

Pumpkin Sweet and Pound Sweet—They Are Different

HENRY T. CONVERSE*

We are looking for the real Pumpkin Sweet apple. Beach's Apples of New York, describe Pumpkin Sweet as "Fruit large to very large, marbled with light and dark green and streaked over the base with whitish scarf-skin; well colored specimens eventually become quite yellow and sometimes are faintly bronzed on the exposed cheek." The color plate for Pumpkin Sweet in Beach's book shows a large yellow apple. Now all of the Pound Sweet apples which I have seen are solid green and keep until March in good cellar storage; but Beach reports that Pumpkin Sweet is in season from October to January. However Beach says that Pound Sweet is a synonym of Pumpkin Sweet, as are also Lyman's Large Yellow, Lyman's Pumpkin Sweet, Vermont Pumpkin Sweet, Vermont Sweet, and Yankee Apple.

Dr. O. C. Roberts, formerly Associate Professor of Horticulture at the Mass. Experiment Station, had some green Pound Sweet apples sent to him from Mr. Edward Davidson, of Center Conway, N. H., in March 1958. He told Mr. Davidson that, in so far as he could see, they were the Lyman's Pumpkin Sweet "except for season." Mr. Davidson told me in a letter "The Worcester County Horticultural Society describes (Pumpkin Sweet and Pound Sweet) as one and the same apple; but they are not. I am sixty-seven years old, and my grandfathers both had the Pumpkin Sweet and the Pound Sweet. The Pumpkin Sweet is an early fall apple. Some as large as Wolfe River. They are yellow, very sweet and juicy. Will not last longer than December 15. I have some Pound Sweet apples in my cellar now; and they are hard and will keep a month

longer. It was in March when Mr. Davidson sent his apples to Professor Roberts.

I am quite sure that I have a letter from Mr. Ira Glackens, of Center Conway, who is a gatherer of old apple varieties, in which he stated that there are three distinct varieties of apples as follows: Pumpkin Sweet, Pumpkin Russet, and Pound Sweet. Unfortunately, I cannot find the letter today.

I have had scion wood from two supposed Pumpkin Sweet trees, one from an old tree in Abbott, Maine, supplied by Mr. Cuyler Rich, of Newport, Maine, which proved definitely not to be Pumpkin Russet; and the other was from Mr. Lathrop Davenport, secretary of the Worcester County Horticultural Society. This fall I got some apples from Mr. Davenport from his tree which he calls Pumpkin Sweet (Pound Sweet) in his lists; however, when I took them to Center Conway, Mr. Davidson said at once that they were the Pound Sweet—which was what I thought, for they were solid green apples, and when baked, they had the same taste as the Pound Sweet apples which I bought in 1959 from the Lord Orchards in Kezar Falls, Maine. So our nursery is without any true Pumpkin Sweet source of scion wood.

We are still looking for a Pumpkin Sweet tree. If any one knows of a tree of that variety, I or the Converse Co. Nursery, of Amherst, N. H. (03031), will pay ten dollars if we can get some bud wood or scions from it. However, the apples must be yellow and not green; soft and not hard; and their storage season must be not later than December or January, in a cellar type storage.

*Member of APS Fruit Gardens Committee, manager of Converse Co. Nursery, Amherst, N.H., 03031.