

Thomas lived and worked in Derry until his mother died, when he moved to her village in the Republic of Ireland. Therefore, it seemed fitting to include one recipe from Northern Ireland. Fifteens are a classic Northern Irish “traybake” (even though they aren’t baked). They also freeze well; place slices between sheets of parchment paper so they don’t stick together. Warning: They’re addictive! This recipe is adapted from one at traybakesandmore.com.

Fifteens

Makes 18

15 digestive biscuits (cookies) or graham cracker squares, crushed

15 large marshmallows, quartered (or use about 3 ounces/1 ½ cups mini-marshmallows)

15 glacé/candied cherries (or well-drained maraschino cherries), quartered

7 to 9 ounces sweetened condensed milk (from a 14-ounce can)

Dessicated coconut (see note)



Crush the biscuits or graham crackers until they are mostly crumbs, leaving a few larger pieces for texture, and place in a large bowl.

Add the chopped large or uncut mini-marshmallows and cherries and mix all together with your hands, making sure all the pieces stay separate.

Pour in the condensed milk and mix until everything comes together, adding more condensed milk as needed, a little at a time, just enough to hold everything together. Mixture will be sticky.

Place the mixture onto a large piece of foil or parchment paper coated with coconut. Using the paper to keep your hands from getting sticky, shape mixture into a log about 12 inches long. Cover outside of the log generously with the coconut, rolling the log around until it’s covered on all sides. Wrap up tightly in plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator for a couple of hours. Slice and enjoy.

Notes: Dessicated coconut is finely grated coconut that is typically unsweetened. It’s available online and may be sold in some stores. Unsweetened coconut, so long as it’s finely grated, can be substituted.

For extra pretty (and more authentic) fifteens, use a mix of white and pink marshmallows. In the UK/Ireland, marshmallows typically come in a bag of mixed pink and white mallows. Colored marshmallows are available in the U.S. However, they are flavored; those in the UK are not.