

Thank You Johnny Appleseed

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John Chapman, alias Johnny Appleseed, was born 200 years ago last September 26th near Leominster, Massachusetts. Historians record that he was something of a dreamer. In his wildest dreams, however, he could never have imagined the fuss that would be made over him and the hundreds of birthday parties to be celebrated in his honor coast to coast this past year in commemoration of the bicentennial of his birth.

The apple industry was—and rightly should be—delighted with the celebration, and it owes much to this two hundred year old apple salesman, Johnny Appleseed, and to the International Apple Institute and the state and regional apple producer associations which spearheaded some of the finest publicity and public relations for apples and apple products the industry has ever known—all while paying tribute to Johnny Appleseed.

In John Chapman's day there was not the need to promote apples that there is today. They were pretty much a staple in every household. Indeed most households, in a nation far more rural than today, had at least a few apple trees somewhere on the farmstead; and for the relatively few folks who lived in town—like maybe the family doctor or the local blacksmith—most had relatives or friends who farmed and who gave or swapped them a few barrels of apples or kegs of cider to put down in the root cellar for winter fare.

That was back East. Out where John Chapman traveled and spent his life during the first half of the nineteenth century—on the frontiers of mid-America—in what is now Ohio, Indiana, Illinois—of course there were



no apples. John Chapman planted them. That's how he acquired the affectionate nickname, Johnny Appleseed. He adopted apple planting as a life's work, along with his evangelism of spreading the good word of the Swedenborgian religious faith which he pursued.

In his own unique way and in his own time he did promote the apple industry, however, starting apple orchards for the pioneers; and the niche he carved for himself in history and legend as a result of his deeds has made great apple promotion copy ever since.

A horticulturist and pomologist, as we know the profession today, he was not—at least not with the same scien-

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tific flair. Johnny planted apple seeds, and sold or bartered or gave away the seedling trees from the nurseries he established throughout the frontier wilderness. He had an uncanny foresight for selecting nursery sites where farm clusters and towns were later to be established. He was a yankee peddler of whom New England can be proud. He loved nature. He was a conservationist and an environmentalist long before these terms were coined.

While he knew most of the apple varieties or cultivars—this modern day term would have thrown him—of the late 1700's from his boyhood days in western Massachusetts and later in western Pennsylvania; and while he probably knew all about budding and grafting, his religious philosophy apparently precluded "tampering with God's natural creations." He did no varietal propagation. He stuck to the seedlings he raised from seed and left it to the pioneer farmers to bud or graft the trees to the varieties they preferred and/or for which they could obtain scion wood from travelers coming west across the Alleghenies.

'Summer Rambo' was reportedly a favorite of Johnny's, and he knew well the 'Winesap', 'R. I. Greening', 'Baldwin', 'Roxbury Russet', 'Spitzenberg',

'Maiden Blush' and other varieties of the period.

John Chapman was a quaint mixture of a number of vocations, as was often the case in early pioneer days when a sparse population and necessity challenged many men to fill dual roles. He was a nurseryman, a missionary, a war hero, a newsman, and a peacemaker, among other things.

When he died near Fort Wayne, Indiana, in the spring of 1845, still planting and tending his apple tree nurseries and preaching "good news right fresh from Heaven," he was already as much legend as real life folk hero. . . . And the years have only added more chapters. Historians, poets, artists and fiction writers have all been enthralled by his life and deeds. American art and literature is enriched with their work—and by Chapman's life.

John Chapman did hear a different drummer and marched to a different cadence than most men of his time. In his own unique way he added greatly to the development of our nation and enriched its history. For the apple industry he gave a special blessing. Not only was he an apple tree nurseryman, but he has become a great apple salesman as well. Thank you Johnny Appleseed.

Genetic and Climatic Influences on Apple Attractiveness¹

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In common with hereditary characters of other living organisms, the appearance (phenotype) of a specific characteristic results from the interaction of the genetic factors (geno-

type) of the organism directing development under the influence of the environment surrounding the organism. The hereditary factors determine the possible limits of development,

¹Presented at the January 1975 meeting of American Pomological society and the Illinois State Horticultural Society. Publication no. 38, Illinois Horticultural Experiment Station, published with the approval of the University of Illinois Horticulture Department and the Southern Illinois University Plant and Soil Sciences Department.

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