

The Sutton Beauty Apple

Notes compiled by Christie Higginbottom for the Sutton Historical Society and Waters Farm Preservation, Inc.:

From Charles Hovey, *The Magazine of Horticulture*. Boston: Hovey and Co.:1849. Page 249:

“There are quite a number of seedling apples cultivated in Worcester county, and some of them appear to possess great merit. Recently, through the influence of the Worcester County Horticultural Society, whose exhibitions of fruit, particularly of apples, have been remarkable fine, many of these seedlings have been, for the first time, brought to the notice of pomologists, ...

“Our correspondents, Messrs. Earle and Jacques, of Worcester, sent us some specimens of the Sutton Beauty, which we had the pleasure of seeing upon the tables of the Society, at the Annual Exhibition last September, and we have found it so excellent an apple, as well as one of the most beautiful with which we are acquainted, that we have given it a place in our descriptive list of select varieties, with the belief that it will become a very popular fruit.

“The Sutton Beauty, originated in the town of Sutton, in this State, and has, as yet, been but little disseminated. It is of good size, with a brilliant crimson glossy skin, and a white flesh. The tree is vigorous, and produces great crops, bearing, like the Baldwin, only every other year. ...”

From Samuel W. Cole, *The American Fruit Book*. New York: Orange Judd and Company, 1849. Page 130.

“140. Sutton Beauty. Rather large; roundish; yellow; covered with bright red; flesh white, tender, crisp, juicy; very pleasant, sprightly, sub-acid flavor, great grower and bearer. December to May. Origin, Sutton, Ms.”

From Franklin R. Elliot, *Elliott's Fruit Book*. New York: C. M. Saxton, 1854. page 85-86:

“Sutton. Hubbardston Nonsuch, Sutton | Sutton Beauty American. Originated in Mass. A superior fruit succeeding even better when grown West, than in its native locality. Tree, vigorous grower; shoots rather slender, very different from the Baldwin, which has often been disseminated as this variety; spreading; very productive. *Fruit*, large, West very large; *form* roundish ovate, very regular; *color*, yellow ground, mostly overspread, and partially striped with rich red; *stem*, short; *cavity*, narrow; *calyx*, with short open segments; basin deep, round, rarely ribbed; *flesh* yellowish, mild, sub-acid, juicy. Season, October to February.”

From Andrew Jackson Downing, revised and corrected by Charles Downing, *Fruits and Fruit Trees of America*. New York: Wiley & Halstead, 1857. page 190.

“Sutton Beauty, Beauty

Origin, Sutton, Mass.

Tree upright, thrifty, and very productive. Fruit medium or above, roundish, somewhat angular, conic. Skin waxen yellow, shaded, mottled and obscurely striped with fine crimson, and thinly sprinkled with whitish dots. Stem rather short, inserted in a medium cavity, slightly surrounded by greenish russet. Calyx partially closed, set in a moderate, uneven basin. Flesh whitish, crisp, tender, juicy, with a sprightly, sub-acid flavor. November, February.”

From Charles Downing, *Selected Fruits from Downing’s Fruits and Fruit Trees of America*. New York: John Wiley & Son., 1871. Pages 238-239.

“Sutton Beauty, Beauty

Origin, Sutton, Mass. Tree upright, thrifty, and very productive alternate years.

Fruit medium, roundish oblate, waxen yellow, shaded, mottled, and obscurely striped with fine crimson, and thinly sprinkled with whitish dots. Stem rather short, inserted in a medium cavity, slightly surrounded by greenish russet.

Calyx partially closed, set in a moderate, uneven basin. Flesh yellowish, half fine, crisp, tender, juicy, rich, mild subacid, slightly aromatic. Very good.

November, February.”

From Patrick Barry, *The Fruit Garden*. New York: Orange Judd & Company, 1883, page 355:

“Sutton Beauty. – Origin Massachusetts. Medium to large, roundish, somewhat inclining to conical; waxen-yellow striped with crimson; Flesh whitish, crisp, tender, juicy, sub-acid, fine-flavored. Mid-winter. Tree a good grower and bearer. The fruit is very handsome and keeps well.”

From Annual Report of Ohio State Board of Agriculture, for the year 1896, issue 51. Appendix: the Annual Report of the Ohio Horticultural Society, page 137:

“Secretary: Is Sutton’s Beauty large enough for a commercial orchard?

Mr. Willard: Yes, sir. I did not come here, however, to blow my bugle, and I mean to have that understood. But the history of the Sutton Beauty, or the history of the apple trade of the country is this, that an apple that approximates to that size is large enough and more satisfactory at least than an apple of greater size.

I do not know of an apple ever introduced into Western New York that is so promising as the Sutton Beauty. It is an annual bearer, has fine foliage and produces the right size. You pick a tree of them and you will not get a small apple, and in keeping qualities they are almost unsurpassable. In March you open a barrel of Sutton's Beauty and they are crisp and juicy, but after you have passed the first of February with the Baldwins you find them mealy around the core. Instead of that the Sutton Beauty hold their good qualities right up to the first of April."

From Tom Burford, *Apples of North America*. Portland, OR: Timber Press, 2013, page 182:

"Visitors touring my collection orchard would always pause before the Sutton Beauty tree when it was laden with fruit. The red and yellow color of the apples would cast a pinkish glow throughout the tree, particularly just after dawn and before twilight. The beauty is anything but understated.

OTHER NAMES Beauty, Morris Red, Steele's Red Winter, Steel's Red, Sutton
HISTORY Likely a seedling of Hubbardston Nonesuch, the apple was found around 1757 by Stephen Waters of Sutton, Massachusetts. It was brought to notice in 1848 through the Worcester County Horticultural Society.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION This medium-sized, round apple has glossy, bright red skin striped with carmibe over a yellow background. Under-colored fruit have less red in the yellow background and the carmine stripes dominate.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION The creamy flesh is crisp, fine-grained, juicy, and sub-acid. It is considered by most palates to be mild in flavor.

TREE CHARACTERISTICS The upright-growing tree bears earl and heavily; it is biennial in production. The fruit hangs well on the tree.

DISEASE RESISTANCE Susceptible to fireblight; moderately resistant to other major diseases.

SEASON OF RIPENING Fall

USES Dessert and sometimes for baking

STORAGE QUALITY Good. It is important to properly store the apples as soon as they are picked to dispel the heat."

From Daniel J. Bussey, *The Illustrated History of Apples in the United States and Canada*, Vol. 6. Mount Horeb, WI: Jak Kaw Press, 2016, pages 185 - 186.

"Sutton (Beauty, Hubbardston Nonsuch [erroneously], Morris Red, Steele's Red [erroneously], Steele's Red Winter of Ohio [erroneously], Sutton Beauty, Sutton's Beauty) Originated on the farm of John Waters, Sutton, Massachusetts; brought to notice by Nathan Waters {Burford: Stephen Waters} through the Worcester County Horticultural Society in 1849, although known

as early as 1757. This variety was disseminated in Michigan under the name Morris Red, with Steele's Red or Steele's Red Winter of Ohio as erroneous synonyms. Said to be a seedling of Hubbardston Nonsuch... Flesh slightly tinged with yellow, rather firm, moderately fine textured, crisp, tender, juicy, mild subacid, not readily bruised; good to very good quality for dessert, kitchen or market use. Medium to late in season; average fruit maturity at Geneva, New York from November 5 – 15; ...”

From Scion Exchange data base, www.scion-exchange.com 2022:

“A high-quality dessert apple which originated in 1848 in Sutton, Massachusetts. It was once raised as a commercial variety in New York around 1900. A productive but biennial variety occasionally susceptible to fireblight. Fruit is medium-sized with waxy greenish-yellow skin shaded and striped with crimson. The whitish flesh is tinged with yellow and is crisp, juicy and fine-grained. A very early bloomer ripening in September.”

Source list from chathamapples.com:

SUTTON

REFERENCES. 1. Cole, 1849:130. 2. Hovey, Mag. Hort., 15:249. 1849. fig. 3. Elliott, 1854:85. 4. Downing, 1857:190. 5. Warder, 1867:616. fig. 6. Thomas, 1875:513. 7. Am. Pom. Soc. Cat., 1877:14. 8. Mich. Pom. Soc. Rpt., 1880:50, 184, 207. 9. Barry, 1883:355. 10. Can. Hort., 11:8. 1888. 11. Lyon, Mich. Hort. Soc. Rpt., 1890:294. 12. Can. Hort., 14:36, 274. 1891. 13. Bailey, An. Hort., 1892:250. 14. Munson, Me. Sta. Rpt., 1893:133. 15. Rural N. Y., 5:115, 181. 1896. 16. Lyon, Mich. Sta. Bul., 143:200. 1897. 17. Rural N.Y., 57:178, 230, 244. 1898. 18. Woodward, Ib., 58:264. 1899. 19. Beach, W. N.Y. Hort. Soc. Rpt., 1899:90. 20. Van Deman, Rural N. Y., 60:54, 789. 1901. 21. Can. Hort., 24:121. 1901. 22. Waugh, Vt. Sta. An. Rpt., 14:309. 1901. 23. Budd-Hansen, 1903:184. 24. Powell and Fulton, U. S. B. P. I. Bul., 48:57. 1903. 25. Farrand, Mich. Sta. Bul., 205:45. 1903. 26. Beach and Clark, N.Y. Sta. Bul., 248:145. 1904. [27. Burford, Tom. 2013. Apples of North America. ISBN 978-1-60469-249-5. p. 182.]

Synonyms. Beauty (4). Hubbardston Nonsuch (3) but incorrectly. Morris Rep (8, 11, 25). Morris Red (16). Morris Red (19). Steele's Red (8, erroneously 11). Steele's Red Winter (8, of Ohio 19). Sutton Beauty (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21). Sutton Beauty (3; 14) 22,23, 24, 26).

Sutton is supposed by some to be a seedling of [Hubbardston](#) (22, 23). The tree certainly resembles Hubbardston somewhat but is much more vigorous and healthy. In color, texture, quality and season the fruit is intermediate between Hubbardston and [Baldwin](#). Its uniform size, symmetrical shape, beautiful color and pleasant quality unite to make the Sutton an excellent dessert apple, but being mild in flavor it is less desirable for culinary use. It sells well in the general market but it appears especially suitable for fancy market and fruit-stand trade. It does not keep quite so long as Baldwin, hardly averages as large and because it is more tender requires more careful handling. Although in some regions its fruit seems to be somewhat more subject to scab than that of the Baldwin, yet in many localities it has gained a reputation of being remarkably healthy in foliage and fruit. The fruit hangs well to the tree. In favorable locations the tree has vigorous dark green foliage, is handsome in form, a strong grower and productive, with a marked tendency to bear biennially.

Sutton has been practically unknown in New York state until recent years but it is now being introduced quite extensively for commercial purposes. Although it has not

done well in some localities, yet in most parts of the state it is regarded as one of the most promising of the newer varieties. Because the trees of this variety are still young the value of the Sutton for commercial planting in New York has not been fully determined.

Sutton has been disseminated in Michigan under the name Morris Red with Steele's Red or Steele's Red Winter of Ohio as erroneous synonyms. Ragan recognizes Morris Red as possibly identical with Sutton. Morris Red as fruited at this Station from stock obtained from D. G. Edmeston, Adrian, Mich., who has pronounced the fruit borne by this stock to be the true Morris Red (Letters, D. G. Edmeston, 1897), is certainly identical with Sutton.

Leroy refers to Sutton Beauty erroneously as a synonym for Wellington (Leroy, 1878: 864.).

Historical. Sutton takes its name from the town of Sutton, Mass., in which it originated. It was brought to notice through the Worcester County Horticultural Society in 1848 (2). In 1849 Hovey included it in a descriptive list of select varieties in the belief that it would become a popular fruit and remarked that it had as yet been but little disseminated. It was not included in the American Pomological Society Catalogue till 1877 (7). Within recent years it has been planted and top-worked upon older trees to a considerable extent in New York commercial orchards, but we do not know of any old trees of this variety in this state.

TREE.

Tree vigorous with stout branches.

Form upright spreading, eventually becoming roundish, dense. Twigs short to medium in length, straight, moderately stout to stocky; internodes short to medium. Bark dark olive-green somewhat tinged with reddish-brown, mottled and streaked with gray scarf-skin, pubescent. Lenticels few, very scattering, not conspicuous, small to medium, elongated or roundish, not raised. Buds prominent, large, broad, obtuse to acute, pubescent, free. Leaves somewhat narrow, medium to large; foliage vigorous, dark green, healthy, rather dense.

[Diseases: Susceptible to fireblight; moderate resistance to the other major diseases (27).]



SUTTON

Fruit.

Fruit medium or rarely large, pretty uniform in size and shape. Form roundish or slightly oblong rounding toward cavity and basin, symmetrical, regular or very slightly ribbed. Stem medium to short, sometimes fleshy.

Cavity acute or sometimes acuminate, moderately deep to deep, moderately wide to narrow, symmetrical, often with some greenish russet. Calyx medium size, partly open, sometimes closed, pubescent; lobes vary from medium and obtuse to long and acuminate. Basin moderately shallow and obtuse to rather deep and abrupt, medium in width, somewhat furrowed and slightly wrinkled, sometimes compressed.

Skin moderately thin, tough, often slightly roughened toward the basin by inconspicuous, concentric broken russet lines and fine russet dots, otherwise glossy and smooth; color attractive bright red striped with carmine or purplish carmine nearly overspreading the lively yellow or greenish ground color. Prevailing effect attractive red. The less highly colored fruit has a distinctly striped appearance.

Calyx tube symmetrical, conical or sometimes funnel-form. Stamens median.

Core medium or below, slightly abaxile; cells symmetrical, closed; core lines slightly clasping. Carpels broadly cordate approaching elliptical, emarginate, sometimes

slightly tufted. Seeds rather light brown, small to above medium, plump, acute, sometimes a little tufted.

Flesh slightly tinged with yellow, rather firm, moderately fine-grained, crisp, tender, juicy, mild subacid, good to very good. [Also used sometimes for baking (27).]

Season intermediate between [Hubbardston](#) and [Baldwin](#); early winter in the southern part of the state but farther north it is in season for home use from November to March, and the commercial limit extends to February. [In Virginia it ripens in the autumn and is a good keeper if handled properly (27).]