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"Gratitude of the World" for Black Ben Davis.

THE APPLE FOR THE MILLIONS.—Extracts from Some Recent Letters to Stark Bro's, Louisiana, Mo.

I've gained more valuable hints from your literature than from almost any other source. It is better adapted to our mountain climate than most of our Calif. publications. . . . Have just been gathering apples. My aim has been to find some new and better market apples. It has been an experiment, but I wish you could see them! . . . Nero is good but won't keep. Lawyer poor—as you have always said. Akin beautiful and I like it. M. B. Twig has not fulfilled expectations. YORK IMPERIAL a grand apple, and I like the way it sets its fruit. JEFFERIS is fine; an apple that all like and ask for more—rich and satisfying. Barry is surely no honor to the name. BLACK BEN DAVIS I'm proud of; it is simply grand.—Frank Femmons, Home Orchard, Madera Co., California, Oct. 30, 1899.

Later, March 16, 1900: Have put off replying to your highly valued letter, so as to note keeping qualities of new apples. Season was unfavorable—August cool, September warm, then the mildest of winters, making the test a severe one. . . . APPLE of COMMERCE hung till Dec. 1, through a couple of snow storms, and developed greatly; keeping hard and sound yet; none rotted. DELICIOUS 2-yr. grafts bore a few specimens; only tasted one myself. It certainly has high quality. GRIMES GOLDEN here is good a short while, but loses quality too soon. Springdale looks well, keeps well if left on the tree till late; but I've no use for it. . . . Must say a word for COFFELT; a good apple; not among the extras, but sells well, gives good satisfaction; good grower, bears heavily every year, good color, not too large—just the size to pack right. . . . GANO is a Ben Davis in tree; redder, but smaller; gets mealy by mid-winter. BLACK BEN DAVIS still holds its own; sound yet. Sent specimens to many parts of the state. Everyone praises it highly. It is a grand apple and you deserve the gratitude of the world for its introduction. . . . I shall always feel grateful to you for the many ways you have helped me in my effort, and particularly for kindness and friendly feeling so often expressed.—Frank Femmons.

Later, Nov. 1, 1900: Apple crop thru this mountain fruit belt is better than for some years past. I think more highly of nearly all the new sorts than last year, when I first fruited some of them. BLACK BEN DAVIS was my first choice last year, and I still give it first place—the most beautiful apple grown. APPLE of COMMERCE developed a good flavor late in the spring and proved a remarkably fine keeper. CHAMPION is my second choice—even size, good shape, bright color, good flavor, keeps well and hangs well on the tree. DELICIOUS—well, that name tells the whole story. Prizetaker has done well and looks fine—covered with the heaviest bloom. Attracts much attention.—Frank Femmons.

BLACK BEN DAVIS apples came to hand all right, and was very glad to receive them, as I could not believe the Gano and Black Ben Davis were identical, judging from what I had seen of the fruit. I am very glad to know Black Ben Davis is such a good keeper; they were all sound when they reached me, and kept so until they were all eaten,—whereas the Gano were nearly all more or less decayed. I can...
not see how anyone can make the mistake of considering Black Ben Davis and Gano alike. Flesh of Black Ben Davis is yellowish and has a sweetish taste, reminding one of Gilpin, while Gano has white flesh and flavor like Ben Davis.—E. A. Richl., Supt. Ill. Exp. Station, Alton, Ill., May 6, 1900.

Later.—Yours of the 12th received and noted. As I am not in the nursery business, I can discuss the B. B. Davis matter without prejudice. I only want the truth. Whether Black Ben Davis has any Gilpin blood or not can never be proven. I only form the opinion that such may be the case, from the flavor, texture and shape of the fruit. Gilpin is an old variety, and it is quite possible that it pollinated the seed that produced B. B. Davis—which is surely a valuable apple and so much better than Ben Davis or Gano that I cannot understand how anyone who pretends to be a judge can think them alike.—E. A. Richl.

BLACK BEN DAVIS bore two fine apples this season, on top grafts set spring 1899. They were as large as Ben Davis, but of almost solid red color, instead of stripes or splashes. The tree grafted to Champion bore one sample. So much for the first crop, but it proves conclusively that these two kinds are young bearers—grafts set 18 months ago.—Frank O. Harrington, Iowa Co., Iowa, Oct. 18, 1900.

BLACK BEN DAVIS are showing beautiful color; so much more than any others—especially Ben Davis, by which they are surrounded. I have noted them since 1895; they have never failed to have a good crop. W. M. Norwood, the nurseryman, who lives near the old trees, says they are different from Gano; deeper red and richer color and of better quality; says he has never known them to fail a crop. Another great point: I have noticed that Black Ben Davis is not nearly so badly affected by bitter rot as other sorts in same orchard.—Prof. W. G. Vintchenheller, Ark. Exp. Sta., Aug. 1, 1900.

BLACK BEN DAVIS Bears 4 Years from Graft.—The 1-yr. grafted Black Ben Davis trees which you furnished Mr. C. B. Kountze Spring 1897, have done remarkably well, and have fully caught up with the 2-yr. trees planted the same time. Furthermore, you would hardly believe it, but these Black Ben Davis bore a few apples, this last summer, which colored up perfectly—the handsomest apples I ever saw. Black Ben Davis is certainly a very early bearer and the fruit cannot be excelled.—Wesley Page, Supt. Kountze Bros.' Orchards, Arapahoe Co., Colo., Nov. 1, 1900. [BLACK BEN DAVIS has shown its young bearing habit in so many localities that it is impossible for local conditions to have been the cause in each case; without doubt, it is one of the youngest bearing sorts grown.—STARK BRO.'S]

CHICAGO and DELICIOUS are the Coming Fancy Market Apples—possessing all good market points, and, most valuable of all, quality the very finest known.

There is no better judge of apple values than Hon. Parker Earle, Pres't of the Am. Hort. Society, who, by the way, as judge awarded 1st premium to the Stark exhibit at the great St. Louis Fair, not only for high merit, but, as he afterward said, "because every variety was correctly labeled". DELICIOUS we have not yet sent to Pres't Earle; but Pres't E. A. Richl says, "surely well named".

After testing CHICAGO, along with a large number of the best old and new sorts, Pres't Earle wrote: "It impresses me as the finest apple in the entire collection".

CHICAGO is now first introduced exclusively by us. Can be obtained nowhere else: we own every tree in existence, and have been three years working up a stock large enough to make us the leading apple growers. Will delight all beyond every expectation. Bids fair to excel nearly all varieties hitherto grown.

A visit to the original DELICIOUS tree, in Madison Co., Iowa, 85 miles from Des Moines, was made by us. Mr. C. M. Stark, Nov. 1, 1900. Even at that date apples were still hanging—the 14th crop without a failure. A full and sure bearer, and must become a great fancy market apple. We know many other good apples; but one is so absolutely delicious. For the last 5 years we had known Delicious to be an extraordinary apple; but it even surpasses our expectations. If you want to grow and sell the very best apple in existence, plant DELICIOUS: beautiful, fragrant, perfumed, juicy, melting—rivaling a Seckel pear in texture, flavor and quality.

APPLE OF COMMERCE, SENATOR and CHAMPION.—In October, 1900, our Mr. C. M. Stark spent two weeks in the apple region of Ark. where these three new famous apples and Black Ben Davis originated. Briefly, one result of this visit is: We shall grow and plant these four sorts more largely.

Mr. P. Gholson, of Benton Co., Ark., says: "Apple of Commerce [local name, Lady Fippin] will lay it over anything grown; have kept it until July; a fine bearer, a fine keeper, and is proof against bitter rot; have been growing it for 24 years and am going to set more. My 24-yr. trees have never missed a crop since they first commenced bearing, and my younger trees, now 12 years old, have the same record".

Mr. Gholson has two rows of Apple of Commerce in a 24-yr. orchard. Many trees of other varieties have already passed away, but there is not a break in the Apple of Commerce; and the trees of this age, as well as the younger, were loaded with fine, LARGE fruit. Mr. Gholson sold his crop of Apple of Commerce 40% higher than Ben Davis. Later, Chapman & Harris, on the Frisco R. R., paid 50% more for Apple of Commerce than for Ben Davis. This shows conclusively that a demand is rapidly growing for better apples than Ben Davis and that buyers are willing to pay for such fruit. Furthermore, both orchardists and buyers say that the man who has an orchard of straight Ben Davis finds it increasingly hard to make a sale; for buyers prefer taking Ben Davis only in connection with better sorts.

Mr. H. Highfill, a neighbor of Mr. Gholson and the originator of Highfill apple, says he often wished all his trees were Apple of Commerce, as it bears as young as Ben Davis and is equally productive.

SENIOR bore a fine crop this year as usual; fully bears out all claims made for it. Its beautiful color and surpassing quality will soon bring it into still greater popularity; as the tree is a remarkably strong and thrifty grower, orchardists will welcome it as a "quality apple".

CHAMPION we think more of than ever. A most regular and heavy bearer, fine color, and while not extra large, is of fine size for marketing and fruit is very uniform—a great point in a market apple. Bulletin No. 60 of the Ark. Experiment Station says: "Fruit well colored and smooth; a good keeper and apples are usually nearly all marketable. This is a promising apple and a safe variety for planting in this section. The original tree is still bearing good crops".
Gold is the Most Beautiful plum that could be imagined, of the largest size, good quality and abundantly productive.—A. Richel, Sept. III. Exp. Station, Sept., 1900.

The Gold Plum samples reached us Sept. 19, and we soon tested their qualities as long as possible. They were excellent. They indeed last a long time and we kept them in perfection for over one month. The fruit is so good that we were able to eat almost all of it.

Gold Truly a Grand Acquisition—Surpassed all other plums with us this year. A few fine specimens are still hanging on the tree.—Edwin H. Richel, Alton, Ill., Oct. 10, 1900.

Stark Bros' sent specimens of Gold plum, a new variety which has been criticised by some. We cannot judge from the fruit at the present time how it will flourish, but, there are people who will object to the seed assigned them in paradise. Gold is not a purebred Japanese native. It is a native of Japan, the seed parent being one of the best, hardest native American plums. In the Grand Valley where Gold plum has fruited for three years, the plants are well pleased, and four boxes from there were on exhibition last fall at our state Horticultural Fruit Show. The trees are very hardy and have never been killed. The plums hug the limbs so closely that it is impossible to pull them off. The fruit will ship a long distance and remain perfectly sound, although the skin is somewhat thin and lacking in that acid-retention which gives an unpleasant flavor to many other plums. Delver Field and Farm, Sept. 29, 1900.

Good Work Appreciated.—Your kind note regarding our crate of "Gold" and the use you made of it was not only a drop of what orchardists owe you for the many things you have done to force nurseries to grow good trees. It was to us a pleasant surprise to learn that trees true to name, but good, honest work forced all to be careful.

S. W. Hoyt, Vacaville, Cal., Aug. 1, 1900.

[Above in answer to our letter of thanks for a crate of extra fine Gold sent us free of charge.]

No One Can Deny that the rich yellow of the plum which Stark Brothers have trade marked "Gold" entitles it to the name. Fruit is remarkably attractive, with a transparent quality which makes it impossible to eat a lot of trees true to name, but good, honest work forced all to be careful.

S. W. Hoyt, Vacaville, Cal., Aug. 1, 1900.

I Consider Gold a Valuable Plum, from the consumer's standpoint. Very fine color, excellent flavor.—E. C. Powell, Editor New England Homestead.

Larger than Sample. Received sample Gold plum, but I have been about half. My Gold trees are the first you sent out in '96; they have given me four crops in the five years since they were planted.—Francis M. Troth, Van Buren Co., Ia., Sept. 13, 1900.

Simply Magnificent. To-day I witnessed the grandest sight of my life in these fruits: In orchard of Mr. E. L. Emery, on 400 Gold plum trees; set last year, he had a several miles to see.—W. T. Davis, Buchanan Co., Mo., July, '96.

Bearing One Year After Planting. I obtained sample Gold plum in this city. Tree small, 2 yr. set; bore 100 plums last Aug., and feel confident more than a bushel this year.—W. S. Gardner, Lamar Co., Tex., July 21, 1900.

My Gold trees full of fine plums, as good as they are fine.—C. V. Thompson, Cleveland Co., Okla., July, 1900.

GOLD Plums
—IOWA, 1899

GOLD Plum, as grown by Hon. B. A. Mathews, Marion Co., Iowa (near Des Moines), in 1899—after the hardest Winter in 30 years.

Have Fruited Gold 5 Years; a full bearer, very fine. Attracted attention at our State Fair. Shipped some Gold to Des Moines to see how it would sell. Shall plant more Gold trees this fall and push it.—B. A. Mathews, Knoxville, Iowa, Sept. 5, 1900.

Gold at Hort. Soc. At last meeting of our Society the Pres't had twigs of Gold plum which were beautiful. The tree is literally loaded. There will be a good show of blooms at the State Fair next season.—J. M. Irvin, Ed. Western Fruit Grower, July 30, 1900.

Stark Bros', Louisiana, Mo., sends us samples of their Gold plum. The plum is round, indented at stem like an apple; of medium size—larger than Wild Goose—light red, shining to yellow in color, and dark yellow flesh. Flavor "peachy" and almost free from acid at skin and stone. These samples indicate that Gold is one of the very best plums for eating out of hand. The tree and buds are hardy, fruit not subject to rot. I must regard this plum as an important acquisition.—Nebaska Farmer, Oct. 4, 1900.

Bearing Under Difficulties. Specimens of Gold received. They are fine. Mine this season have encountered a whole procession of storms, hot winds, great freezes, hail storms, etc., but have borne fruit still on the tree.—E. H. Clark, Kans., July 21, 1900.

Queen of All Plums is Gold; for size and beauty they surpass the picture. One tree from you 3 years ago bore last year and this. Last year I planted 10 more trees of Gold, most have plums; this spring planted 10 more, which are doing fine in spite of drought. Have orchard 100 plum trees, mostly Jap, for your nursery—20 Red Jewel, 3 years old, very fine plums; Burbank, set 3 years, are nothing but a mass of plum and must be pruned; tree very hardly like Gold and Red June. AUSTIN, have had to horse to keep from breaking; fine, but not hardy in tree and bud as Gold. Will dig out my natives from other nurseries and replace everything with Gold, Red June and Burbank, Stark Trees. Farmers should plant Jap plums instead of peaches in northern Iowa, Neb, and Kans., where peach buds freeze. Then they are sure of fruit every year.—T. M. Fleming, Republic Co., Kans., July 20, 1900.

A Good Word for Jap Plums. You wrote me to have patience with my Jap plums—they would surprise me with their crops. They not only surprised me, but every one that saw them; all exclaimed, "I never saw anything like it! What kind of plums are they?" Sold 55 boxes from one tree, besides those that were eaten. Am picking Chaler now; they are loaded—have to tie and prop every limb. Will plant more Japs.—Mrs. Elmira Gable, Pocoria Co., Ill., Aug. 27, 1900.

Gold Attracts Great Attention; an abundant bearer and very hardy.—Wm. Bonngardiner, Colo.
Want More Trees, I specially GOLD.—Sample reed 18 days ago, and wanted to preserve, but don’t you know I was told there had been a Gold Plum that Eve tempted him with. I ate one; it was in the mail (carried 2 miles horse-back); so good I ate another; first plum I ever saw could bite a mouth full like Kansas; that is why don’t you call it seedless? Some nurserymen would. One plum is keeping fine to-day except where bruised, and bruises don’t rot—simply dry up same as Ben Davis apple.—L. Good, Newton, Ind., Aug. 10, 1900.

Stands Drought.—Went carefully over Gold Plum trees this morning just to see how much damage by failure of irrigation ditches; not a drop of water since middle of June, and every day hot. I feel quite sure I could move to make you happy. This crop is very large for such small trees, but think I can yet do you some good in that line.—W. M. Hastings, Delta Co., Colo., Aug. 4, 1900. [Mr. Hastings sent us later 20 bushes from his fine trees.

Three or Four Hundred Plums on one little tree of Gold planted two years ago. Gold, Red June and Burbank are beginning to bear here.—W. O. Norval, Redwillow Co., Neb., July 14, 1900.

Gold All Right, As Usual.—Your Gold plum plant all right here; whilst tree healthy and clean, it is smaller in habit of growth than Burbank, Red June, etc., A. Pullen, Nurseryman and Fruit Grower, Kent Co., Dela.

Four Bushels from a Four-Yr. Tree.—Gold plums sent you come from tree just 4 years from bud. and I gathered a little over 4 bushels from it.—E. V. Dunn, Tama Co., Iowa, July 11, 1900.

Worth the Price.—Gold plums are grand and the trees are cheap at any price.—J. L. Young, Warren Co., III., July 21, 1900.

From Buchanan Co., Iowa, “Pioneer,” July 21, 1900.—C. C. Nelson shows samples of Gold plum raised in Iowa. To say the least, they are the finest plum ever grown in Iowa and we cannot conceive why everyone who has spare land does not have an abundance of this luscious fruit.

Sample Gold plum received. Very much taken with it. Will put out some trees of Gold next spring.—W. C. S. White, Greene Co., Ill., July 15, 1900.

Gold is a Marvel of beauty and sweetness, a thing we can say without fear of contradiction, because we have partaken of this luscious fruit. A fine shipper, as is shown by condition in which some sent to this office by mail were received, and we are confident that every orchardist will find it a great acquisition.—Farmers’ Voice, Sept. 29, 1900.

Gold at $1.50 per Peck, or $6 per bushel.—In 1886 I worked hard, talked fruit and induced a few farmers to plant your leading varieties, such as Gold, Red June, etc. To-day one man sold Gold plums at $1.50 per peck; also had Red June and says fruit was as large as hen’s eggs, and that if he had planted these two plums he would now have a gold mine. You have the greatest fruits in the world and if more farmers could be induced to plant them, they would have more of the “long green.”—J. H. Davis, Van Zandt Co., Tex., July 16, 1900.

ADVERTISE THEMSELVES.—Gold plums received and admired by everybody. Had no trouble in getting first-class recommendations from parties who have planted trees. H. R. Luntz, Merick Co., Neb., July 29, 1900.

From the Trade. —Sample Gold plum received; we are well pleased with it and would like to catalogue it this fall if we can make such arrangements with you.—Nurserymen, Tarrant Co., Tex., July 26, 1900.

Like Results of Gold. Gold for sure—are the plums received today. Shall see what Gold will do.—Thos. E. Sine, Shendaide Co., Va., July 22, 1900.

Exceeded Expectations.—Gold the finest thing I ever saw in plum line; far ahead of my expectations.—J. S. Massey, Meade Co., Ky., July 23, 1900.

A Wonder to Behold are the Gold plums bought of you 2 yrs. ago; the most beautiful plum old York Co. ever saw. And ripest yet and most large apples you sent. You will remember that trees shipped on Nov. 1 did not arrive until Dec. 16. Notwithstanding long delay, every apple growing in spite of dry summer.—R. A. Knisely, York Co., Pa., Aug. 8, 1900.

EXPERIENCE.—Gold has proved itself everywhere, surprising even horticulturists as to its wide adaptability. Gold was hort to prove a winner; knowing this we had no hesitancy in paying $1000 for original tree because we had faith in it and appreciated the value of just such a plum—It’s the plum for the millions.—Stark Bros.