

Old Apple Varieties that have Survived

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The McIntosh appears to have survived as a major variety for some time yet. Not too long ago it was frequently mentioned that the Northeast needed a variety to replace Macs. It had many faults—scab, preharvest drop, and quality was poor after long storage. But thanks to new chemicals and CA storage, the McIntosh is still holding its place in the apple variety picture. New red strains and the discovery of spur types has just about assured its place in the sun.

It was in 1796 that John McIntosh discovered the seedling that later became the favorite apple of Canada and Northeastern U.S. The original tree lived to be over 100 years old and was named McIntosh Red in 1836. McIntosh is the parent of many varieties that are today recognized in the commercial lists of many countries. They include Melba, Saprtan, Cortland, Macoun, Puritan and Tydman's Red.

Not too many of the century old apple varieties are included in the commercial lists today. Blue Pearmain, Ben Davis, Baldwin, Roxbury and Yellow Bellflower are just about forgotten; but others that have been around for more than 150 years are still grown in commercial quantities.

It is interesting that two varieties that have gone past the 200 year mark are green apples — Rhode Island Greening and Newtown. The Golden Russet, also well over the two and a quarter century mark, is still grown commercially in Nova Scotia, Canada.

Of the Spitzenburg type apples that were at one time very popular in this country, the Jonathan, which remains the lone survivor, will soon reach the

150 year mark. Northern Spy is another variety that has been with us since the early 1800's and still holds a small place in the commercial field today.

History of Cherries in California

In an article first published in Blue Anchor in 1938 on the history of the cherry in California, and reprinted in March, 1969, we are told that none of the three species of cherry native to California ever amounted to anything, fruit-wise.

There is evidence that the Russians grew cherries near Ft. Ross as early as 1820. However, the California cherry industry probably began in about 1850. It is known that W. H. Nash and R. L. Kilburn planted trees of Napoleon and Black Tartarian in Napa County in that year.

When Seth Lewelling came to California from Oregon in the Spring of 1851, he brought and planted trees of Napoleon. But, because the labels were lost, at least so the story goes, and because he remembered that the name had to do with royalty, he renamed the variety "Royal Anne."

Eldon Banta (1919-1971)

Eldon Banta, Extension Horticulturist at Ohio State University since 1958, died suddenly of a heart attack this past March.

Many will best remember Eldon for his informative articles as field editor (1944-58) and later as associate editor of the American Fruit Grower. Eldon also served as secretary of the Ohio State Horticultural Society since 1962.

He was a member of the American Pomological Society, and served the Society as a member of the Advisory Committee for many years.

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