

Potato Varieties of Historical Interest in Ireland



Department of
**Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food**
An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta,
Iascaigh agus Bia**

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Introduction

Few plants have had as strong an influence on the destiny of a nation as the potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) has exercised on the people of Ireland. Since its introduction to Ireland in the 16th century, the potato has occupied a central place in the diet and, by extension, the culture of Ireland. A living legacy of this long association is the unique collection of potato varieties which is maintained by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (DAFF). Comprising over 400 accessions, the collection includes old and modern Irish varieties and varieties from abroad. Appendix 1 lists 145 pre-1950 potato varieties which form the basis of DAFF's historical potato collection. Approximately 50 of these varieties are unique to the collection.

Although descriptions exist for many of the old Irish varieties (e.g. Davidson, 1936), there is a need for these descriptions to be updated to conform with international standards. In addition there are no descriptions for many of the varieties held in the collection nor are there photographic records of the tubers, foliage, flowers and sprouts on which existing descriptions are based.

The objective of this book, therefore, is to compile for the first time, descriptions and photographic records of the main varieties of historical interest to Ireland. In order that the varieties are described uniformly, the Union Internationale pour la Protection des Obtentions Vegetales (UPOV) guidelines for the conduct of tests for distinctness, uniformity and stability for potato (Anon., 1986) are used. These guidelines use standard varieties to illustrate the different characteristics of the potato plant and are recognised internationally. In this book where a particular characteristic has not been observed by the authors, a description by an earlier cited author is used.

In addition to the variety descriptions, an attempt has been made to trace the origin of the varieties contained in this book. In a few cases the parent varieties from which the accession was derived are known but, generally, the varieties arise spontaneously in nature and regrettably their exact origin cannot be determined. Where a variety is associated with a particular geographical region, this is stated. For accessions which are unique to the collection, and for which no historical references or descriptions are known, save that of Kehoe (1986), this date is given as the earliest record of their existence although the variety may be considerably older.

Not all the varieties in this book are of Irish origin, but they are included because they have strong associations with this country or because they are now unique to the collection.

History of potato varieties in Ireland

The potato originated in the highlands of Peru particularly the region around Lake Titicaca. Over 200 species of wild potato are found in the Americas, and it is from these that the potato we know developed.

Potatoes were first domesticated at least 7000 years ago. Primitive farming communities developed technology for potato preservation by exposing tubers to the dry freezing mountain conditions, producing 'Chuno' which remains a staple to this day. The food security provided by potato and maize allowed the development of civilisations such as the Huari and Inca. As these civilisations flourished, the potato was adapted to meet different environmental conditions. The potato diversified into those which were suitable for more temperate valleys, and frost-resistant types suitable for the alpine tundra. Thus, the first potato varieties were born and to this day over 5,000 potato varieties are still grown in the Andes.

The Spanish conquest of South America began in 1532, bringing to an end the Inca Empire. As the Spanish extended their control of this vast new land they recorded the manner and customs of the native population. Pedro de Cieza de Leon, a Spanish soldier was the first European to record the existence of the potato, in 1538, in the Upper Cauca valley in what is now Colombia.

The precise date of the introduction of the potato to Europe is uncertain, but was probably before 1570. According to Wilson (1993), potato was included in Seville's hospital diet by 1573. According to Salaman (1926), the first recorded mention of the potato in Europe occurred in 1587 when the Austrian botanist Clusius described some tubers he had received from Spain. One year later in London, Gerarde, famous for Gerardes Herball, received some tubers possibly from Virginia. Both have left valuable descriptions of the plants they received. It was not however until 1730 that the first description of different potato varieties was given by an Irish writer, Rye in his work Considerations on Agriculture.

Further confusion concerns the introduction of potato to Ireland. Popular opinion is that the potato was introduced by Sir Walter Raleigh at his estate in Youghal Co. Cork at the end of the 16th century. However it is as likely that potatoes were introduced to Ireland from Spain as part of normal trade. According to Salaman (1926), Ireland was exceptional in that the potato quickly became a staple food stuff.

The potato began to diversify into varieties as its cultivation spread. In 1785, Marshall complained of the indiscriminate raising of seedlings and described the varieties extant as 'endless'. It was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that an effort was made to introduce a more systematic approach to the breeding of new varieties. This development was given added impetus following the outbreak of potato blight (*Phytophthora infestans*) in 1845, which in addition to the tragic social consequences also eliminated almost all of the varieties most used at that time.

Of the many pre-famine varieties which undoubtedly existed, few have survived to the present day. Some of the varieties most cultivated in Ireland during this period included: Blacks; Yellows; Cluster; Irish Apple; Red Nose Kidney (syn. Wicklow Banger); Cork Red; Lumper and Cups. Lumper was grown extensively in Ireland up to 1845 and was the mainstay of the cottier and small farmer class. In the Agricultural Survey, Co. Galway (1824) it is stated "Lumpers are much used as they are more productive....than any other kind...quality very bad". Howden (1837) recommended the Lumper for stock-feeding on account of its yield. Lumper was also very susceptible to potato blight which no doubt compounded the effects of the blight epidemic.

In the second half of the 19th century, some varieties which came to prominence in Ireland included Rocks, Skerry Blue, Flounder and Champion. The acreage of potatoes in Ireland was first recorded in 1880. In that year a total of 820,651 acres of Rocks were grown accounting for c. 40% of the total area. Rocks continued to be the dominant potato variety grown in Ireland until becoming overshadowed by Champion. Champion was first introduced in 1876 and although not grown extensively at first, gained in popularity following the blight outbreak in 1879. The 1879 epidemic was considered by Davidson (1933) to exceed that of 1846, however Champion demonstrated "remarkable" resistance to the fungus. From 1884 to 1892, Champion accounted for c. 80% of the total acreage of potato grown. Davidson attributed the success of Champion to "its superb cooking quality, the Irish ideal of what a potato should be". From 1900 onwards, Champion declined in popularity due to a reduction in its resistance to blight and the arrival of newer varieties such as Kerr's Pink.

It is of interest to note that many of the potato varieties which have dominated the Irish market in living memory have their origins in late 19th and early 20th centuries. British Queen (1894), King Edward VII (1902), Golden Wonder (1906), Kerr's Pink (1907), Record (1925) are all old varieties and it is a testament to the skill of their breeders, as well as advances in seed production, that they have remained popular. In addition some old varieties such as Pink Fir Apple (1850) and Congo (1900) have in recent years enjoyed a resurgence.

With reference to more modern varieties, there are numerous high quality publications produced by seed houses and variety maintainers available. A recent publication by Teagasc (Anon. Undated a) details modern potato varieties produced as part of the Irish potato breeding programme. The European Cultivated Potato Database (Anon., Undated b) also provides a vast amount of information on many thousands of potato varieties. This book is a further contribution to our knowledge on potato varieties. Although the varieties contained in the following pages are described as 'historical', they should not be considered irrelevant to modern agriculture. In a world where food security is a daily concern for many millions of people, it is likely that we like the Spanish Conquistadors and the Inca before them, will come to recognise the value of the humble potato once more.

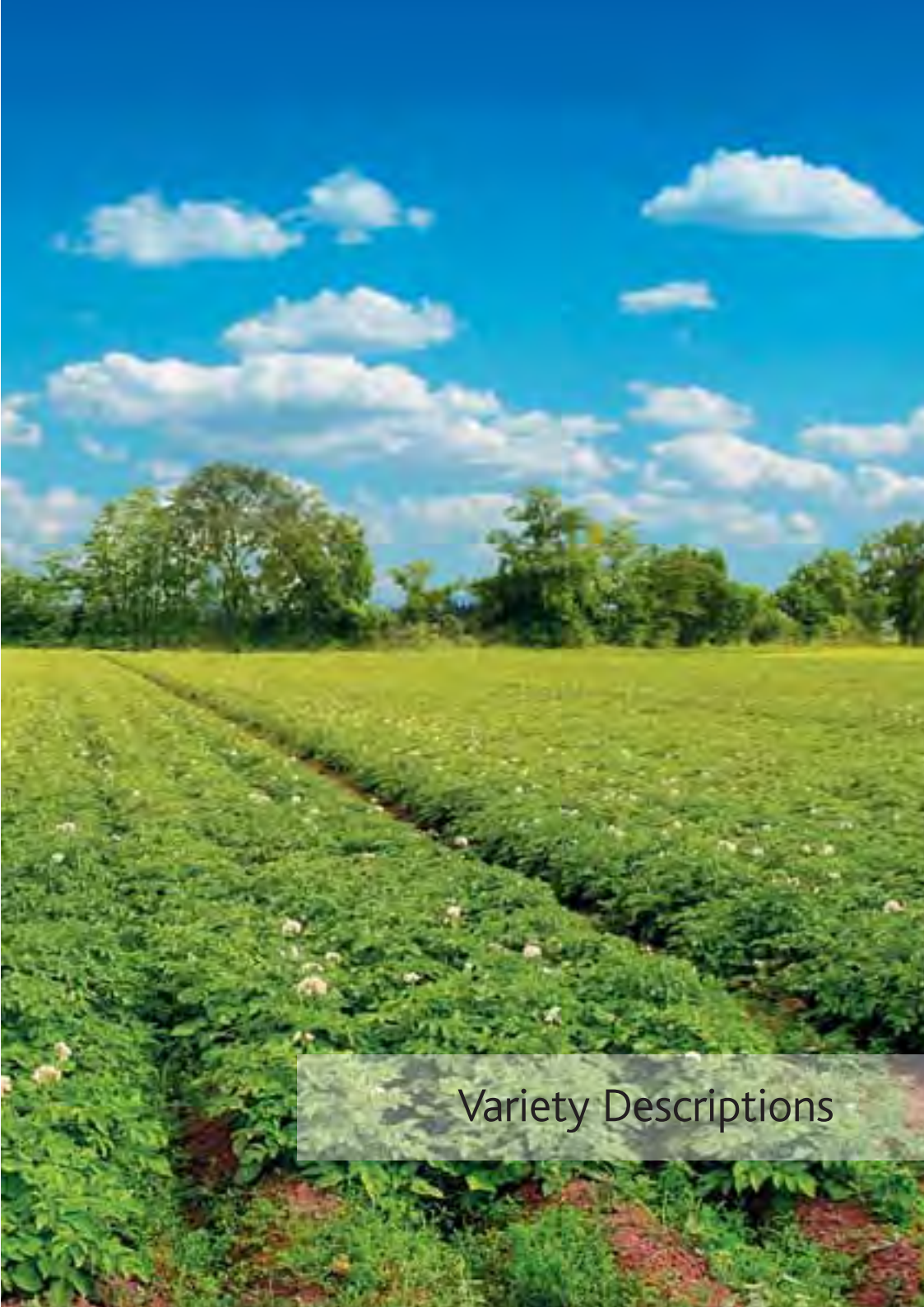
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Variety Descriptions

Beauties:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: • None

Maturity: Maincrop



General Comments

Davidson (1936) described the variety Beauties as an old variety of unknown origin and no commercial value. He also mentioned that the name Beauties was a synonym for the variety Beauty of Bute (see MacDonald, 1991) but that this was a distinct variety. Beauties was noted by Kehoe (1986) as being unique to the Irish potato collection.



SPROUTS

Light pink in colour, ovoid and of medium size.

PLANT HABIT

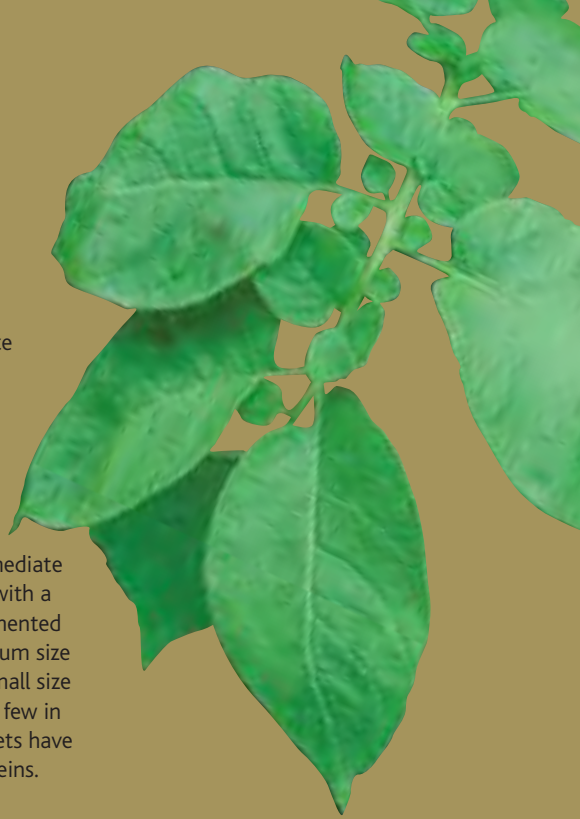
Plants are very short, with an intermediate appearance and spreading habit.

STEMS

The stems are thin and have very little pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are of medium size and intermediate openness. They are light green in colour, with a medium to dull texture and have un-pigmented mid-ribs. The primary leaflets are of medium size and width while the secondaries are of small size and few in frequency. Tertiary leaflets are few in number and very small. The primary leaflets have weakly waved leaf margins and shallow veins. Fused terminal leaflets are absent.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and individual flowers are small. Flowers are rare. The peduncle and flower buds lack pigmentation. The peduncle is short and weak. Flowers are a very weak red-violet colour with medium size white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers are round in shape with eyes of medium depth and medium smooth skin. The tubers are white in colour with yellow at the base of the eye. The flesh is cream. Faint pigmentation is occasionally seen in the medulla.

Black Champion:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: • *Scotch Greys,*
Greys
(also syn for
Skerry
Champion)

Maturity: *Maincrop*



General Comments

Davidson (1936) described this as an old variety found growing in the Midlands of Ireland but of no commercial value. Noted by Kehoe (1986) as being unique to the Irish potato collection.



SPROUTS

Sprouts are coloured purple, spherical and of medium size.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are tall, with an intermediate appearance and erect habit.

STEMS

Stems are thin with moderate, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are of medium size and open. They are mid-green in colour, with a dull mid-glossy texture and medium pigmented mid-rib. The primary leaflets are of medium size and long while the secondaries are small and of medium frequency. No tertiary leaflets were seen. The primary leaflets have a weakly waved margin and veins of medium depth. Fused terminal leaflets are few in number.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and individual flowers are both of medium size. Flowers are few in number. The peduncle is of medium length and weakly pigmented but the flower buds are strongly pigmented. The flower is an intense blue-violet colour with medium size white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are round, with eyes of medium depth and smooth skin. The skin and base of the eye are white in colour, as is the tuber flesh.



Black Potato:

First record: 1730

Synonyms: None

Maturity: –



General Comments

There are many historical references to Black Potato in the literature, spanning several centuries. Rye (1730) mentioned a variety called Black Potato which he praised highly, especially as a good keeper. The variety was described by Hayes (1795) as having the “outer coat sooty colour, but when rubbed off, raw potato is bright purple”. Dubordieu (1812) referred to it being a popular variety for many years in Co. Antrim.

Lawson (1836) said “it has long been in partial cultivation, and is chiefly valuable from being in season for using between the periods of planting and taking up the new crop”. Howden (1837) recommended the Black Potato for spring use. Davidson (1933) described it as the first really outstanding potato variety. He also said that it ceased to be mentioned after the blight epidemic of 1846. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are of medium size, broad-cylindrical in shape and with an intense blue-violet pigmentation.

PLANT HABIT

The plant is tall, with an intermediate appearance and erect growth habit.

STEMS

The stems are thick with intense localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are small, closed with a pigmented mid-rib. The primary leaflets are of medium size and shape and are a light green colour. The secondary leaflets are small and numerous. Fused terminal leaflets are seen.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and individual flowers are both small. The peduncle is very weakly pigmented but the flower buds have medium levels of pigmentation. The flowers are a weak red-violet colour with medium size white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are round-oval in shape with medium to deep eyes and medium smooth skin. The tubers are blue in colour with blue pigment also visible at the base of the eye. The flesh is light yellow and is streaked dark purple.

Black Skerry:

<i>First record:</i>	1902
<i>Synonyms:</i>	<i>Skerry, Rehedee</i>
<i>Maturity:</i>	<i>Late maincrop</i>



General Comments

Wallace (1902) mentioned a late main-crop variety called Black Skerry which he recommended for growing in Ireland. The variety Black Skerry was mentioned among the agricultural statistics published by the Department of Agriculture in 1906 where it was coupled with the variety Skerry Blue.

The variety name Skerry Blue was omitted from the statistics of 1907, only Black Skerry being mentioned. However Salaman (1926) and Davidson (1933) both claimed that Black Skerry was a synonym for Skerry Blue. Several years later however, Davidson (1936) stated quite clearly that the two varieties were distinct. He described it as being of unknown origin, but possibly arising from the Burnside region of Derry c. 1900. He also said that it was grown in the vicinity of Lough Neagh for the Belfast and Dublin markets. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

A deep purple colour (Davidson, 1936).

PLANT HABIT

Plants are tall, stemmy and erect.

STEMS

The stems are thin with intense, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are small and open. They are a light green colour with a dull texture and strongly pigmented mid-rib. The primary leaflets are small and of medium width while the secondaries are small and of medium frequency. The primary leaflets have weakly waved margins and veins of medium depth. Fused terminal leaflets are occasionally seen.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescences are of medium size and individual flowers small. Flowers occur frequently. The peduncle is medium to long in length and has intermediate levels of pigmentation while the buds are weakly pigmented. The flowers are a medium blue-violet colour with medium sized white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers are oval in shape, with medium to deep eyes and a smooth skin. The skin is red in colour but the base of the eyes are blue. The flesh is a cream colour.



Blight Resister:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: None

Maturity: Maincrop



General Comments

Davidson (1936) noted that this variety was of no commercial importance and was found as a rogue among crops of the variety Gardenfiller (syn. Hibernia) near Athlone. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.



SPROUTS

A bright purple colour (Davidson, 1936).

PLANT HABIT

Plants are medium to tall, stemmy in appearance and have an erect habit.

STEMS

Stems are thin with very pronounced pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are medium size and open. They are a dark green colour, with a dull texture and strongly pigmented mid-rib. The primary leaflets are small and of medium width while the secondaries are small and of medium frequency. The primary leaflets have medium wavy margins and veins of medium depth.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and individual flowers are of medium size. Flowers occur frequently. The peduncle is strongly pigmented and of medium length. The flower buds have medium intense pigmentation. The flowers are medium intense blue-violet colour with medium size white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are oval to long-oval in shape, and have eyes of medium depth and a smooth skin. The skin is distinctly blue/purple in colour with blue pigment also visible at the base of the eyes. The flesh is cream in colour and is streaked with purple/violet pigment at the rose end.

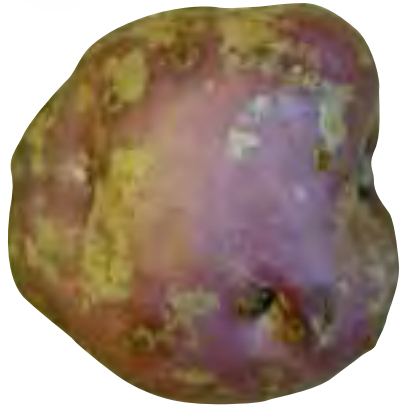


Bloomers:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: *Starters, Brown Blacks, Black Bull, Stouter, Stouters*

Maturity: *Second early*



General Comments

Davidson (1936) described Bloomers as a very old variety which he procured from Co. Clare. In his time it was grown only in isolated areas and was of no commercial value. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are a deep purple colour (Davidson, 1936).

PLANT HABIT

Plants are of medium to tall, stemmy in appearance and have an erect habit.

STEMS

The plant is of medium height, with a stemmy appearance and are semi-erect.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are of medium size and closed. They are a mid-green colour, glossy and have a medium coloured mid-rib, the colour extending partially into the mid-rib of the leaflets. The primary leaflets are of medium size and long and the secondaries are small to medium in size, rounded and numerous. Tertiary leaflets are few in number and small. The primary leaflets are of medium waviness and medium deep veined. The terminal leaflet is frequently fused.



INFLORESCENCE

The flowers are of medium size and numerous. The peduncle is long and strong with weak to medium levels of pigmentation. The buds are strongly pigmented. The flower is a very pale blue colour with large white tips. Occasionally the peduncle bends at the base and grows horizontally.

TUBERS

The tubers of Bloomers are round with medium to deep eyes and a smooth skin. They are blue in colour with blue pigment also visible at the eye base. The flesh is cream coloured with a slight tinge of purple under the skin at the rose end.



Bothwell:

First record: 1986

Synonyms: None

Maturity: Late maincrop



General Comments

The origin of this variety is unknown. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.



SPROUTS

Sprouts are large, broad-cylindrical in shape and an intense blue-violet colour.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are very tall, stemmy in appearance and semi-erect.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness with moderate, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are large and medium to open. They are a light green colour with a medium texture and medium intense pigmentation on the mid-rib. The primary leaflets are of medium size and narrow while the secondaries are small and infrequent. Tertiary leaflets are very rare. The primary leaflets have a weakly wavy margin and have veins of medium depth. Fused terminals are rarely observed.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescences and individual flowers are small. Flowers occur with medium frequency.

The peduncle is short with medium levels of pigmentation. The flower buds are strongly pigmented.

The flowers are a medium intense blue-violet colour with medium size white tips.

TUBERS

Tubers are shaped round-oval and have medium to deep eyes and a smooth skin. The tuber skin is white and the base of the eyes are yellow. The tuber flesh is white.



Bufs:

<i>First record:</i>	<i>poss. 1836</i>
<i>Synonyms:</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Maturity:</i>	<i>Maincrop (Early maincrop)</i>



General Comments

Lawson (1836) mentioned a variety called Bufs, but described it as having a white flower. Davidson (1936) described Bufs as an old variety which he procured in Co. Donegal. It was of no commercial value.

Wilson (1993) mentioned it as being one of the varieties grown in Ireland in the early 19th century.

Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are small, spherical in shape and a very intense blue-violet colour.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are of medium height and upright (Davidson, 1936).

STEMS

Stems have an intense purple pigmentation, colour developing towards maturity (Davidson, 1936).

FOLIAGE

The leaves are long and open. They are a medium green colour with a dull texture and have a light purple mid-rib, except at the base of the leaf and leaflet stalks where colour is very distinct. The primary leaflets are fairly large, long and pointed. The secondaries are small and not numerous.



INFLORESCENCE

Flowers are fairly numerous. The peduncle is of medium length with moderate levels of pigmentation. Buds are a very dark purple colour. The flowers are a very light blue-purple colour, but abscise easily .

TUBERS

The tubers are round with medium to deep eyes and a skin of medium smoothness. The tuber skin is bright purple with purple streaks and the base of the eyes are purple. The flesh is a yellow colour.



Champion:

First record: 1863

Synonyms: *Old Champion*
(Wallace, 1902),
Old Scotch
Champion,
Nichol's
Champion,
Schoolmaster

Maturity: *Late maincrop*



General Comments

The variety Champion was raised and introduced by John Nichol, Ochterloney, Scotland between 1863 and 1876. Its parentage is unknown (Salaman, 1926). There are numerous references to this variety due to its dominance of the Irish potato industry during the latter years of the 19th century.

Its success was due in part to the severe blight epidemic which affected the potato crop in Ireland in 1879, a disease to which Champion showed high levels of resistance. Consequently between 1880 and 1894 the acreage grown increased from 220,934 acres (27 % of total) to 717,000 acres (80% of total) (Davidson, 1933; Wilson, 1993). Thereafter the acreage of Champion declined as varieties such as Kerr's Pink and Arran Banner increased in popularity. The success of Champion was also due to the excellent cooking quality of the variety (Davidson, 1933). The variety was described in detail by Salaman (1926), Davidson (1936) and MacDonald (1991). Stegemann and Loeschcke (1979) list Champion as a synonym for Skerry Champion which is incorrect. The variety Schoolmaster held at the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency's potato collection has white flowers.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are distinctly purple (Davidson, 1936).

PLANT HABIT

Plants are tall, leafy in appearance and erect.

STEMS

Stems are thin and wiry with moderate, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are of medium size and intermediate openness. They are dark green in colour, with a medium glossy to glossy texture and medium levels of pigment on the mid-rib. The primary leaflets are large and narrow while the secondaries are small and of medium frequency. Tertiary leaflets are very rare. The primary leaflets have a weakly waved margin and are shallow veined. Pigmentation on the leaf blade of the apical rosette is present. Occasional fused terminal leaflets are seen.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and individual flowers are small. Flowers are few to medium in frequency. The peduncle is very weakly pigmented while the flower buds are very strongly pigmented. The peduncle is short. The flowers are an intense red-violet colour and have small white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers are round with medium to deep eyes and smooth skin. They are white in colour often showing purple specks and a purple shade frequently showing in dent of the heel. The base of the eyes is yellow. The tuber flesh is a yellow colour.



Earl of Essex:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: *Blue Eyes, Copper Duns, Shaun Power, Farmer's Glory* (The variety name *Farmer's Glory* has been attributed to many varieties. Malden (1895) mentioned a late variety called *Farmer's Glory* which had white flowers, and kidney or oval shaped tubers. Salaman (1926) noted that *Farmer's Glory* was a synonym for both the varieties *Magnum Bonum* and *Up-To-Date*. Sanders (1905) noted two varieties called *Farmer's Glory*, one bred by/introduced by Findlay and one by Sutton and Sons.)

Maturity: *Maincrop*



General Comments

This variety was described by Davidson (1936) as an old variety, which was widely distributed in Ireland, but never intensively grown. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection. The variety *Essex*, described by MacDonald (1991), is American in origin and was introduced in 1947.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are small, conical in shape and are an intense blue-violet colour.

PLANT HABIT

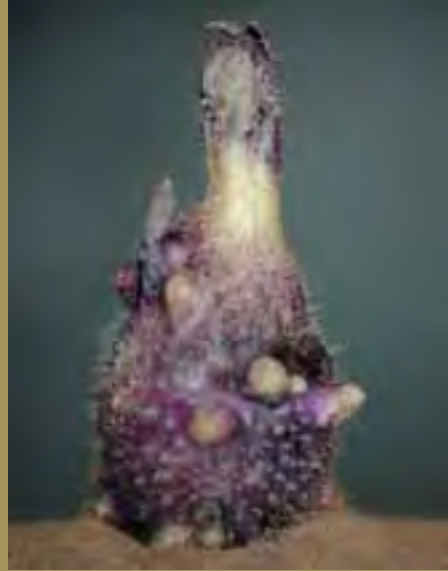
Plants are tall, stemmy in appearance and semi-erect to erect.

STEMS

Stems are thin and possess moderate, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are small and closed. They are a dark green colour, with a medium texture and medium levels of pigmentation on the mid-rib. The primary leaflets are of medium size and narrow, while the secondaries are small and of medium frequency. The tertiary leaflets are small and of medium frequency. The primary leaflets have strongly wavy margins and medium deep veins.



INFLORESCENCE

Both the inflorescence and individual flowers are small in size. The flowers are numerous. The peduncle is short and weakly pigmented. The buds are green with purple markings. The flowers are a medium intense red-violet colour with small white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers are round-oval in shape with medium to deep eyes and medium smooth skin. The tuber skin is part blue with the pigment being associated with the tuber eyes. The base of the eyes is coloured with a very deep purple pigment. The tuber flesh is white.



Farmers:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: None

Maturity: Maincrop



General Comments

This variety was procured by Davidson (1936) in Co. Cork. Its origin was unknown. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection. The variety Farmer, described by Salaman (1926) as a synonym for Duke of York has white flowers.



SPROUTS

Sprouts are medium sized, spherical in shape and are a very intense blue-violet colour.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are tall, intermediate in appearance and erect to semi-erect.

STEMS

Stems are thin and have moderate, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are medium size and closed. They are light-green in colour with a glossy texture and medium levels of pigmentation on the mid-rib. The primary leaflets are long and narrow while the secondaries are generally small and medium frequency. The primary leaflets have intermediately waved margins and medium deep veins. Fusion on the terminal and lateral leaflets occurs with medium frequency. Pigmentation on the leaf blade of the apical rosette is present.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence of this variety is small and indistinct and the individual flowers are small. Flowers are few in number. The peduncle is short and weakly pigmented. Buds possess medium levels of pigment. The flowers are an intense red-violet colour with small white tips.

TUBERS

Tubers are round with medium to deep eyes and medium smooth skin. The tubers are coloured white with the base of the eyes yellow. The tuber flesh is a light yellow colour.



Flourball:

First record: 1895

Synonyms: *Dargavel,*
Helon's
Plentiful,
Keeper

Maturity: *Maincrop*



General Comments

Procured by Sutton and Sons, Reading from Miss L. King, Mountmellick, Co. Laois in 1895 (Salaman, 1926). This variety was once popular and was still grown in pockets during Davidson's time (Davidson, 1936). Kehoe (1986) noted that varieties of this name occurred in many European potato collections.

It was described by MacDonald (1991). The name Flourball is a synonym for the variety America but it is not the same variety (Salaman, 1926). Flourball is also distinct from the red skinned variety Sutton's Flourball which was introduced in 1870. The synonym Dargavel, is a co-synonym of the variety Up-To-Date, however the latter variety has reddish-purple flowers.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are of medium size, conical in shape with an intense red-violet pigmentation.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are of medium height, intermediate appearance and semi-erect.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness with moderate, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are of medium size and intermediate openness. They are mid-dark green in colour, with a medium texture and a faintly pigmented mid-rib. The primary leaflets are of medium size and width, while the secondary leaflets are of medium size and frequency. The primary leaflets have a weakly waved leaf margin and shallow veins. Tertiary leaflets are numerous. Fused terminal leaflets are rarely seen.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence is large, while the flower is of medium to large size. Flowers occur with medium frequency. The peduncle is of medium length and weakly pigmented with medium levels of pigment on the flower buds. Individual flowers are white in colour lacking pigmentation of any kind.

TUBERS

The tubers are round with medium to deep eyes and smooth skin. The tubers are red/pink in colour with red pigment visible at the base of the eyes. The tuber flesh is cream coloured with pink threads associated with the eyes.

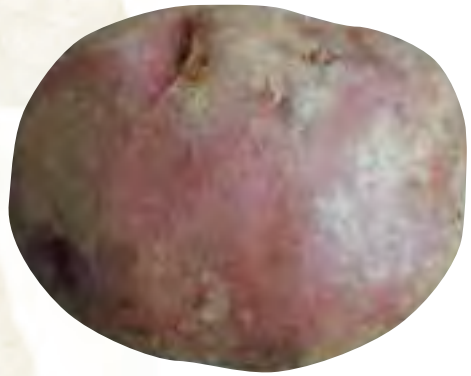


Gardenfiller:

First record: 1918

Synonyms: *Garden Filler, Hibernia, Land Leaguers, Home Rulers*

Maturity: *Maincrop*



General Comments

Davidson (1936) said that this variety was of unknown origin. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish and UK potato collections. MacDonald (1991) described this variety and said that it originated before 1918. Saunders (1905) mentioned a variety called Hibernia which he ascribed to the Scottish breeder Findlay.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are of medium size, conical in shape and possess an intense blue-violet pigmentation.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are of medium height, stemmy in appearance and semi-erect.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness with moderate to intense, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are very long and open. They are a dark green colour, of glossy texture and have a strongly pigmented mid-rib. Primary leaflets are large and narrow while secondaries are small and few in number. The fusion of the terminal and lateral leaflets occurs with medium frequency. The primary leaflets have a moderately waved leaf margin and veins are shallow. Pigmentation on the leaf blade of the apical rosette is occasionally seen.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence is small. The peduncle and buds are strongly pigmented. The inflorescences are numerous but flowers usually abscise before opening. Flowers that do open are a weak red-violet colour with large white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers are oval with shallow to medium deep eyes and smooth skin. The skin is purple and a purple pigment can be seen at the base of the eyes. The flesh is a light yellow colour.



Gawkies:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: None

Maturity: Maincrop



General Comments

This is a very old variety which Davidson (1936) procured from the locality of Glenties, Co. Donegal. The extent of its cultivation is not known but Davidson (1936) considered it to be of no commercial value. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are very faint pink, ovoid and of medium size.

PLANT HABIT

The plant is of medium height, stemmy in appearance and has a spreading habit.

STEMS

Stems are thin and numerous and are very weakly pigmented.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are small and open. They are a mid-green colour, glossy and have no colour in the mid-rib. Primary leaflets are small and broad while the secondary leaflets are small, few in number and rounded. Tertiary leaflets are rarely seen. The primary leaflets have intermediately wavy margins and veins of medium depth. Fused terminals are rare.



INFLORESCENCE

Flowers are rare. The peduncle is long and green in colour and the buds are markedly green. Flowers are white in colour. The buds are formed freely but normally abscise before opening.

TUBERS

The tubers are shaped round-oval and have very deep eyes and smooth skin. They are coloured white with eye bases yellow. The flesh is light yellow.



Green Champion:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: *Brown Champion, Blight Defender, Queen Mauve*

Maturity: *Late maincrop*



General Comments

The origin of this variety is not known. It was grown to some extent, but not commercially, in the Midlands of Ireland (Davidson, 1936). Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are large and spherical with a weak red-violet pigmentation.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are tall, with a stemmy appearance and erect habit.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness with moderate, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are of medium size and open. They are a mid-green colour with a medium texture and very weak pigmentation on the mid-rib. The primary leaflets are of medium size and narrow while the secondaries are of medium size and frequency.

Tertiary leaflets are few in number. Primary leaflets have weakly waved margins and are shallow veined. Fused terminal leaflets are rare.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and flowers are large. The inflorescences are numerous. The peduncle is long and very weakly pigmented but the buds have a very intense pigmentation. The flowers are a blue-violet colour with small white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers are round, with shallow to medium deep eyes and smooth skin. The tubers are white with a slight pink blush occasionally seen at the rose end. The bases of the eyes are usually yellow except at the rose end where a pink pigment can be seen. The tuber flesh is white.



Haddingtons:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: None

Maturity: Early



General Comments

This variety is of unknown origin. It is very rare and was found by Davidson (1936) as a rogue in some potato crops in Co. Donegal. He did not consider it of commercial importance. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are of medium size, conical in shape and have a weak red-violet pigmentation.

PLANT HABIT

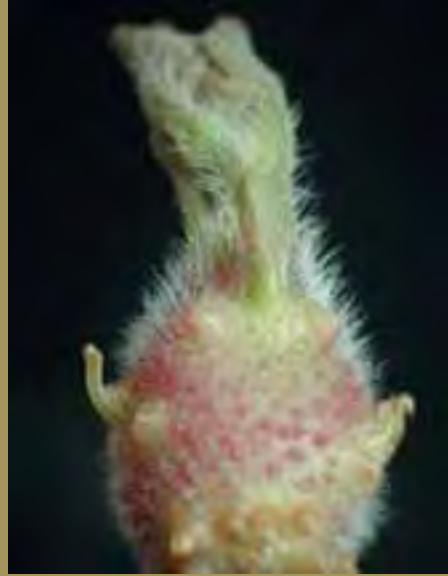
Plants are medium height, with a leafy appearance and semi-erect habit.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness, with faint, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are large and closed. They are a mid-green colour with a medium glossy texture and moderately pigmented mid-rib especially where the petioles of the lateral leaflets intersect the mid-rib. The primary leaflets are large and broad while the secondaries are medium size and fairly numerous. Tertiary leaflets are very rare. The primary leaflets are of medium waviness and have medium deep veins. Fused terminals occur infrequently.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence is small and borne on a short indistinct peduncle. The inflorescences are numerous but flowers usually abscise before opening. Flowers that do open are an intense red-violet colour with large white tips (Davidson, 1936).

TUBERS

The tubers are shaped round to oval with eyes varying from shallow to medium deep and smooth skin. The tubers are white with distinct red streaks especially at the rose end and at the lenticels. The bases of the eyes are yellow. The tuber flesh is a cream colour.



Irish Chieftan:

First record: 1917

Synonyms: None

Maturity: Late maincrop



General Comments

This variety was introduced by a Mr. McKenna, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim. It was said to be the offspring of the variety Beauty of Hebron and *Solanum commersonii*.

According to another, more probable, account, it arose as a cross between the varieties Up-to-Date and Champion (Salaman, 1926). The date of its introduction was given as c. 1917 (Davidson, 1936). Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish and UK potato collections. It was described by MacDonald (1991).

SPROUTS

Sprouts are small, spherical, with a weak blue-violet pigmentation.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are medium to tall, leafy and with a semi-erect growth habit.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness and have intense localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are large and open. They are a greyish green colour, with a dull texture and have strong colouration of the mid-rib. Primary leaflets are of medium size while the secondaries are large and of medium frequency.

Tertiary leaflets are few in number.

The primary leaflets have a weakly waved margin and are shallow veined. Fused terminal leaflets are occasionally seen.



INFLORESCENCE

The flowers are of medium size and very numerous. The peduncle is medium to long and it and the buds are weakly pigmented. The buds are green with dark purple markings. The flowers are red-purple with medium sized white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers are oval with shallow to medium to deep eyes and smooth skinned. The tubers are white in colour, and the bases of the eyes are yellow but occasionally a blue pigment is associated with the eyes at the stem end and occasionally the rose end. The tuber flesh is cream coloured.

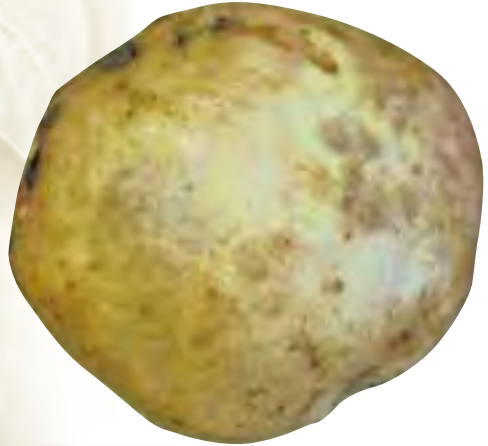


Irish Queen:

First record: 1910

Synonyms: *Moss Pink*

Maturity: *Maincrop*



General Comments

It is believed that this variety was raised by Strain of Ballyroney, Co. Down c. 1910 (Davidson, 1936). MacDonald (1991), however, attributed its origin to the UK, although he does not elaborate.

It was given the name Irish Queen by Issac Bell, Corbet, Banbridge (Davidson, 1936). He noted that it was 'fairly' popular but was replaced by Kerr's Pink. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was present in both the Irish and UK potato collections.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are of medium size, narrow conical in shape and have a weak red-violet colour.

PLANT HABIT

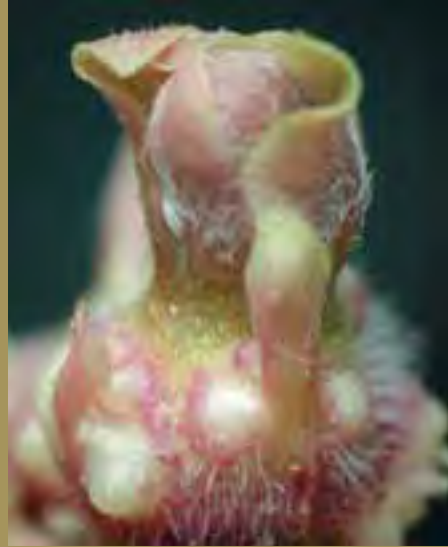
Plants are of medium height appearance and have an erect growth habit and are stemmy.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness and have a moderate, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are medium size and closed. They are a light green colour, with medium texture and a medium amount of pigmentation on the midrib. The primary leaflets are large size and round while the secondaries are of medium size and frequency. Tertiary leaflets are absent. The primary leaflets have a medium waved leaf blade and medium deep veins. A slight thread of pigmentation may be seen on the blades of the primary leaflets at the apical rosette when examined closely. Occasional fused terminal leaflets are seen.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence is small and borne on a short peduncle, which has a medium level of pigment. Buds are weakly pigmented. The inflorescences are numerous but flowers usually abscise before they open. Davidson (1936) reported that the flowers were light purple, tipped white.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are round, with medium deep eyes and medium textured skin. The skin colour is pink with white streaks especially around the eyes and the bases of the eyes are yellow. The tuber flesh is a cream colour.



Lumper:

<i>First record:</i>	<i>1808</i>
<i>Synonyms:</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Maturity:</i>	<i>Maincrop</i>



General Comments

The variety Lumper is of immense historical interest in Ireland, due to the fact that its fecundity facilitated the rapid increase in the population of Ireland during the early nineteenth century and its devastation, due to the 1845-48 potato blight epidemic, led to the Great Famine. It is a very old variety, and was probably well known when first recorded by Dutton (1808) in his Agricultural Survey of County Clare.

There are numerous references to this variety attesting to its widespread cultivation. It was described by Andrews (1835) as a 'coarse species' and was recommended by Howden (1837) as stock feed due to its enormous yield. Although it was claimed that 'Lumpers suffered more than any other variety (from blight)' (Anon., 1845), in truth, most pre-Famine potato varieties were blight susceptible, and varieties such as Cups, which were grown by more affluent farmers, never recovered their position post-1847 (Davidson, 1933). Lumpers now survive in the variety collections of Ireland and the UK only (Kehoe, 1986). The variety was described by MacDonald (1991). A variety called Lumper procured by Davidson in Co. Cavan in 1923, and subsequently from other places, was not the true Lumper and was named Cavan Lumper to avoid confusion. Davidson, who was responsible for collecting the true Lumper, had no doubt as to the veracity of this accession.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are a very faint red-violet colour, ovoid and large in size.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are of medium height, intermediate appearance and are semi-erect.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness with moderate localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are of medium size and open. They are dark green in colour with a glossy texture. Moderate levels of pigment are present on the mid-ribs. The primary leaflets are of medium size, while the secondaries are small and rounded. The primary leaflets have a weakly waved margin and are shallow veined.



INFLORESCENCE

Inflorescences are very numerous and individual flowers are medium to large. The peduncle and buds are without pigmentation. The flowers are white and tend to abscise readily.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are oval shaped and irregular. The eyes are very deep and the tuber skin has a rough texture. The tuber skin is white and the bases of the eyes are yellow. The tuber flesh is cream coloured.

Mill Street Hero:

<i>First record:</i>	1936
<i>Synonyms:</i>	None
<i>Maturity:</i>	Second early



General Comments

Davidson (1936) described this variety as being grown on a very small scale in the Ards district of Co. Down. The origin of this variety is unknown. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

The sprouts are of medium size, conical and have an intense blue-violet pigmentation.

PLANT HABIT

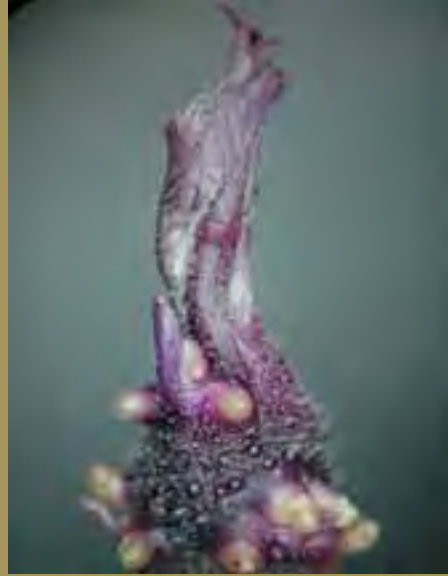
Plants are of medium size, with a leafy appearance and semi-erect habit.

STEMS

Stems are of average thickness and have faint to moderate localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are small and closed. They have a light green colour, glossy texture and a strongly pigmented mid-rib. The primary leaflets are medium to broad, tapering gradually to a point, while the secondary leaflets are of medium size and frequency. Tertiary leaflets are small and of medium frequency. The blade of the primary leaflets show medium waviness and the veins are of medium depth. Fused terminals are regularly seen.

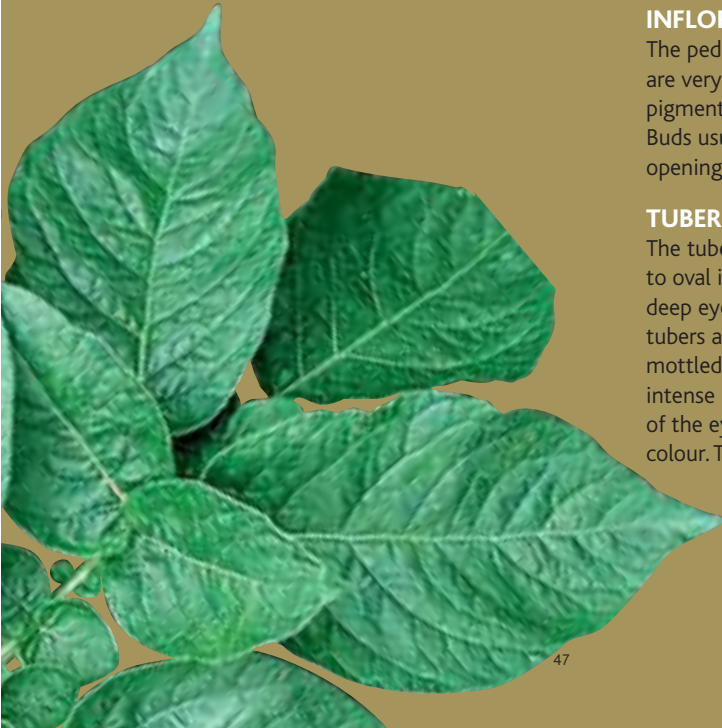


INFLORESCENCE

The peduncle is short and flowers are very rare. Medium levels of pigment are seen on the peduncle. Buds usually abscise before opening.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are round to oval in shape with medium to deep eyes and smooth skin. The tubers are pale purple but are mottled and streaked with a more intense purple pigment. The bases of the eyes are a deep purple colour. The tuber flesh is white.



Peerless:

<i>First record:</i>	1919
<i>Synonyms:</i>	None
<i>Maturity:</i>	Maincrop



General Comments

It is believed that this variety was raised by Strain, Ballyrone, Co. Down before 1919. It is similar in appearance to the more popular variety Arran Victory, and was sold as Arran Victory for some years (Davidson, 1936). Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish and UK potato collections. It was described by MacDonald (1991) who claimed that it originated in the UK.

SPROUTS

The sprouts are large, narrow-cylindrical in shape with a very strong blue-violet pigmentation.

PLANT HABIT

The plant is short to medium in height, with an intermediate appearance and a semi-erect habit.

STEMS

The stems are of medium thickness, with intense local pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are of medium size and closed. They are a mid-green colour, with a medium texture and medium level of pigmentation on the mid-rib. The primary leaflets are large and of medium width while the secondary leaflets are of medium size, cupped and intermediate frequency. The blade of the primary leaflets are of medium waviness and veins are shallow.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence is small and the flowers are medium in size. The flowers are sparse, as buds frequently abscise before opening. The peduncle and buds possess weak to medium levels of pigment. The peduncle is of medium length. The flowers are a weak red-violet colour with medium sized white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers are round with medium to deep eyes and smooth skin. The tubers are coloured purple with purple pigment at the base of the eyes. The tuber flesh is coloured white.

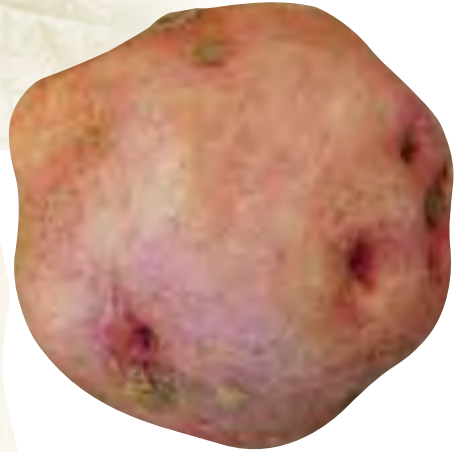


Red Cups:

First record: 1808

Synonyms: *Cups,*
Grigor Cups

Maturity: *Maincrop*



General Comments

Red Cups were first mentioned in Dutton's Agricultural Survey of Co. Clare (1808). He said that they were the most widely planted variety because they were both more productive and more nutritious than other varieties then available. Although widely praised for their quality, they were described by Andrews (1835) as being 'rather coarse', and it is perhaps more accurate to say that they were of a higher quality than the variety Lumpers, although much less productive. Cups were described by Davidson (1933) as the rich man's potato.

They were badly affected by the potato blight of 1845-48, which practically ended the variety, although in Davidson's time two types of Cups were still grown in parts of Ireland. These were Red Cup, which Davidson (1933) believed to be identical to the pre-famine variety and Gregor Cup. The latter variety however is mentioned by several authors as originating in the UK about 1903 (MacDonald, 1991; Wilson, 1993), and so it is possible that Davidson (1933) is, unusually, mistaken in this. Salaman (1926) lists the similarly named Grigor Cups as a synonym of Red Cups. The variety Red Cups was described by Davidson (1936). Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

This variety produces small, narrow cylindrical sprouts with a strong red-violet pigmentation.

PLANT HABIT

The plants are tall, with an intermediate appearance and an erect habit.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness with moderate, localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are small and of intermediate openness. They are mid-green in colour, with a medium texture and medium levels of pigment concentrated where the laterals intersect the mid-rib. The primary leaflets are of medium size and width while the secondaries are of medium size and frequency. The blades of the primary leaflets are of medium waviness and the veins are of medium depth.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and flowers are medium in size. Flowers tend to be numerous. The peduncle and buds are weakly pigmented. The peduncle is of medium length. The flowers have a weak red-violet colour with medium sized white tips. Slight purple flecking of the flower can be seen.

TUBERS

The tubers are shaped round with medium to deep eyes and smooth skin. They are pink in colour with streaks of deeper pink across their surface and at the bases of the eyes. The tuber flesh is cream coloured.

Rocks:

First record: Before 1856

Synonyms: White Rock,
White Rocks,
Scotch Downs,
Green Tops,
Protestants,
Silver Skins,

Maturity: Late maincrop



General Comments

The variety Rocks was the principal variety grown in Ireland from the end of the Great Famine up to the introduction of the variety Champion c. 1880 (Davidson, 1933). Howden (1837) mentioned a variety called Rocks, but Davidson (1933) considered it unlikely that this was the same variety which came to prominence a decade later, although he offers no reason for this. In 1880, the first year in which the acreage of potatoes grown in Ireland was officially recorded, 322,200 out of a total of 820,651 acres (c. 40%) were planted with Rocks. Thereafter, the acreage of Rocks declined rapidly.

In addition to the ordinary Rocks or White Rocks, there were two sports from this variety which were widely grown. These were called Red Rocks (syn. Peelers) and Brown Rocks (syn. Leathers, Leathercoats, Yellow Potato). In Davidson's time, all three were still grown in small patches in Ireland. Wilson (1993) said that Brown Rocks were synonymous with Rocks and not a sport of the variety, although he did acknowledge the existence of the red and brown types described by Davidson (1933). In addition, he said that Rocks were sometimes known as Yellows. This very old variety was first mentioned by Rye (1730) but Davidson (1933) was quite adamant that it was incorrect to link Yellows with Rocks. A partial description of Rocks was given by Davidson (1936). Rocks now exists only in the Irish potato collection (Kehoe, 1986). The name Rocks has also been used as a corruption of the variety name Shamrock.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are small, broad-conical in shape and blue-violet in colour.

PLANT HABIT

The plant is tall, stemmy and semi-erect.

STEMS

Stems are medium thick with faint localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are small and closed. The leaves are dull, mid-green in colour with a weak pigmentation of the mid-rib. The primary leaflets are also small but broad while the secondary leaflets are small and few to medium in frequency. Tertiary leaflets are small and few in number. The leaf blades are weakly waved and veins are deep. Some slight pigmentation of the leaf blades of the apical rosette can be seen.



INFLORESCENCE

The peduncle is short and almost completely lacking in pigmentation while the flower buds are strongly pigmented. The buds normally abscise before the flowers open. Davidson (1936) said that the flowers were small, reddish-purple in colour with white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are round, with very deep eyes and skin of medium texture. The tubers are white in colour and the bases of the eyes are yellow. The tuber flesh is a light yellow colour.

Sackfiller:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: None

Maturity: Late maincrop



General Comments

This variety was reported by Davidson (1936) to be grown around Athlone, Co. Westmeath and Clonakilty, Co. Cork. He did not consider it of commercial value. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.



SPROUTS

Sprouts are of medium size and broad-cylindrical in shape. They are pale pink in colour and have a small tip.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are tall, of intermediate appearance and erect.

STEMS

Stems are thick and strong and have intense localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are small and open. They are a mid- green colour, with glossy texture and a faint to medium pigmented mid-rib. The primary leaflets are medium sized and broad, while the secondary leaflets are small and not numerous. The blades of the primary leaflets are weakly waved and medium vein depth.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and flowers are large. The flowers are very numerous. The peduncle is very long, thick and strongly coloured while the buds are tinged with pigment. The flowers have a medium intense red-violet colour with medium size white tips. Prominent leaflets may be seen within the flower cluster. Flowers are retained late into the season.

TUBERS

The tubers are round to oval with shallow to medium deep eyes and smooth skin. They are white in colour with the base of the eyes yellow. The tuber flesh is cream coloured.



Skerry Blue:

<i>First record:</i>	1865
<i>Synonyms:</i>	<i>Skerries</i>
<i>Maturity:</i>	<i>Late maincrop</i>



General Comments

The first record of Skerry Blue occurred in the Farmer's Magazine of 1865, where it was mentioned as being free from potato blight. According to Davidson (1933) the origin of this variety is unknown but it has always been regarded as an Irish variety more than an English one.

Skerry Blue was chiefly grown in the northern counties of Ireland especially in the neighbourhood of Lough Neagh in Co. Derry and Tyrone. It was grown for the Dublin and Belfast market. There is some confusion as to the relationship between this variety and Black Skerry (see entry). Skerry Blue was once very popular in Ireland, its acreage in 1911 being exceeded by only Champion and Up-to-date. Its susceptibility to wart disease and the advent of new varieties such as Arran Victory (also purple in colour), hastened its decline although Davidson (1936) said that the variety was immune to wart disease. Salaman (1926) gives Skerries as a synonym for Skerry Blue. Wilson (1993) noted that this variety was never popular but that it was highly regarded for its culinary qualities. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was present in both the Irish and UK potato collections. MacDonald (1991) described this variety and claimed that it originated in the UK and was introduced c. 1846.



SPROUTS

The sprouts of this variety are purple.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are of medium height, intermediate appearance and are semi-erect.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness with moderate localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are small and open. They are a light green colour, dull in texture and have a deeply pigmented mid-rib. The primary leaflets are small, while the secondary leaflets are of medium frequency and small. The primary leaflets are weakly waved and have shallow to medium deep veins.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and individual flowers are of medium size. The flowers are numerous. The peduncle is short to medium in length and has medium levels of colour as do the buds. The flowers are a medium intense blue purple colour and have medium size white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are round to oval in shape with medium to deep eyes and medium textured skin. The tubers are purple with purple pigment also visible at the base of the eyes. The tuber flesh is white.



Skerry Champion:

First record: 1922

Synonyms: *Buchan Beauty,*
Striped
Champion,
Champion
Gardenfiller,
Greys

Maturity: *Maincrop*



General Comments

Davidson (1936) reported that this variety was previously grown extensively in the midlands and west of Ireland where it was considered second only to the variety Champion. Although the origin of this variety is unknown, he surmised that it was introduced to Ireland as a rogue in Champion.

Kehoe (1986) noted that, as Buchan Beauty, it occurred in both the Irish and UK potato collections. He also listed this variety independently as Striped Champion and Skerry Champion. MacDonald (1991) described Buchan Beauty in his booklet and claimed that it originated in the UK before 1922.



SPROUTS

Sprouts are purple.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are of medium height, stemmy and erect.

STEMS

Stems are medium to thick with moderate, localised pigmentation present.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are small and closed. They are mid-green, glossy and have medium levels of pigment on the mid-rib especially at leaflet axils. The primary leaflets are of medium size and broad, while the secondaries are small and of medium frequency. Tertiary leaflets are few in number and small. The primary leaflets have weakly waved leaf margins and deep veins. Fused terminal leaflets are seldom seen.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and individual flowers are of medium size. Flowers are numerous. The peduncle is of medium length while the peduncle and buds have medium levels of pigment. The flowers are a very intense red-violet colour with very small white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are round to oval in shape with medium to deep eyes and medium textured skin. They are coloured part blue, the pigment being concentrated mid-way between the heel and rose ends. The bases of the eyes are yellow. The tuber flesh is a deep yellow colour.



Snowdrop:

First record: 1881

Synonyms: *Snowdrop
(Resistant),
Witchhill,
Witch Hill*

Maturity: *Maincrop*



General Comments

A variety called Snowdrop was mentioned by Malden (1895) who described it as having a kidney or oval shaped tuber and white flowers. Salaman (1926) described Snowdrop as a variety of little commercial importance. It was possibly raised by Cole and introduced by John Perkin and Son, Northampton prior to 1881. Davidson (1936) gave a full description of Snowdrop but little additional information as to its origin. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

Sprouts are light pink at base and have a white tip (Davidson, 1936).

PLANT HABIT

The plant is of medium height, leafy and has a spreading habit.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness with faint localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are long and of intermediate openness. They are a light green colour, with a medium-glossy texture and have weak pigmentation at the base of the petiole but are otherwise green. The primary leaflets are of medium size, long and narrow while the secondaries are small and infrequent. Tertiary leaflets are very rare. The primaries are shallow veined and have moderately waved leaf blades. Fused terminals are of medium frequency.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescences are large and individual flowers are of medium size. Flowers are seldom formed. The peduncle is very long but lacking in pigment, while the buds are weakly pigmented. The flowers are white.

TUBERS

The tubers of Snowdrop are oval shaped with shallow eyes and medium textured skin. They are white with the bases of the eyes yellow. The tuber flesh is cream coloured.



The Baron:

First record: 1927

Synonyms: None

Maturity: Second early



General Comments

The Baron was raised by Mr C. Brown of Pitnappie, Newtyle, Scotland and first commercialised in 1927 (Davidson, 1936). Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection. MacDonald (1991) described this variety.



SPROUTS

Sprouts are pink (Davidson, 1936).

PLANT HABIT

Plants are tall, of intermediate type and erect habit.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness and have moderate localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

Leaves are of medium size and closed. They are a dark green colour, with a medium to glossy texture and have medium levels of pigment on the mid-rib. Primary leaflets are of medium size and narrow with a distinctly folded appearance, while the secondary leaflets are of medium size and frequency. The primary leaflets have a strongly waved margin and veins of medium depth. Fused terminals occur with medium frequency.

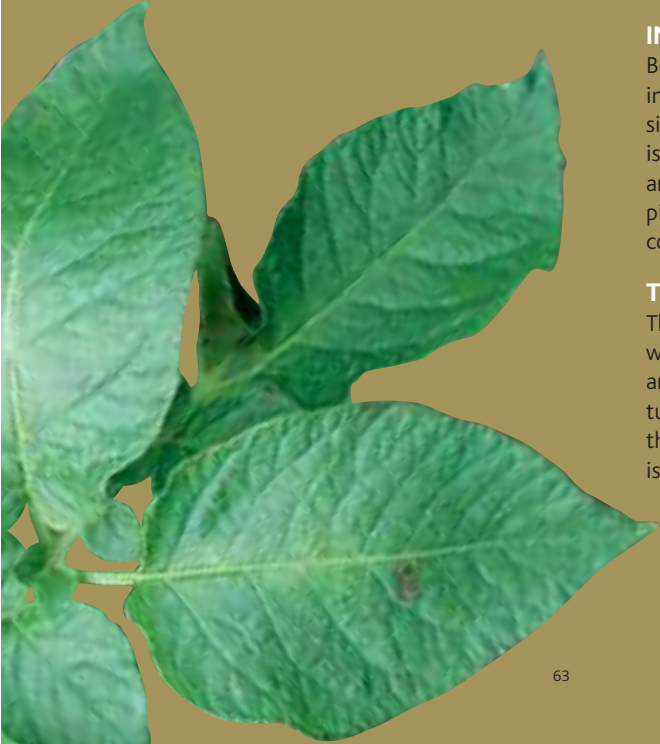


INFLORESCENCE

Both the inflorescence and individual flowers are of medium size. Flowers are rare. The peduncle is of medium length and both it and the buds are very strongly pigmented. The flowers are white in colour.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are oval with shallow to medium deep eyes and skin of medium texture. The tubers are white and the bases of the eyes are yellow. The tuber flesh is white.



Thome Black:

First record: 1936

Synonyms: None

Maturity: Maincrop



General Comments

Davidson (1936) described Thome Black as a very old variety grown in the Kilmacrenan area of Co. Donegal. He did not consider it a commercial variety. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection.

SPROUTS

The sprouts are purple (Davidson, 1936).

PLANT HABIT

The plant is of medium height, leafy and spreading.

STEMS

The stems are thick with moderate local colouration.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are very large and closed. The leaves are light green in colour, dull in texture and the midribs are strongly pigmented. Primary leaflets are very large while the secondary leaflets are medium sized and frequent. Tertiary leaflets are small and are few in number. Leaf margins tend to be weakly waved and veins are shallow. Fused terminal leaflets are occasionally seen.



INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and individual flowers are of medium size. Flowers occur with medium frequency. The peduncle is very short and both it and the flower buds are weakly pigmented. The flowers are white in colour.

TUBERS

The tubers are round to oval with shallow to medium deep eyes and skin of medium texture. The tubers are a light purple colour and the bases of the eyes are yellow. The tuber flesh is white but it is stained with a deep pink pigment.



Thomes:

First record: 1925

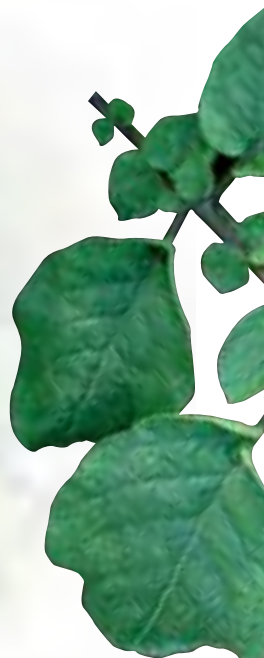
Synonyms: None

Maturity: Early maincrop



General Comments

Davidson (1936) noted that this variety was collected by P. Devine, Newmills, Co. Donegal in 1925 and that it had never been grown commercially. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish and UK potato collections. It was described by MacDonald (1991).



SPROUTS

Sprouts are of medium size and a narrow cylindrical shape. Sprouts are an intense blue-violet colour.

PLANT HABIT

Plants are of medium height, stemmy and semi-erect.

STEMS

Stems are of medium thickness and very strongly coloured over their entire length.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are long and open. They are a dark green colour, with a medium-glossy texture and have very strongly pigmented mid-ribs. Primary leaflets are medium in size and width while secondary leaflets small and of medium frequency. The blades of primary leaflets are of medium waviness and vein depth. Some slight pigmentation of the leaf blades of the apical rosette can be seen. Fusion of the terminal leaflets is rarely seen

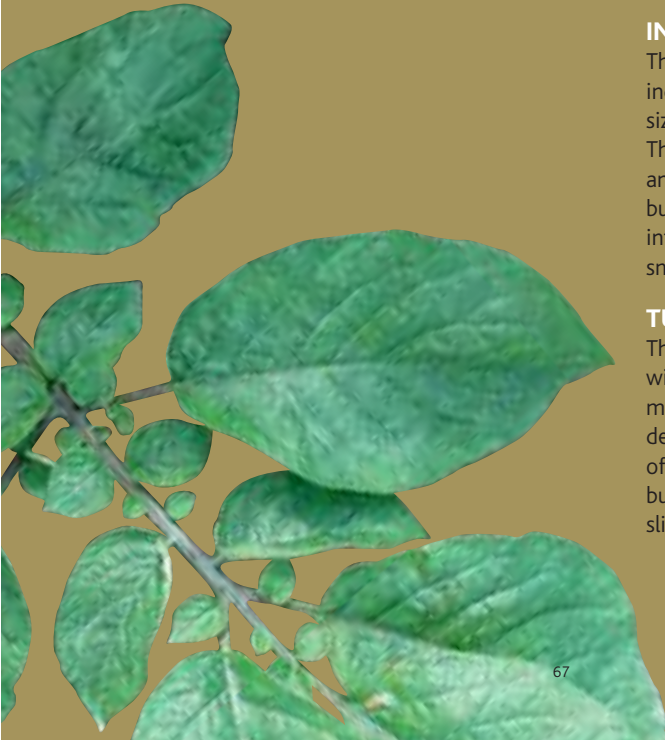


INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence is small and individual flowers are of medium size. Flowers are few in frequency. The peduncle is of medium length and strongly pigmented, as are the buds. The flowers have a medium intense blue-violet colour with small white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers are long oval in shape with shallow eyes and skin of medium texture. The tubers are a deep purple colour, as are the bases of the eyes. The tuber flesh is white, but the skin pigment extends very slightly into the tissue.



Yankee Baby:

First record: 1923

Synonyms: None

Maturity: Maincrop



General Comments

This variety was mentioned by Davidson (1936) who found it growing in Co. Kerry c. 1923. He suggested that it was possibly an American variety and was of no commercial value. Kehoe (1986) noted that it was unique to the Irish potato collection. This is not the same as the variety Yankee (Davidson, 1936).

SPROUTS

The sprouts are deep pink (Davidson, 1936).

PLANT HABIT

The plant is of medium height, with intermediate appearance and semi-erect to erect stems.

STEMS

The stems are of medium thickness with intense localised pigmentation.

FOLIAGE

The leaves are medium long and open. They are light green in colour, medium textured with very pronounced colour on the mid-rib.

The primary leaflets are medium to narrow in shape, with medium deep veins and strongly waved leaf margins. The secondary and tertiary leaflets are small and numerous.

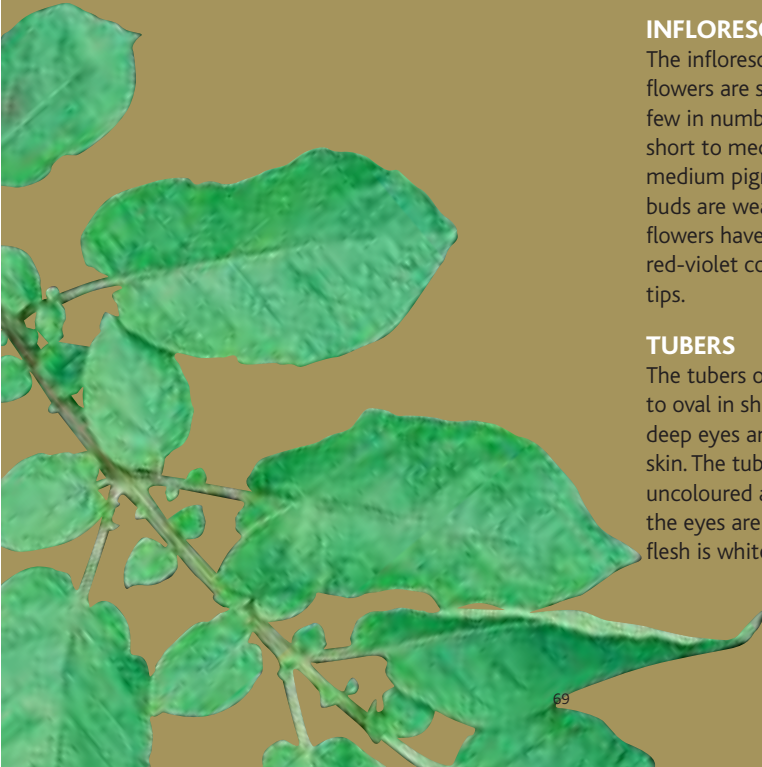


INFLORESCENCE

The inflorescence and individual flowers are small. Inflorescences are few in number. The peduncle is short to medium in length, has medium pigmentation whereas the buds are weakly pigmented. The flowers have a medium intense red-violet colour and diffuse white tips.

TUBERS

The tubers of this variety are round to oval in shape with medium to deep eyes and medium textured skin. The tubers are red but have uncoloured areas and the bases of the eyes are also red. The tuber flesh is white but is stained pink.



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APPENDIX 1

Complete List Of Historical Accessions in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Potato Collection (Pre-1800 to 1950).

Variety Name	Origin	Date ¹	Status ²	Information sources ³
America	USA	1876	Rare	1,2,3,4
Arran Banner	Sc	1927	Common	2,3,4
Arran Cairn	Sc	1929	Rare	1,2,3,4
Arran Chief	Sc	1907	Common	2,3,4
Arran Consul	Sc	1925	Common	2,3,4
Arran Crest	Sc	1928	Common	2,3,4
Arran Peak	Sc	1930	Common	2,3,4
Arran Pilot	Sc	1931	Common	2,3,4
Arran Rose	Sc	1912	Rare	1,2,3,4
Arran Scout	Sc	1931	Rare	2,3,4
Arran Victory	Sc	1912	Common	1,2,3,4
Arran Viking	Sc	1945	Rare	3,4
Ballydoon	Sc	1931	Common	2,3,4
Beauties	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	2
Beauty of Bute	Sc	1890	Rare	1,2,3,4
Beauty of Hebron	USA	1878	Very rare	1,2,4
Belgium Lily	Unk	Unk	Very rare	5
Ben Lomond	Sc	1916	Rare	2,3,4
Bintje	NL	1910	Common	3,4
The Bishop	Sc	1906	Rare	1,2,3
Black Champion	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	2
Black Potato	Ir	Unk	Very rare	5
Black Skerry	NI	1900	Very rare	2
Blight Resister	Ir	Pre-1936	Very rare	2
Bloomers	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	2
Blue Kidney	Ir	Unk	Very rare	5
Blue Gloss	UK	Pre-1936	Rare	3
Blue Neb	NI	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	2
Bothwell	Ir	Unk	Very rare	5
British Queen	Sc	1894	Common	1,2,3,4
Bufs	Ir	1850	Very rare	2,4

Catriona	Sc	1920	Rare	1,3,4
Champion	Sc	1862	Common	1,2,3,4
Congo	UK	Pre-1900	Common	3,4
Craig's Alliance	Sc	1948	Rare	3,4
Craig's Bounty	Sc	1946	Rare	3,4
Craig's Defiance	Sc	1938	Common	3,4
Craig's Royal	Sc	1947	Common	3,4
Crusader	Sc	1913	Common	2,3
Di Vernon	Sc	1922	Common	1,2,3,4
Donard (Nursery)	NI	1927	Very rare	2,3
Doon Early	Sc	1934	Rare	2,3,4
Doon Star	Sc	1928	Common	2,3,4
Dr. McIntosh	Sc	1944	Common	3,4
Dunbar Cavalier	Sc	1929	Rare	2,3,4
Dunbar Rover	Sc	1936	Common	2,3,4
Dunbar Standard	Sc	1936	Rare	2,3,4
Earl of Essex	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	2
Dunbar Yeoman	Sc	1932	Common	2,3,4
Early Market	Eng	1884	Rare	1,2,3,4
Early Ohio	USA	Unk	Common	2
Early Regent	Eng	1882	Very rare	2,4
Eclipse	Eng	1900	Rare	2,3,4
Edgecote Purple	Eng	c.1900	Rare	1,2,3,4
Edzell Blue	Sc	c.1900	Rare	1,2,3,4
Eigenheimer	NL	1893	Common	2,3,4
Eightyfold	Eng	1894	Very rare	1,2,4
Epicure	Eng	1897	Common	1,2,3,4
Etoile de Leon	Fr	1935	Common	3,4
Evergood	Eng	1900	Common	1,2,3,4
Farmers	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	2
Field Marshal	Sc	1920	Very rare	1,2,3
Flounders	Ir	Pre-1880	Very rare	2
Flourball	Ir	1895	Common	1,2,3,4
Gardenfiller	Ir	1798	Rare	2,3,4
Gawkies	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	2
Gladstone	Sc	1935	Common	2,3,4
Golden Wonder	Sc	1906	Common	1,2,3,4
Great Scot	Sc	1909	Common	1,2,3,4

Green Champion	?	Pre-1936	Very rare	2
Gregor Cups	UK	1903	Rare	2,3,4
Haddingtons	Ir	Pre-1936	Very rare	2
Herald	Sc	1932	Common	2,3,4
Home Guard	Sc	1942	Common	3,4
Idaho	Unk	Unk	Very rare	5
Immune Ashleaf	Ger	1891	Rare	1,2,3
International Kidney	Eng	1879	Common	1,2,3,4
Irish Chieftain	Ir	1917	Rare	1,2,3
Irish Queen	NI	1916	Rare	2,3
Irish White	NI	1882	Rare	2,3
John Bull	UK	Pre-1936	Rare	2,3
K. of K.	Sc	1920	Rare	1,2,4
Kerr's Pink	Sc	1907	Common	1,2,3,4
King Edward (VII)	Eng	1902	Common	1,2,3,4
King George V	Sc	1911	Rare	1,2,3,4
Langworthy	Sc	1905	Rare	1,3,4
Lochar	Sc	1915	Rare	1,2,3
Long Island White	Ir	Unk	Very rare	5
Lumper	Ir	1800	Very rare	2,3,4
Lynn Grey	UK	Pre-1936	Rare	2,3
Majestic	Sc	1911	Common	1,2,3,4
Marquis of Bute	Sc	1921	Rare	1,2,3
May Queen	Eng	1900	Common	1,2,3,4
Mein's Early Round	UK	1916	Rare	2,3,4
Mill Street Hero	Ir	Pre-1936	Very rare	2
Miller's Beauty	Sc	1920	Very rare	2
Ninetyfold	Eng	1897	Common	1,2,3,4
North Island Skerry	Ir	Unk	Very rare	5
Northern Star	Sc	1900	Rare	1,2,3,4
Peach Bloom	USA	Pre-1936	Rare	2,3
Peerless	NI	1919	Rare	2,3
Pink Fir Apple	F	Pre-1850	Common	3,4
President	NL	1896	Common	1,2,3,4
Pride of Bute	UK	Pre-1936	Rare	2,3
Pride of Perth	Ir	Unk	Very rare	5
Puritan	USA	Pre-1936 ⁴	Rare	2,3
Purple Champion	Unk	Unk	Very rare	5
Record	NL	1925	Common	3,4

Red Cups	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	2
Red Kidney	UK	Unk	Rare	2,3
Red Rock	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	5
Red Skin (Russet)	Sc	1932	Very rare	2,3,4
Rhoderick Dhu	Sc	1914	Rare	1,2,3
Ridgeway Rossmore	Unk	Unk	Very rare	
Royal Kidney	Sc	1899	Common	1,2,3,4
Ruby Queen	Sc	1894	Very rare	2
Sackfiller	Poss IR	Pre-1936	Very rare	2
Shamrock	UK	Pre-1900	Common	2,3
Sharpe's Express	Eng	1901	Common	1,2,3,4
Sharpe's Victor	Eng	1891	Common	1,2,3,4
Skerry Blue	UK	1865	Rare	2,3,4
Skerry Champion	Sc	Pre-1936	Very rare	2
Snowdrop	Eng	1881	Very rare	1
Snowflake	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	2,4
Spry's Abundance	Sc	Pre-1936	Rare	2,3
Stormont Dawn	NI	1942	Common	3,4
Striped Champion	Unk	Unk	Very rare	
Sutton's Abundance	Eng	1886	Rare	3
Sutton's Victoria	Eng	1863	Very rare	4
Templar	Sc	1906	Rare	1,2,3,4
The Baron	UK	1927	Very rare	2,3
Thome Black	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	2
Thomes	Ir	Pre-1936	Rare	2,3
Tinwald Perfection	Sc	1914	Very rare	1,2,3,4
Ulster Chieftain	NI	1938	Common	3,4
Ulster Commerce	NI	1939	Rare	3,4
Ulster Dale	NI	1948	Common	3,4
Ulster Earl	NI	1943	Rare	3,4
Ulster Leader	NI	1947	Rare	3,4
Ulster Premier	NI	1945	Common	3,4
Ulster Prince	NI	1947	Common	3,4
Ulster Supreme	NI	1948	Common	3,4
Up-to-Date	Sc	1894	Common	1,2,3,4
White City	Sc	1909	Very rare	1,2,3,4
White Rock	Ir	Pre-1936 ⁴	Very rare	4
Yam	UK	1836	Rare	2,3
Yankee Baby	USA	Pre-1936	Very rare	2

- 1 Date raised or introduced
- 2 From Kehoe (Very Rare=Irish Collection, Rare = Irish and UK Collection, Common= three collections or more)
- 3 In addition to field observations made during the course of this work the following historical descriptions have been consulted: (1) Salaman (1926); (2) Davidson (1936); (3) MacDonald (1991); (4) Wilson (1993); (5) new original description
- 4 Described by Davidson (1936) as being very old.

APPENDIX 2

List of Synonyms Described Potato Varieties

Variety	Synonym
Beauties	None
Black Champion	Scotch Greys
	Greys
Black Potato	None
Black Skerry	Skerry
	Rehedee
Blight Resister	None
Bloomers	Brown Black
	Black Bull
	Starter
	Stouter
	Stouters
Bothwell	None
Buffs	None
Champion	Nicol's Champion
	Old Champion
	Old Scotch Champion
	Schoolmaster
Red Cups	Cups
	Grigor Cups
Earl of Essex	Blue Eyes
	Copper Duns
	Shaun Power
	Farmer's Glory
Farmers	None
Flourball	Dargavel
	Helon's Plentiful
	Keeper
Gawkies	None
Green Champion	Brown Champion
	Blight Defender
	Queen Mauve
Haddingtons	None
Gardenfiller	Garden Filler
	Hibernia
	Land Leaguers
	Home Rulers
Irish Chieftain	None
Irish Queen	Moss Pink
Lumper	None
Mill Street Hero	None
Peerless	None
Rocks	White Rock
	White Rocks
	Scotch Downs
	Green Tops
	Protestants
	Silver Skins
Sackfiller	None
Skerry Blue	Skerries
Skerry Champion	Buchan Beauty
	Striped Champion
	Champion Gardenfiller
	Greys
Snowdrop	Snowdrop (Resistant)
	Witch Hill
	Witchill
The Baron	None
Thome Black	None
Thomes	None
Yankee Baby	None

