

of relatively few varieties in the parentage. For our area the outstanding parents have been Howard 17, Missionary, Blakemore, and more recently, Tennessee Shipper and Midland. In red stele resistant varieties Aberdeen has been the recurrent parent. For quality introduction Fairfax has been important.

As time passes, demands on varieties become more exacting. The shipper,

freezer, and preserve maker each wants his own particular needs met as precisely as possible. At the same time the grower is interested in supplying all outlets from the same patch. In other words he is looking for an all-purpose berry to give him the strongest possible position in the market. This ideal all-purpose berry is the ultimate aim in commercial berries. Blakemore comes closest at present.



More on Howard 17 and (or) Premier Strawberries

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The name of the Alton, Illinois man who sent the seedling strawberry to R. M. Kellogg in 1912 from which the Premier was allegedly developed, almost certainly was not "E. H. Riche", (as printed in Mr. H. K. Bell's article, page 57, in the winter, 1955 issue of *Fruit Varieties and Horticultural Digest*).** I find no one of that name listed among Illinois growers, but Edwin H. Riehl was superintendent of Experiment Station No. 8 of the Illinois State Horticultural Society at Alton in 1912 and for a number of years. He belonged to a family long prominent in growing, breeding, and propagating fruits and nuts in that area, and had tested small fruit varieties. According to his reports, published in the *Transactions of the Society*, Riehl had fruited the "Howard's No. 17" strawberry at least by 1911, in which year he ranked it

second only to Early Ozark among June bearing varieties at his station. I think it likely, although Riehl appears to have been a strawberry breeder himself, that he would have included the Howard selection among promising new varieties if he sent any of them to the Michigan nurseryman the next year. So if Kellogg did indeed get his start of "Premier" from a horticulturist at Alton, what he got was very probably the Howard 17 from its Massachusetts originator, and not one of Riehl's own seedlings or an "unknown". The possibility exists that it could have arrived at Kellogg's as a mixture with some other variety or selection, or as a bundle on which the label was lost, so that the subsequent renaming as "Premier" may not have been a deliberate deception.

In his 1912 report, Riehl listed "Howard No. 17" among nine "newer

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**Editor's Note: Our apologies to the reader for the typographical error which caused this misunderstanding.

varieties of the June bearing class which did well." He was an enthusiast for everbearing varieties, writing that "recent tests of our new creations prove plainly that the old class must go." Riehl's report for 1915 mentions that there was no late frost, and "all fruits made a good setting of fruit excepting strawberries." Kellogg's Premier is reported on for the first time, as follows: "— Decidedly the best of the June bearing type ever fruited here. Large, bright red, firm; very productive; hold up in size; quality very good. Bore a good crop where fifty other sorts failed." In 1916, he reports again: "Kellogg's Premier, the best variety ever tested here of the single season berry." Apparently he had discarded the plants grown under the name "Howard No. 17" as it does not appear in his reports after 1912. This series of variety testing reports ended with 1916.

Unfortunately, Riehl's description of Howard 17 is inadequate to settle the question of which present "strain" (or clone) of Howard 17 (Premier) is the original. The two have appeared to us at the Illinois Station to have enough difference to classify them as separate clones.

Incidentally, for Urbana conditions, the "virus-free Premier" showed so much fruit inferiority to Vermilion in an irrigated field planting here in 1956, that it appears locally to be as obsolete as the old Early Ozark. Though the harvest is not complete at this writing, it is obvious that Vermilion in this location has produced much the heavier crop, with better average berry size, and superior flavor, firmness, color and consumer acceptance. This is in agreement, as to high yield of Vermilion, with recent experimental and observational reports from other middle latitude locations in Kansas, Maryland, West Virginia and southern Ohio. Both varieties

were set in 1955 with plants from the same Maryland nursery, grown from virus-indexed foundation stock. Red stele disease was not a factor, but yield differences may have been accentuated by a freeze on April 23, which appeared to have killed more primary flower buds on "Premier". This experimental planting was set up for irrigation studies by Dr. Roy K. Simons, and he expects to publish on it this year.



The Starkrimson (Bisbee Strain) Delicious Apple

Starkrimson, an improved and very promising new sport of the Starking Delicious, has been introduced by Stark Bro's Nurseries this year. This new variety, which ripens about the same time or shortly before Starking, is a whole-tree bud sport that was discovered near Hood River, Oregon.

The fruit of the Starkrimson Delicious has a solid red blush, in contrast to the red striping of Starking. In size, the Starkrimson fruit tends to be about the same as Starking, but it is longer with a more pronounced five-point crown. Its color is bright and glossy, a characteristic which it retains well even when the fruit has become overmature. Although it darkens some as it matures, Starkrimson never develops the muddy dark appearance that is evident in some of the other early coloring bud sports of Starking.

Careful observations indicate that the tree of the Starkrimson Delicious is very different from Starking. It seems to form a tree that will be $\frac{2}{3}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ the size of a standard tree at maturity. It tends to develop an extensive spur system, to come into bearing earlier, and to produce more heavily than other varieties of the Delicious type.