

Pollitt's Seedlings (Potatoes)

John Pollitt Green Pit Farm Winwick, Lancashire

Local Hero: Potato Breeder 1858



The Cup

"Presented to Mr. John Pollitt, of Winwick, by a few friends, as an acknowledgement of the benefit he has rendered his neighbourhood in raising from seed the potatoes called "Pollitt's Seedlings". April, 1858"



Ian Pollitt

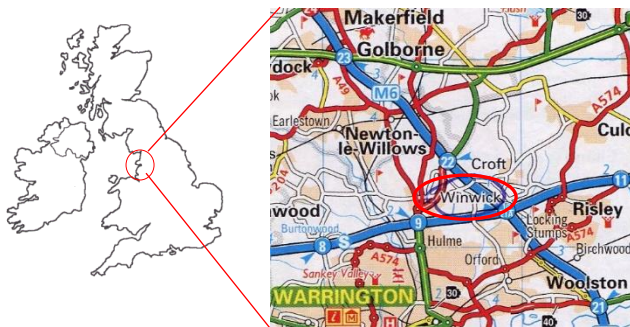
John Pollitt of Green Pit Farm, Winwick's contribution to local agriculture would have been forgotten if it were not for the questioning mind of his Great Great Grandson Ian Pollitt living in Perth, Australia (Top right). He inherited a cup awarded to John Pollitt by neighbouring farmers with the inscription above. History was uncovered in two newspaper articles found in the Warrington Guardian archives, [Church records and maps.](#) Lancashire with industrial growth, the importance of Liverpool as global port and the proximity to Ireland meant there was an increasing dependence on the potato as a source of food in the region. In the aftermath of the tragic Irish Potato famine as a result of crop failure due to blight in two consecutive years, John Pollitt produced potatoes from "Bloody Rogers" known as Pollitt's seedlings which were resistant to the disease.

The first article advertises an auction of his much sought after seedlings and the next is a celebratory dinner during which neighbouring friends and farmers presented him with the inscribed cup. Nothing further has been found which suggests his varieties did not stand the test of time and probably succumbed to disease again. Other breeders, particularly in Scotland, are well known such as Paterson, Findlay, helped undoubtedly by the cool climate and lower rainfall which kept diseases in abeyance. Today there is no trace of variety nor the White Horse Inn but the cup holds good for the Pollitt line.

John Pollit, Green Pit Farm, Winwick

LANDOWNERS.	OCCUPIERS.	Extent relating to the Plan.	NAME AND DESCRIPTION of LAND AND PREMISES.
170. James Pollitt Winwick, Lanc.	170. John Pollitt (Continued)	170. 1/2000 170. 1/2000 170. 1/2000 170. 1/2000	170. 1/2000 170. 1/2000 170. 1/2000 170. 1/2000

Tithe Information 1849



Tithe Plan 1835



Winwick Map 1893
National Library of
Scotland archive



Lumpers



Irish Potato Famine
1845-1846

The Auction 1855

Important to Potato Growers, Butchers, and others
SALE of 1,000 BUSHELS OF PURE SEEDLINGS.
M. R. P. UNSWORTH
 Has been favoured with instructions from Mr. John Pollitt, of Winwick, in the County of Lancashire, to SELL by AUCTION on Thursday, March 22nd, 1855, ABOUT 1,100 Bushels of POLLITT'S SEEDLING POTATOES, to be sold in lots to suit purchasers. The above named Seedlings were raised from the crabs of "Red" or "Bloody Rogers" in the year 1848, and have been selected with great care and judgment from amongst other sorts raised the same season, as being the only kind that would resist the disease or blight in those seasons when all others were almost destroyed. They are considered by all competent judges to be the best late Potatoes for growing purposes, and particularly for the table in the months of April, May, June and July. They are the best now in existence, being very white and of a floury nature.

To be viewed on or before the day of sale by applying to Mr. Pollitt, on the premises, or to any of the following persons, who have been growers of a few of them the last season, viz: Mr. William Daine, Winwick, Mr. William Warburton, Dailam, Mr. William Bate, Winwick, Mr. Adam Cartwright, Newton, Mr. William Walkden, Carrington Hall, near Altrincham.

Also 3 excellent Fat Pigs, from 10 to 11 score each, 1 Fat Cow, 1 Fresh Barren Cow, 2 in-milk Cows, to calve about the time of sale, 1 Broad-wheeled Cart 15 cwt., 1 Narrow-wheeled Cart on springs, 1 excellent Whitechapel with patent axles, 10 tonnes of Swedish Turnips, a quantity of Horse Gears.

The Auctioneer can with confidence recommend the above as Pure Seedling Potatoes, being witness to the crop and taster of the quality, he also begs of his friends and the public to come to the sale of Pollitt's Seedlings situated at Winwick, near the White Horse Inn, where refreshment will be provided, and taste the quality before they buy.

The sale to begin at one o'clock with the Pigs and Cows, Carts, Horse Gears and Whitechapel. [258]

TO BE SOLD

The Cup Presentation 1858

WINWICK.
Presentation.—On Thursday evening, the presentation of a silver cup was made to Mr. J. Pollitt, of Winwick, at the house of Mrs. Smith, the White Horse Inn. Upwards of 30 sat down to an excellent supper prepared for the occasion, the chair being occupied by Mr. Hatton, of Southworth Hall, and the vice chair by Mr. Daine, of Hulme. Upon the withdrawal of the cloth, and after the usual loyal toasts had been disposed of, the chairman made the presentation in eulogistic to the presentee, for the great benefits he had been the means of conferring upon the community as one of the few, through whose efforts an highly necessary article of the life had been rescued from a destruction which at one time was greatly impending. Mr. Pollitt returned thanks in very able terms, for the tangible appreciation that had been made of his efforts; and hoped that not only would such kindness be ever remembered by him, but would be long and duly acknowledged by his "seedlings" after him; and remarking that he was a very poor subject indeed that could not raise some sort of "seedlings" for the good of his country.

After sentiment, the cup was handed round to each party, respectively, and not a few were the observations made upon its perfections in administering to the attractions of the eye, by the taste displayed in its external design, which could only vie with that practical appreciation of the taste emanating from its internal capacity, as it underwent in the peregrination its initiation as the channel of communication of the juice of the grape to the succulence of man; its adaptation to which was evidently perfectly satisfactory from the frequent calls that had to be made upon its "chum" the "black bottle." The cup, which was supplied by Mr. Simcock, of Warrington, is beautifully enchased on one side with an agricultural subject and on the other bears the following inscription:—

Presented to Mr. John Pollitt, of Winwick, by a few friends, as an acknowledgement of the benefit he has rendered his neighbourhood in raising from seed the potatoes called "Pollitt's Seedlings". April, 1858.

Important to Potato Growers, Butchers and others

Sale of 1,100 Bushels of pure seedlings.

Mr P. Unsworth has been favoured with instructions from Mr John Pollitt of Winwick, in the County of Lancashire, to SELL by AUCTION on Thursday, March 22nd 1855. About 1,100 Bushels of POLLITT'S SEEDLING POTATOES, to be sold to suit purchasers. The above named Seedlings were raised from the crabs of "Red" or "Bloody Rogers" in the year 1848, and have been selected with great care and judgement from amongst other sorts raised the same **strains** as being the only kind that would resist the disease or blight in those seasons when all others were almost all destroyed. They are considered by all competent judges to be the best late Potatoes for growing purposes, and particularly for the table in the months of April, May, June and July. They are the best now in existence, being very white and of a floury nature.

To be viewed on or before the day of sale by applying to Mr Pollitt on the premises or to any of the following persons, who have been growers of a few of them last season, viz Mr William Warburton, Dailam, Mr William Bate Winwick Mr Adam Cartwright, Newton Mr William Walkden Carrington Hall near Altrincham.

Also 3 excellent fat pigs from 10 to 11 score each, 1 fresh Barren Cow, 2 in calf Cows, to calve about the time of the sale, 1 broad wheeled Cart 15 cwt, 1 Narrow wheeled Cart on springs, 1 excellent Whitechapel with patent axles, 10 tonnes of Swedish Turnips a quantity of horse gears

The Auctioneer can with confidence recommend the above pure Seedling Potatoes being witness to the crop and taster of the quality, he also begs of his friends and the public to come to the sale of Pollitt seedlings situated at Winwick, near the white Horse inn where refreshment will be provided and taste the quality before they buy. The sale to begin at one o'clock with pigs and cows, carts, horse gears and Whitechapel

TO BE SOLD

Warrington Guardian Newspaper March 17 1855

Warrington Guardian Newspaper April 24 1858

DISTRICT NEWS.

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A number of complimentary, agricultural and other toasts, intervened with songs, afterwards followed during the conviviality of the evening, and in the remarks connected therewith, some practical observations were made upon the potatoe disease, its cause, and best means of eradication; and the great importance which the cultivation of that root must be held in the agriculture of Lancashire in particular. This and various other agricultural subjects were discussed in a manner highly creditable for the emanations that they gave rise to; and more particularly the practical remarks of Mr. Kerfoot, in the propounding of his thirty years' experience, from which he deduced three great desiderata in farming:- "Making land dry, afterwards making it fat, and getting good crops." - *Corr*

