

The Bedfordshire Clanger

What on earth is this, you ask?

And so you should! I was reading '**Eating for England – Nigel Slater**' ... ('Eating for England' is an entertaining, detailed and somewhat tongue-in-cheek observation of the British and their food, their cooking, their eating and how they behave in restaurants, with chapters on – amongst other things – dinner parties, funeral teas, Indian restaurants, dieting and eating whilst under the influence.)

If you love reading about food in a fun entertaining way, look at your local library, bookshop, second-hand bookshop or order this via Amazon. It really is such a lovely 'drool-worthy' book.

So I'm sitting, reading this book and in the chapter: Dick and Other Delights – *For every famous name, such as Sussex pond pudding, with its cascading pool of lemon syrup, there are another two known only to collectors of Victorian cookbooks. "pace" Mrs Townley's apple pudding, Kentish wells, Bedfordshire clanger, Great Western victory roll"*

Wow, stop!!! Of all the mentions in above paragraph this jumped out at me ... Bedfordshire clanger. I had absolutely NO clue whatsoever what it is – nor does Nigel Slater give an explanation. I immediately turn on my Wi-Fi on my iPad and google it. I was immediately intrigued.

Underneath is the explanation of Bedfordshire Clanger by <https://www.thefooddictator.com/the-hirshon-bedfordshire-clanger/>

'Put simply – it's a very unique and little-known meat pie recipe from England, specifically (not surprisingly) the county of Bedfordshire which is nestled in the very beating heart of the country.

Bedfordshire is a bucolic and agrarian county (with the town of Luton now a centre of the automotive and tech industry), and in centuries past many of the working husbands of the area used to toil in the fields there. Their wives, knowing their husbands would need lots of protein and carbohydrate sustenance, came up with the brilliant idea of a doubled, loaf-shaped pie. One end containing a savoury filling that used the famed pork of the area while the other end was filled with stewed apples (made from the famed local apples) as dessert!

This was brilliant, an entire meal for the hard-working man – handheld, portable and delicious. Traditionally there was a secret code to denote which end was meat and which was dessert: two tiny holes on one end of the pastry top means meat, three knife slits on the other shows the sweet. Clang means to eat voraciously'.

I was captivated. Monday (19 June 2017) I bought puff pastry but kept it in the fridge. Monday night I made a beef shin curry stew. There were leftovers.

Tuesday (20 June 2017) I bought 2 Granny Smith apples, got home, prepared the apples and left it to cool.

Tuesday night (20 June 2017) I made my version of a clanger. And can I say ... it was SWEET! And SAVOURY! And absolutely delicious!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! With little effort, HUGE drama and such satisfaction. Below is my recipe. It does only feed 2, maybe 3 at a stretch depending on your side dishes.

But hey ... main meal and dessert in one dish!!!! Just make sure you mark the top of the pastry or you may baffle and confuse your guests (and yourself).

Bedfordshire Clanger Pie

Clang means to eat voraciously.

My version:

Serves 2

1 x puff pastry, defrosted
1 big cup cooked filling*, cooled down
2 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, cubed
1 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp butter
cinnamon, mixed spices (All Spice) to taste
bit of water
1 egg, beaten



In a pan/pot on stove, melt the butter. Add the apples, sugar, spices and water, put lid on and on medium heat, cook till apples are soft. Let cool down completely.

Preheat oven to 200 oC, using the bottom oven shelf. On baking sheet, place foil and grease. On floured surface, lightly roll out the pastry. On the one side, cut off a long thin strip of pastry. With a knife, lightly mark the bigger part of pastry in 4. Spoon the cooked and cooled savory filling on the one side, leave a space around it. Now use the thin strip of pastry, wet the pastry on both sides and let it stand upright next to the savory filling, folding it a bit around the filling (see picture below).

Spoon the sweet filling* onto the other side on top of the pastry, leaving a space around it. Wet the borders of the pastry and carefully fold the pastry side closest to you over the top of fillings to the other side. Crimp with a fork. Brush with the beaten egg. Make sure you know which side is the savory side by either making 3 holes on top of the pastry, or 3 slashes with a knife. Then on the sweet side make either 2 holes or 2 slashes with a knife. Bake for 30 minutes or till pastry is golden and puffy.

*This filling can be a leftover stew, or a bolognaise, or veggies mixed with a cheese sauce ... use your imagination. Anything that you normally would put into a pie.

*You can use other fruits ... anything you would normally use for a pie filling.



Savoury (left), Sweet (right)



3 slashes (savory), 2 slashes (sweet)



Savoury pie, mash, peas



Sweet pie, serve with ice cream or custard