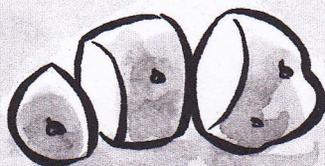
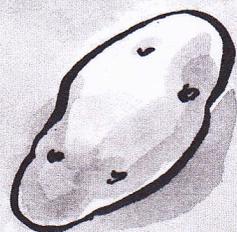
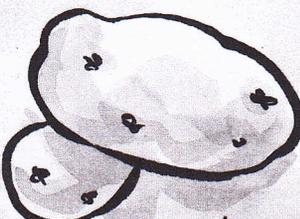
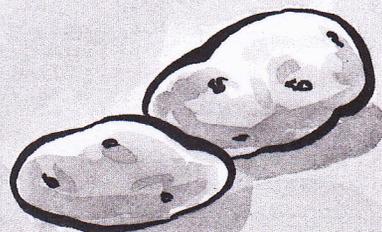


An Irish Potato Treat



by Carollyne Hutter



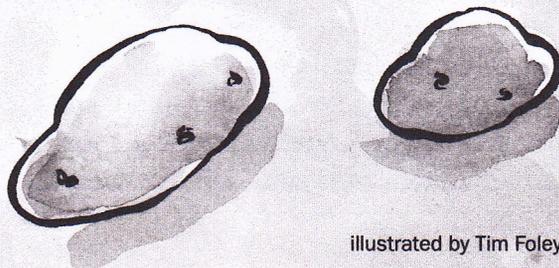
Native to the South American country of Peru, the potato was brought to Europe in the late 1500s. For the Irish, it was a wonderful new crop. The moist, cool weather in Ireland was perfect for growing potatoes, and a tiny plot of potatoes could feed a family. Potatoes provide enough protein, vitamin C, and carbohydrates for a family to survive mainly on potatoes and milk.

That is what happened. Millions of Irish peasants lived on a diet consisting mostly of potatoes.

When a potato blight hit Ireland in 1845 (see page 2), it spread from field to field, killing the potato crop throughout the country. Without the potatoes, about one million people died of hunger and another million emi-

grated, primarily to the United States.

Today in Ireland, the potato is once more an important part of the meal, but not the main course. Potatoes are generally eaten boiled or roasted with meat, seafood, or fish. Two of Ireland's most famous dishes, *champ* and *col-cannon*, are made from mashed potatoes and served on holidays, such as Halloween or Lughnasa, when the Irish celebrate the new potato harvest. The Irish also enjoy eating potato soup, potato pancakes, potato scones, and potato bread. Sometimes they bake potatoes with milk and cheese. Try it.



illustrated by Tim Foley

Potatoes With Cheese

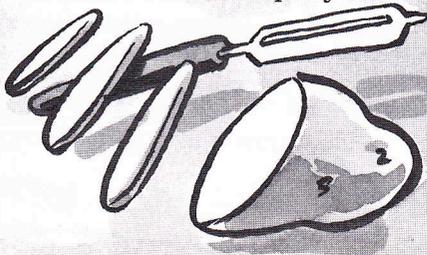
You Need

- 1/2 tablespoon butter
- 2 pounds russet potatoes
(about 2 large or 3 medium
potatoes), peeled and very
thinly sliced
- salt and pepper
- 2 cups grated Cheddar
cheese
- 1 cup whipping cream
- measuring cups and spoons,
baking dish, peeler or par-
ing knife, grater

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Rub the baking dish with the butter.



2. Arrange half the potatoes in the baking dish. Make sure the potatoes are very thinly sliced. You can slice them using the long slits on a grater or with a knife. Ask for help if you need it.



3. Sprinkle salt and pepper on the potatoes and then sprinkle on 1/2 cup of the cheese.



4. Spoon half of the cream over the potatoes. Add the remaining potatoes and cream and cover with the remaining cheese.



5. Bake, uncovered, for about 1 1/4 hours. The top should be a deep golden brown. Stick a knife into different parts of the dish to make sure the potatoes are cooked. Let the dish cool for 15 to 20 minutes before serving. Serves 4 to 6.

