

# Halloween Pudding Game

Victorian Halloween parties were filled with fun, games and spooky rituals with many of the games having origins in pagan religion or medieval superstition. Others were merely a means of having fun with family and friends. One such popular game was the Halloween pudding. In this game, the host would bake a fruit cake with five objects hidden inside – a ring, a coin, a thimble, a button, and a key. At 9pm, the oldest person would silently cut the cake and would give the pieces out to the other guests. The first words spoken after the cake was cut would be prophetic for the year. It was believed that the person who got the slice of cake with the ring would get married that year. The coin represented finding wealth, while the button symbolized that the person would meet their true love. The key signify going on a journey, and the thimble meant they would remain an old maid/ bachelor.

The following recipe comes from Mrs. Wilson's Cookbook published in 1920:

## **Halloween Fruit Cake**

Place in a mixing bowl

Two and one-half cups of syrup,

One cup of shortening.

Cream well and then add:

Eight cups of flour,

Four level tablespoons of baking powder,

One cup of milk,

One-half cup of cocoa,

One tablespoon of cinnamon,

One teaspoon of cloves,

One teaspoon of allspice,

Two eggs,

Two cups of finely-chopped peanuts.

Beat to mix thoroughly and then grease and flour a baking pan and turn in the batter. Place the raisins one at a time on the top of the batter and gently press them into the dough. Bake for fifty minutes in a slow oven. Cool and then ice and decorate with Halloween figures and then cut into blocks.