

The Robinson Strawberry

By John C. Haley, originator

Dowagiac, Michigan

The Robinson strawberry has been in the nursery trade for about 10 years. It originated in an attempt to secure a better plant producer than Premier. This was accomplished by crossing Premier with Washington. The Premier variety is a dependable producer but is a rather weak plant maker. The Washington produces many vigorous plants with plenty of berries.

Originated in 1934

The cross of Premier and Washington which resulted in the Robinson variety was made in 1934. The seedling plants were grown in an old dishpan, which, by carelessness or lack of time was left exposed to the vigorous Michigan winter weather. The earth and plants froze solid and many of the seedlings died. The survivors were planted in the spring of 1935.

One seedling of this group proved to be outstanding when the first fruit was produced. The single berry on this small plant was the biggest I had ever seen. I intended to plant the seeds from this fruit but a good friend consumed the berry and prevented such action. As a result the berry bears his name.

How Robinson Got Its Name

A peculiar turn of events caused the

new berry to be named after Leon Robinson. Leon is a good friend of mine and has served as a source of fruit packages for my enterprise. Like all amateur plant breeders I was anxious to show my friends what I was doing. I invited Leon to see the seedling with the single luscious berry. After agreeing with me that it was about the largest thing he had ever seen in the shape of a strawberry, he stooped down, picked the berry, and ate it.

Thus was ruined my dream of producing more seedlings from the original fruit of my new strawberry. Leon was of course properly apologetic and regretful. Then and there the variety was named Robinson.

Characteristics of Robinson

The Robinson strawberry produces a fine stand of vigorous runner plants on all types of soils. Up to the present time no red stele disease has been reported in this variety by Michigan nursery inspectors.

The fruit of Robinson is very large and ripens over a rather long period from midseason to late. If weather conditions are favorable the large fruit size is maintained through the picking season. The berries are attractive cardinal-red in color and sweet flavored. The flesh is firm and the skin sufficiently

tough to make this variety a good shipper. Canning companies like Robinson because the solid flesh causes a crate to weigh at least four pounds more than most varieties. This variety is also excellent for freezing.

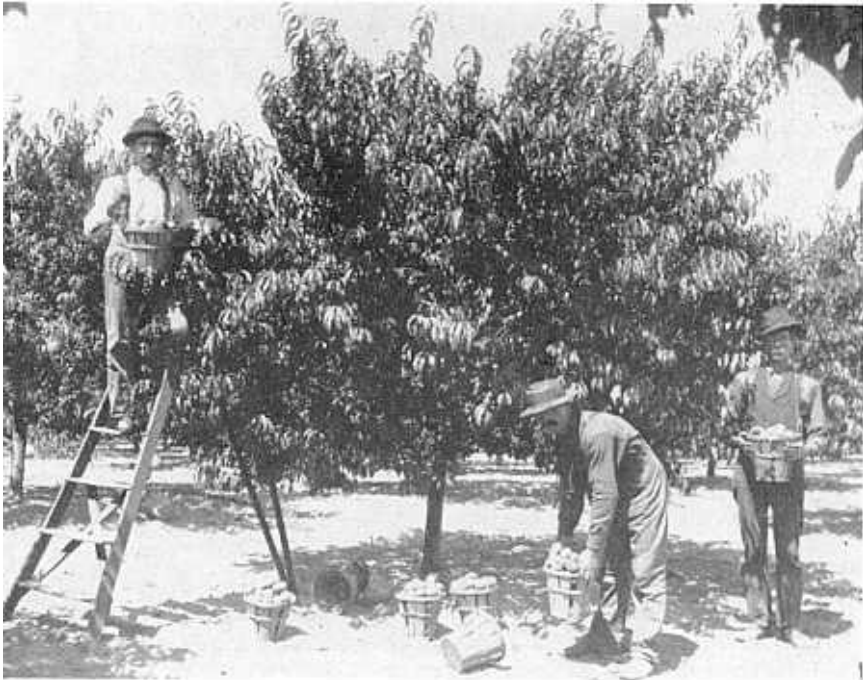
Large Size an Outstanding Feature

An important asset of the Robinson variety is its very large berries. One incident might be of interest to illustrate this characteristic. About four years ago we had an order from a buyer on the Benton Harbor market which was for 50 crates per day. The unique feature of this order was that the berries must be large enough that 18 would fill a

quart box. We filled the order each day for 10 days.

The enthusiastic reports we receive from many commercial growers proves that Robinson is a dependable money-making variety. The plants produce good yields of large, high-quality berries. We have not kept careful yield records which can be compared with other varieties but in one favorable season we harvested 400 crates from an acre of Robinson plants.

A berry which can boast of the outstanding features of Robinson should be tried by all growers in the northern strawberry producing region.



The gals may return to the long tresses of old but the men have not yet sprouted handle-bar mustaches as seen in this peach-picking scene, near South Haven, Michigan in 1890.