

Topsham's own apple tree.



Photo: www.England-in-particular.info

Malus domestica 'Upton Pyne'

Flowers: Large pink flowers.

Flowering Season: Pollination Group 3, usually in full flower by second week in May.

Parentage: Unknown

Fruit: An enormous dual purpose apple, primarily an exhibition or dessert variety, sometimes weighing over 1 lb (½kg).

Growth: Upright.

Details: Flowers at the same time as *M. Cox's Orange Pippin*, making it a useful pollinator for this popular variety. Fruits have a firm, rather coarse-textured, juicy flesh with a somewhat acid but fair flavour. Fruit picking season is late September or early October with a storage season of December to March.

History: This variety was raised by George Pyne of Topsham and introduced in 1910. Specimens were exhibited at the Royal Horticultural Society in 1933 where it was described as being similar in shape to "Royal Jubilee, and with colour typical of Lane's Prince Albert, i.e. yellow with scarlet flush and streaks. Eye closed in a wrinkled basin; stem short, stout. No russet in cavity. Flesh white, juicy and fairly firm". The fruit has also been described: "Of very distinct flavour and likely to become popular." This variety is still obtainable today, this plant having come from Deacon's Nursery on the Isle of Wight.

Footnote: It is estimated that there were once about 7,500 varieties of apples being grown in Britain, many of them having been selected for local soil and climatic conditions. Most of these varieties have been lost during the last century. The Brogdale Horticultural Trust in Kent is the home of the National Fruit Collections which includes some 2,500 varieties of apples, the world's largest collection, and is an important genetic resource for future biodiversity. George Pyne also raised other apples varieties at his Topsham Nursery [now Nurseries Close] which have since fallen out of cultivation.

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Sources:
Brogdale Horticultural Trust, Kent.
Common Ground
Deacon's Nursery, Isle of Wight.
The Apples of England, H. V. Taylor, 1944.