THE MONROE COUNTY SEEDLING.

J. J. MENN.

In the fall of 1904, the first week in October, while driving through the county in search for apples for our Wisconsin exhibit at St. Louis, I stopped at the farm of Cal Day, in town of Wellington, Monroe county, his farm and 10 acre orchard being located four (4) miles east of the Kickapoo river on top of a high ridge.

In going through the orchard with Mr. Day I found 50 per cent of his trees "Seedlings," the balance being top worked. The crop of apples being very good, but prices very low. Mr. Day had made no effort to sell his fruit and the result was that the ground under the trees was covered with rotting apples.

Being more interested in the seedlings than our standard varieties, my eyes were constantly on the seedling trees that he had pointed out to me, until we came to a tree where at least two bushels of the largest and finest apples seen in the orchard were on the ground, some were still on the trees.

I asked what have you here? He said this is a seedling of the Duchess, it is the best apple and tree I have in the orchard, I have only one more top worked tree of this variety. The trees bear a good crop every year.

I have never seen signs of blossom or twig blight.

Our cold winters don’t seem to injure the trees. I have been on this farm since 1856.

Planted my first seeds that fall, which I brought with me from the state of New York, have been experimenting in root grafting and top working, cross pollination ever since, in hopes of growing some winter apples, superior to what we have.

This apple is far superior to its parent "the Duchess" in size, quality and keeping quality.

I asked Mr. Day to give me the history of the tree, which he cheerfully did.

He said in the fall of 1883, I had some choice Duchess trees upon which the Utter Red had been grafted, both the Duchess and Utter Red bore heavily that fall.

I picked a lot of these Duchess and sun dried them, saved the seeds, planted them in a row that fall in the garden, a few years later transplanted these seedlings in the orchard.
In the fall of 1890 one of these trees bore two apples larger and finer than had ever before been seen in my orchard.

Ripening the last of September, the following spring, I cut a few scions and grafted on a small seedling, you see the union is perfect, after this I never cut any more scions from these trees. I neglected to propagate from that time on, am getting too old to do much more in this line.

If you think the apple worthy of propagation and can get a little out of it for me, do so, I leave it with you.

I examined both trees and found them one of the finest orchard trees I have seen. Leaves more pointed than Duchess and not quite so dark green. Bark smooth, no signs of blight have ever been noticed.

The original tree is about 18 feet high and 8 inches in diameter.

The fruit is all large, averaging in size with the "McMahan" fruit, large, roundish, streaked yellow and red, flesh white, juicy and a very good cooking and canning apple, also a good eating apple. Season September 15 to November 15.

This in brief is the history of this seedling tree. I shipped some of these seedling apples to St. Louis and requested Mr. A. A. Parsons, superintendent of our Wisconsin Fruit Exhibit, to show Prof. Taft, who had charge of the judging, to pass on the seedling; he did so. In his reply he said, a very promising new variety, propagate as fast as possible.

In a letter from Mr. Parsons, dated November 17, he says, that seedling is here yet. Now if this seedling is hardy and prolific, it is a glorious thing beyond price.

I picked some of these seedlings last fall, shortly before our state fair and sent them with others to the fair, for our society exhibit in charge of Mr. Cranefield, our Secretary. There Prof. Green of the Minnesota society saw the fruit, he wrote me requesting to give him the history, which I did, I also mailed him one apple.

His reply is as follows:

Mr. J. J. Menn:—Yours of September 16th at hand and also seedling apple, which you were so good as to send on. I took this fruit to the American Pomological Society and it was favorably commented on by a large number of prominent pomologists. I wish I had had a full plate of it as it would then have attracted more attention. I regard it as a fruit of very ex-
ceptional and high value, and if the tree is healthy, hardy and productive, I think it will be a very important addition to our list of cultivated fruits. I shall include a description of the variety in my report to the American Pomological Society.

Yours very truly,

SAMUEL GREENE.

St Anthony Park, Minn.

Geo. J. Kellogg of Lake Mills called on me last fall and after he had seen the fruit and sampled it, pronounced it one of the finest Duchess seedlings he had seen.

It seems too bad that this seedling was not discovered at the time of its first fruiting, if it had, many trees would now be in bearing this variety.

I would suggest that our society take up this seedling question. Many valuable seedling trees are growing all over the apple growing sections of our state, and unless we make a search for them, they will never be known.

A small amount of our funds expended for this purpose, would certainly bring good results for our state and the Northwest.

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DISCUSSION.

Mr. Menn: I wish to state that I have no fruit here this morning. I had packed some, with the intention of sending it to cold storage after our state fair, last fall. I did so, but was unable to find storage at the time, and not until about two or three weeks later, and the weather being so warm during the month of October, it was a little bit too late to send them. For that reason I have no fruit here. I packed some away in the cellar, but the fruit did not keep until this time. I would state, though, that I packed some of the Wealthy and some of the McMahen at the same time, and in the same barrel and both the other varieties did not keep much better than this fruit did, the cellar being too warm. The tree, as I found it growing, is in an old blackberry patch; it had been cultivated for some time, but now had grown up to grass again. There were no signs of blight, as I stated in the paper, although there are a good many trees surrounding it that had
Duchess Seedling exhibited at State Fair, 1905, by J. J. Menz, Norwalk, Wis.
blighted to death. It shows the tree is almost immune. I have some of the wood and if any of you wish to examine it, you can do so. It seems to me, although this is a fall variety, it is a very important addition to our tree list as long as it is almost blight proof and an annual bearer, the quality being very good, and I think it is well for us as a society to look a little more after the seedlings of our state.

The Secretary: There is very little I can say on the subject, except to emphasize what Mr. Menn said. The apple of the Duchess seedling was shown at the state fair, last fall, and it attracted great attention. While I was in some doubt as to whether the Sauk county apple was a seedling, I am in no doubt in regard to this, because there is nothing else in that family of apples that at all resembles it. The fruit that was shown is nearly as large again as the average Duchess, a later apple, it keeps well and while it is a fall apple, I think it will be a valuable addition to our list of fall apples. In color and form it resembles the Duchess; it resembles it in form more than in color. It is undoubtedly of the Duchess family. When I said what I did a moment ago, I had in mind that it was not any of the other Russian apples that have been grown in Wisconsin. It is not the Duchess, it is not any other of the Russian apples, it is undoubtedly a seedling and later than the Morgan, which is a seedling of the Duchess, much later than the Duchess, about in the season of the Wealthy, or possibly a little earlier. I should say that it is an apple that we need to give a great deal of attention to, and as Mr. Menn says, I think we cannot give too much attention to the seedlings. They are found to come rarely by processes of hybridization, they are usually found in the fence corner. That is not the history of the Duchess, but that is the history of a great many of our apples.

Mr. Bingham: I would like to have Mr. Cranefield state to the society whether the seedlings that I spoke about attracted any attention in Milwaukee at the state fair. We sent them down there.

The Secretary: The Zettle seedlings did attract considerable attention from fruit men, not so much as the Duchess seedling shown by Mr. Menn, for the reason that that was possibly a more conspicuous or more showy apple. Your Sturgeon Bay seedlings are not as brightly colored as the
other, but the Zettle seedling did attract considerable attention. There were one or two of undoubted merit, one called the "Lily," and another that attracted a great deal of attention, and I wish to urge upon the members here present the desirability of sending fruit to the state fairs. I expect our exhibit there will now be an annual event. I almost implored people to send apple seedlings or anything else to the state exhibit, but we got very few, Mr. Menn responded, and Mr. Bingham, and some others. There is your chance. You cannot show your fall seedlings at the winter meeting, you can show them at the state fair.

Mr. Toole: I think our Secretary asked for an expression of opinion in regard to the value of the Milwaukee exhibit to the society. I for one, think a great deal of it, and hope it will be continued. We saw many good reasons why we should have it, one seemed to be that it formed the headquarters for horticulturists to get together. Not only were new seedlings brought forward for examination and certain varieties were brought there for naming, shrubs, etc., to be identified, and a great deal of information was brought out in that way, and I do not think that I need to say that I hope our Secretary will continue that; I am quite sure the encouragement he got there from his own observation will make it a permanent feature of this society's work.

CULTIVATION AND COVER CROPS.

Prof. N. P. Hedrick, Geneva, N. Y.

Cultivation is as old as agriculture. It probably began in the garden which the Almighty gave Adam to tend. The very existence of domesticated plants depends upon cultivation. All man's care of plants centers around one great object—to give them more food. We cultivate to make available the food stored in the soil; by means of fertilizers we add food to the soil; we water and irrigate to bring food into solution; we thin that the remaining plants may have more food; we destroy the weeds that rob our plants of food; and we even