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POTATO GROUPS AND VARIETIES

By

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There are a large number of potato groups in the classification of this crop. These groups are different from varieties of potatoes. Each group includes several varieties. Altogether there are about a dozen groups but we will list here only the important groups grown in South Dakota.

A. The Different Potato Groups:

1. The Cobbler Group - Early Maturing, medium sized, white skin; an important truck crop potato; tubers roundish with blunt ends, the stem end being notched rather deeply and giving a shouldered appearance to the tuber. Eyes, medium in number, shallow to deep. Sprouts, short and rather stubby.

Common varieties within this group include Irish Cobbler, Early Dixie and Early Eureka.

2. Triumph Group - Very early maturing, medium sized, white to red skinned; few important commercial varieties. Tubers round, blunt to obtuse ends, slightly too distinctly shouldered. Eyes, medium in number and depth.

Common varieties within this group include Triumph, Quick Lunch and Honeoye Rose.

3. Rose Group - Early maturing, medium sized, pink skinned; tubers elongated or oblong, usually flattish at the center and tapering toward each end, stem and seed end rather blunt. Eyes numerous, shallow to medium deep but sharply marked. Sprouts rather long, medium thick.

Common varieties within this group include Early Fortune, Early Northern, Early Rose and Late Rose Northern Beauty.

4. Early Ohio Group - Early Maturing, medium sized, light pink skin; tubers round oblong, with full rounded seed and stem ends. Eyes, numerous, rather shallow but strong, sometimes protuberant. Sprouts, short large at base.

Common varieties in this group include Early Ohio, Early Market, Early Leme and Early Six Weeks.

5. Burbank Group - Medium late maturing, medium to large size; skin white, smooth to glistening; important in the far West. Tubers long, cylindrical and slightly flattened in shape. Eyes numerous and well distributed, rather shallow.

Common varieties in this group include Burbank and White Beauty.

6. Green Mountain Group - Late maturing, large size, white netted skin. The Green Mountain and Rural Group contain several of the most important commercial varieties of potatoes. Tubers broadly roundish, flattened to distinctly oblong-flattened, ends usually blunt. Eyes medium in number and rather shallow. Sprouts short and stubby.

Common varieties within this group include White Mountain, Pride and White Harvest. (S. D. 875)

7. Rural Group - Late maturing, large size. The most important group for the Northeastern United States. Tubers round and flattened to distinctly oblong. Eyes few and shallow. Sprouts short.

The common varieties within this group having white skin include Rural New Yorker, Sir Walter Raleigh, Bugloss (S. D. 876), Carmen and White Grant.

The common varieties within this group having a russet skin include Late Potosky and Russet.

#### B. What is a Potato Variety:

In discussing the classification of all crops, several terms are employed which should be defined in order that their meaning and use may be clearly understood. The term "variety" is sometimes confused with other terms having a similar meaning. When the term "variety" is applied to potatoes it means a group of the species that have like characters as regards size, shape color, like maturing qualities, etc. In the potato family there are about 1600 species but only six of these bear tubers, the potato family being one of the six. The botanical name for the potato species is *Solanum tuberosum*. Within this species are the numerous varieties which are merely subdivisions of the larger group.

C. Potato Varieties in the United States:

There have been over a thousand varieties of potatoes described by certain potato authorities. It would be impossible for us to include in this circular anywhere near that number of descriptions. The difference between many of these varieties is indeed very slight. There are also a large number of different names for identically the same potato.

D. Potato Varieties in South Dakota:

There are a large number of different varieties of potatoes in South Dakota. Probably the most popular variety in South Dakota is the Early Ohio. A rather fair means of determining the relative popularity would be to make a comparison of the number of growers certifying the different varieties. Following is given the number of South Dakota potato growers certifying various varieties (subject to final inspection):

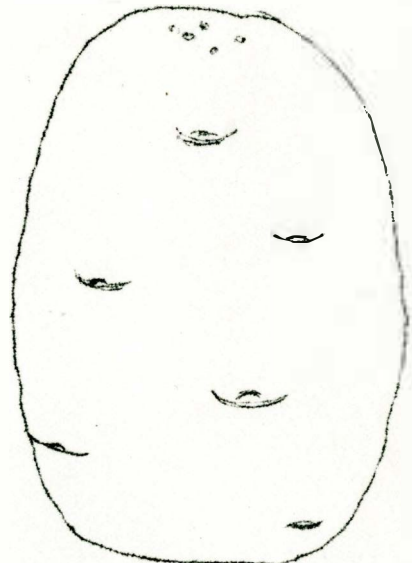
Early Ohio - 97  
Irish Cobblers - 8  
Green Mountain - 5  
Eliss Triumph - 2  
Rural New Yorker - 3

It is evident that among certified growers the Early Ohio seems to be the favorite variety. Following is given a brief description of each of these important varieties.

Early Ohio:

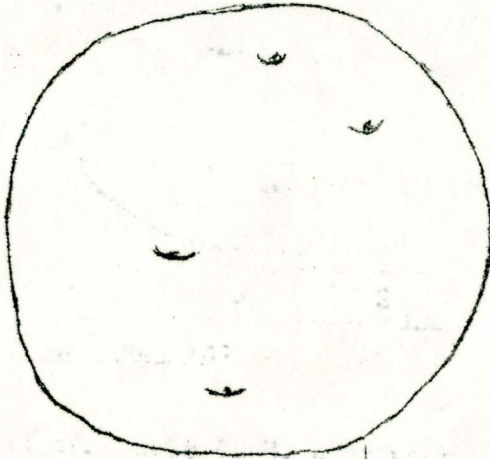
Originated by Alfred Reese in 1871; claimed to be a seedling of Early Rose. Introduced by J. J. H. Gregory in 1875.

Description - Grown side by side with the Early Rose, it proved several days earlier and its yield a third greater. While similar to the Early Rose in color, it is quite distinct in shape, being round-oblong instead of oval-oblong, and can easily be distinguished; eyes about as numerous as those of the parent, brows rather more prominent; on the largest specimens the clusters of eyes at the seed end are located slightly to one side of the longer axis.





Irish Cobbler:

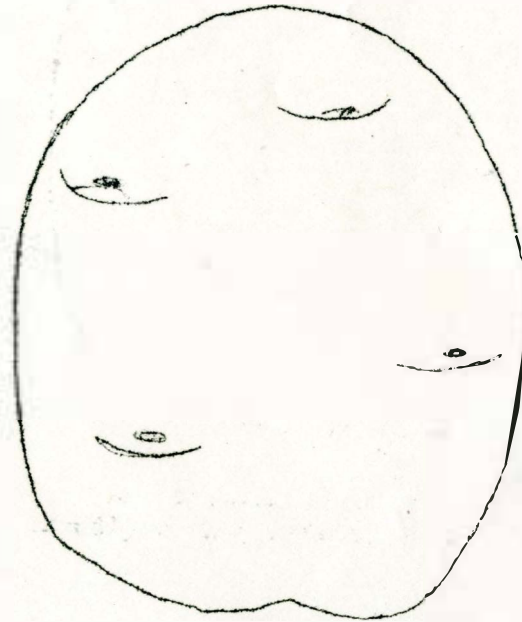


Origin not known; claimed by some leading seedsmen to have been first grown by an Irish shoemaker of Marblehead, Mass. Description - Season extra early. Gregory says, "Similar or identical with Eureka". Tubers nearly round, large; eyes good; skin russet, finely netted; flesh white.

Green Mountain:

Originated by O. H. Alexander, Charlotte, Vt., in 1878; claimed to be a seedling from a cross between Dunmore and Excelsior. Introduced by J. A. Everitt & Co. in 1885.

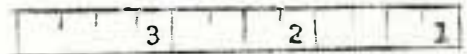
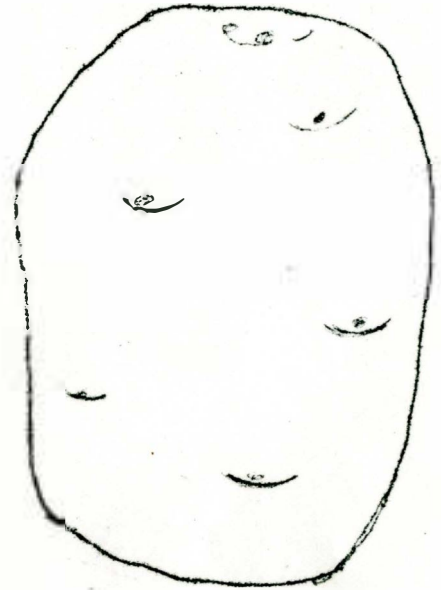
Description - Season medium late. Vines vigorous, foliage deep green. Tubers short and chunky, flattened, and not very regular; eyes sometimes slightly, sometimes considerably depressed; skin nearly white; flesh white, fine grained.



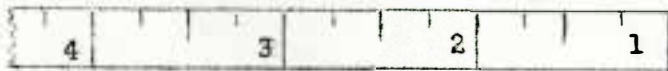
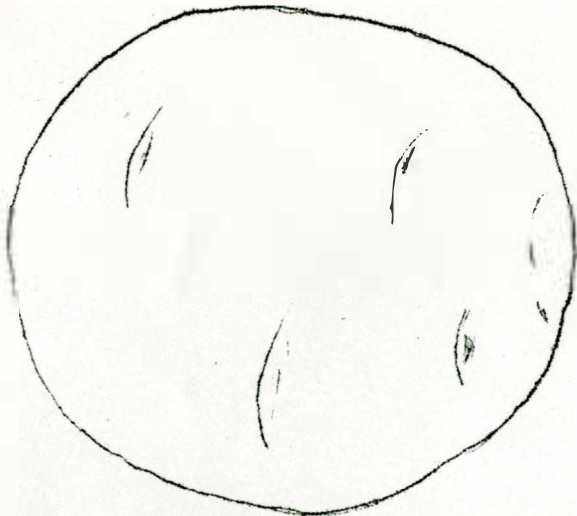
Short oblong type or broadly roundish flattened.

Green Mountain Jr.

Originated by W. E. Johnson, Richmond, Me., in 1905; claimed to be an inbred Green Mountain (that is from a seed ball grown on Green Mountain). The originator says, "Practically a thoroughbred or purebred". Introduced by the Johnson Seed Potato Co.  
Description - Season late. Vines much branched and vigorous; leaves broad, dark green; blossoms white with yellow centers; tubers round to oblong, somewhat flattened; eyes shallow; skin a trifle whiter than that of its parent and more netted. Sprouts white and stubby in the spring and do not grow very long. Note - So far this variety does not appear to possess qualities superior to those of its parent.



Triumph:



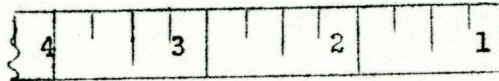
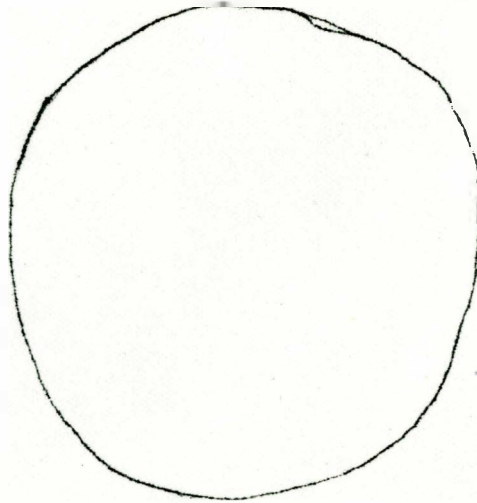
Synonyms, Bliss's Triumph, Red Bliss, Stray Beauty, Red Six Weeks, Early Hunt. Originated in Connecticut; claimed to be a seedling of Peerless crossed with a seedling of Early Rose. Introduced by B. K. Bliss & Sons in 1878.

Description - Season early, matures about 10 days earlier than Early Rose and is more productive. Vines erect; foliage dark green. Tubers medium size, round, uniform in shape; eyes slightly depressed; skin light red; flesh fine grained.

Rural New Yorker No. 2:

Originated by E. S. Carman; claimed to be a seedling of seedlings raised through several generations. Introduced to Rural New Yorker subscribers in a very limited way in 1888. Offered by J. M. Thorburn & Co. in 1889.

Description - Season medium late. Vines Thrifty and strong. Tubers oblong, inclined to round or round-oval, rather flattened; eyes few, shallow; skin pure white, netted, flesh white.



References:

- "The Potato" by Samuel Fraser.
- "Potato Culture" by Max F. Abell, Ohio Extension Service.
- "Group Classification and Varietal Descriptions of Some American Potatoes" by Wm. Stuart, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Bulletin No. 176.
- "Potato Production" by George Stewart, Ci. No. 40, Utah Agricultural College, Experiment Station.
- "Potato Culture" S. D. Bulletin 170.
- "Potatoes in South Dakota", S. D. Bulletin 196.