatians enjoying her beloved pasty with a Cornishman's fervor, she would be pleased — except for a good fight, she had never known them to share anything in common. But if she were to look between or within the crusts of some of our modern day "pasties" Jenny would quickly disclaim any credit for ethnic mediation.

Somehow potatoes seem to have taken over the starring role, and turnips have been forced to give way to carrots — ground up fine,

The dough is rolled out, then cut circular with plate as pattern.



Ingredients, all cut to size, are arranged carefully on the rolled out pasty circle.

mind you. Any chunk meat included is often pretty darn elusive, and on all too many occasions, plain old hamburger has been admitted — one Slavic chef we know has even taken to injecting a garlicky - flavored sauce through the pasty's posterior in an effort to attain a unique flavor. He has.

The barbaric ritual of pouring gravy over the pasty has been spreading across the Peninsula like a cancer and even more incredible, some eateries slice horizontally through their pasties before freezing, then plop them on the hamburger grill when an order is received.

Forgive them, Jenny, for they know not what they do!

In an effort to restore the failing reputation of a good pasty, a campaign was launched to select the pasty-baking champion of the Upper Peninsula, with the hope that she would share her recipe with you readers. The only qualification set for a candidate for this title was that she must be a Cousin Jenny — this automatically eliminated my Finlander wife from the competition, thus preserving 25 years of peaceful cohabitation.

Fortunately, for everyone, I conduct contests like I buy clothes — inevitably, the first pair of shoes tried on are wrapped up and brought home. But if a hundred different pasties were sampled across the Peninsula, most certainly, taste buds' fondest recollections would be of the entry by Negaunee's Pearl Brailey.

Pearl's family background alone almost qualifies her for the title. She is the daughter of a Cornish miner, is married to a retired Cornish miner, and lived much of her single and married life in Cornishtown, within pasty-whiffing distance of Michigan's first iron mine, the Jackson. Husband Bill started working in a Devonshire tin mine when he was 14 and came to America five years later. Forty years and 12,000 pasties later he

Sides of the dough are folded up, then ends are tipped in and all seams are carefully pinched shut.

Baking proceeds while hunger increases. But be wary. Each **real** pasty is a full meal.

retired to the surface. Bill and Pearl have no children of their own, but they raised ten and adopted two, and how many turmits and taties this involved is beyond comprehension of even the newest mathematics.

Despite all these years of experience, Pearl still arranges the ingredients into pasty-size piles prior to assembly and she never involves any guess work when she's building a crust. Good pasties do not just happen. But they can, possibly even for you, if you take heed of the following:

Pastry for Four Pasties

1 cup finely grated suet
3/4 cup shortening (part lard, part oleo)
1 tablespoon salt
3 cups pastry flour

Mix with fingers until real fine and moisten with ice water until pastry stays together firmly.

Ingredients for One Pasty

1/2 pound pork and beef, cut small
1/2 cup onions, sliced fine
1/4 cup turnips, sliced fine
1/4 cup potatoes, sliced fine

Roll pastry out thin and use a 9 inch plate turned upside down on the dough as a template for a pasty with stomach - pleasing proportions. Fill with alternate layers of meat and vegetables, beginning and ending with meat. Salt and pepper to taste. Fold pasty to meet in the middle, press firmly together, crimp near the top, and prick with fork three times to let it know who's boss. Bake one hour at 400 degrees and keep in mind that a two-pasty man is the world's biggest compliment — or he's going to be.

Assuming that you are a person of refinement, prone to using forks in preference to fingers, you'll probably not subscribe to the vertical Cornish technique of savoring a pasty. According to Frank Mathews, Mr. Jackson Mine himself, a pasty should be consumed on end (its, not yours) to encourage the juices to drain towards the last bite, which is dessert enough . . . if you think that a pasty isn't juicy enough to flow, it's a cinch that you've never eaten one of Pearl Brailey's.

By golly, I have . . .