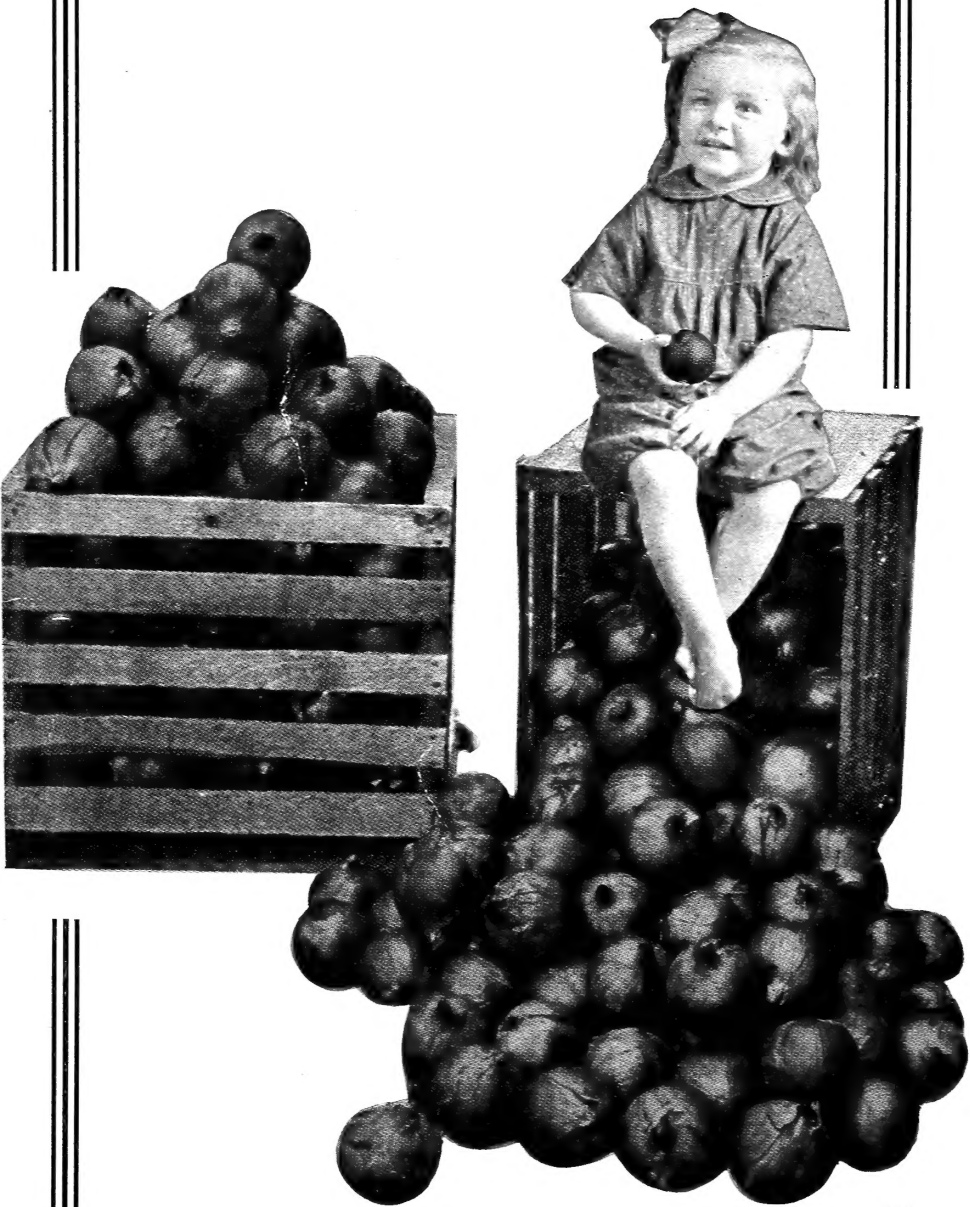


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How to Make Your  
High-Priced Land  
Pay Big Money  
By Growing My  
Grandpa's Pride  
Globe Onions



By GILBERTSON  
The "Krop-Krank"  
At Mason City, Ia.

*"It has taken me thirty-three years to  
write this book. You ought to spend  
at least thirty-three hours to study it."*

—Gilbertson

## Read What One of My Papa's Customers from Idaho Says About My Grandpa's Pride



Payette, Idaho,  
Oct. 17, 1911.

Mr. A. O. Gilbertson,  
Mason City, Ia.

Dear Sir:

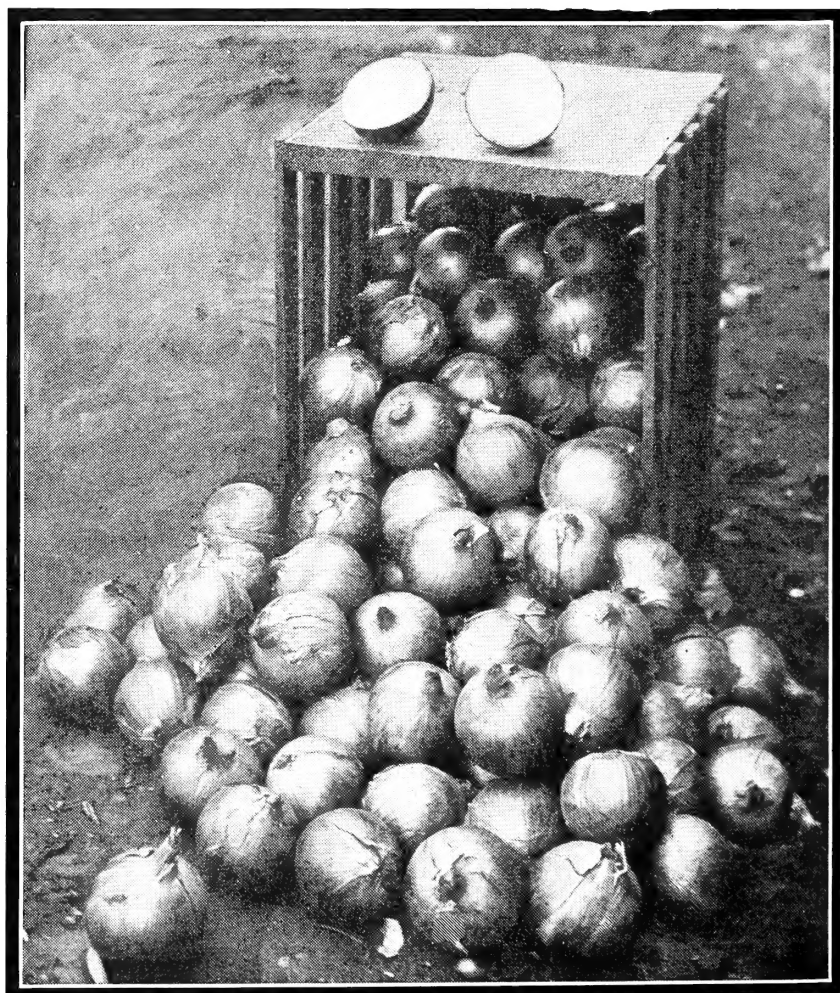
In reply to your favor of the 24th of September, will say in regard to the onions that I never saw any better onions than the GRANDPA'S PRIDE RED GLOBE from the fifty-cent trial package I received. I raised fourteen bushels. I have sold ten bushels of them at four cents a pound. The common price here for onions is only one and one-half

cents per pound. I have also taken first and second prizes on the Red Globe at the county and state fairs of Idaho.

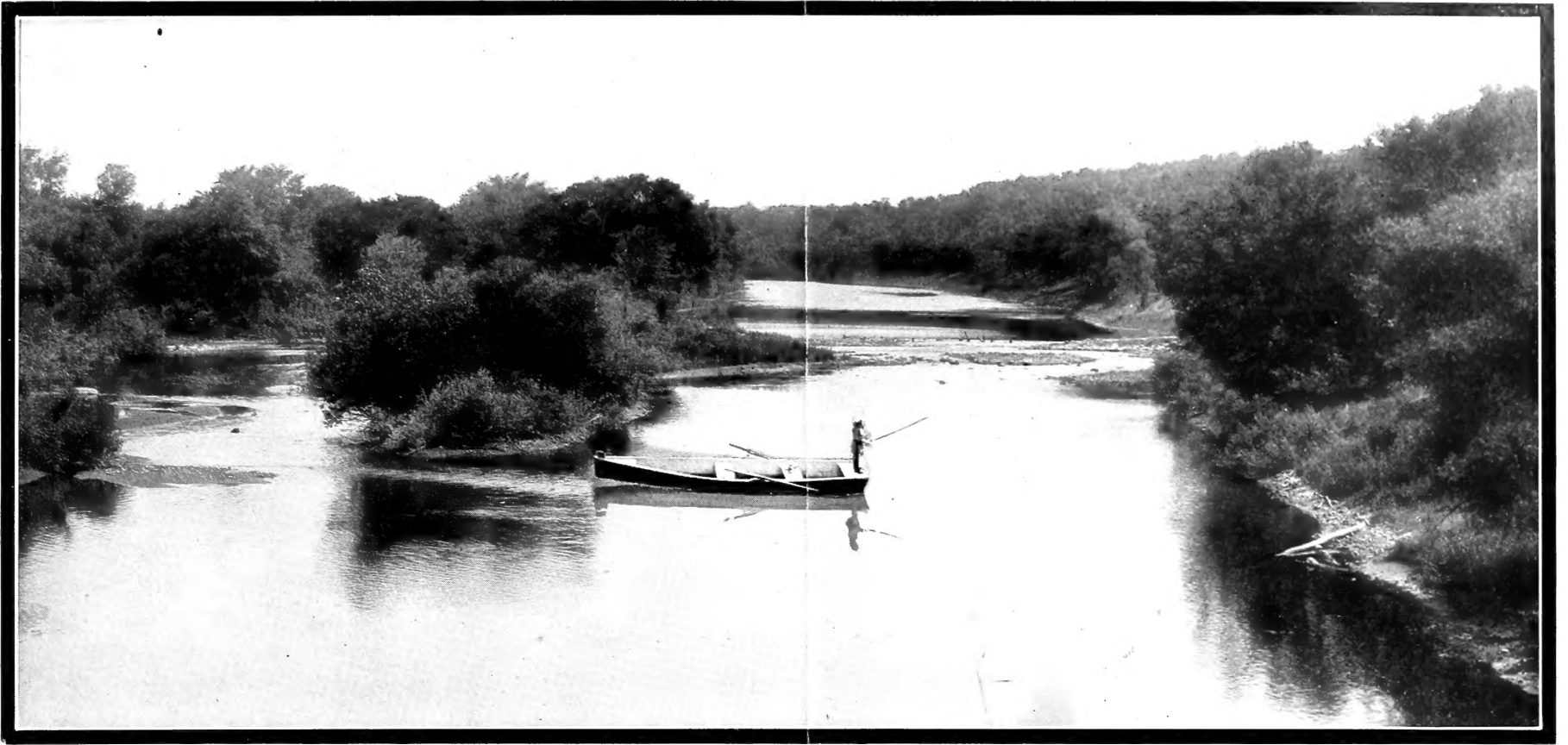
I will plant about three acres next year of your Red Pride Globe onions, and also some of your red raspberries.

Yours very truly,

**RICHARD BENNINGHAUS.**



**A Crate of My GRANDPA'S PRIDE, from a Photograph**



The above photograph shows a scene on the beautiful Cedar, near our St. Ansgar farm, where the writer has spent many a vacation day trying his luck among the large-mouthed bass and the wall-eyed pike. Our Master Alton, in the foreground, demonstrating his ability as a fisherman.

## How I Make My High-Priced Land Pay Big Money by Growing Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions



IN presenting my book on the scientific growing of onions in a commercial way, I do not wish to convey the idea that I know it all, but I simply wish to give you my father's and my own experience in the growing of onions on a large scale, covering a period of over thirty years, and if you will accompany me on a trip over my onion fields through the pages of this book, I will endeavor to give you some of our experiences and lead you, step by step, through the process of successful onion-growing in a commercial way, or, at least, some of the methods that have proven a success with us. In the first place, I will try and outline a few of the things that we have found absolutely necessary in the successful growing of onions.

The first and most important thing to be considered in the successful growing of onions is the matter of good seed. You cannot be too careful in procuring the very best seed that money will buy. This holds true in all kinds of seed, and especially in the growing of onions in a commercial way, as the difference between the first cost of ordinary onion seed and the best onion seed that you can possibly get is so slight, while the difference at the time of harvest may mean the difference between a big-paying crop and a crop that does not even pay expenses.

The second most important consideration in the growing of a large crop of onions is the thorough preparation of the soil. Of course, I will take it for granted that your soil is thoroughly drained, as you cannot possibly expect to grow onions successfully on anything but well-drained soil. What I mean by a thorough preparation of the soil is the plowing and subsoiling of

your fields the proper depth. Do not expect to grow a large crop of onions without first thoroughly preparing your soil.

Third—In order to produce a large crop of onions the first year on a field that has never grown onions before, your soil should be made as rich as possible by the liberal application of well-rotted barnyard manure, at the rate of at least fifty loads per acre (and more would be better), as onions will always have a tendency not to ripen up well the first year, unless your ground is made thoroughly rich by a liberal application of well-rotted barnyard manure, as well as a liberal top dressing of some reliable brand of artificial fertilizer containing a large percentage of potash. I might add in this connection that your field should be fertilized to the point where it will produce at least seventy-five to one hundred bushels of corn to the acre.

Fourth (and perhaps as much important as any of the subjects I have mentioned) is the proper distribution of seed. In fact, this was the biggest obstacle that father and I encountered when we started the growing of onions in a commercial way. We tried out every onion-seeder offered on the market, but were unable to find a seeder that would sow the onion seed evenly enough whereby thinning would be unnecessary. Of course, there are plenty of onion-seeders on the market that you can adjust in such a way that they will sow the onion seed thin enough whereby it will not be necessary to thin the young plants but, in doing this, every machine we have tried out that is offered on the market will invariably leave a large percentage of blanks. But, as I take up this important subject later on in my book, I will leave it for the present by assuring



PHOTOGRAPH "A"—Shows a part of our onion field and our method of thorough preparation of the soil, ready for the onion-seeder. Rolling, pulverizing, discing and planking in one operation. This photograph was taken about the 10th of April—"THE GILBERTSON WAY."

you that father has overcome this obstacle by inventing a machine that will handle such difficult seed as onions and beets so perfectly that thinning will be absolutely unnecessary, and at the same time will not leave any blanks in the rows.

Fifth—The early preparation of your soil. You should by all means start the preparation of your soil and put it in the very best condition just as early in the spring as possible, as onions are a good deal like wheat. If they are not gotten into the ground just as early in the spring as you can work up your ground thoroughly, you cannot expect to grow a large crop of onions, even under the most favorable conditions.

Sixth—Thorough cultivation. Do not start the growing of onions in a commercial way unless you have thoroughly made up your mind to keep your onion field absolutely clean, never allowing a weed to go to seed, as this is the only economical way to grow onions on a large scale. Remember, one year's seeding makes seven years' weeding.

Seventh—Economical harvesting of the crop. When I say economical harvesting of the crop, I mean the adoption of the very latest methods and up-to-date machinery, so that the harvesting of your crop can be accomplished as economically as possible, from the fact that this is one of the most expensive operations in connection with the growing of a big crop of onions, as

an onion crop is naturally a bulky crop to handle at the best.

Eighth—Storing and curing of the crop. Do not make the mistake that so many beginners have made—that of placing your crop on the market, direct from the field, without first thoroughly curing your bulbs in well-ventilated curing sheds, which will enable you to put your bulbs on the market absolutely clean, by running your bulbs over a screen after they are thoroughly cured, you can remove all dirt and surplus leaves, and thereby establish a reputation over and above all your competitors by putting nothing but clean and thoroughly-cured-out onions on the market, which will in a short time mean that the buyer will be looking for you instead of you looking for the buyer.

Ninth—Buy nothing but the very best seed obtainable, and grow a strain of onions that has been bred up for keeping quality, so that, if necessary, you can keep your bulbs through the winter and put them on the market in the early spring, when good onions always bring a good price.

I have mentioned these nine hints in my introduction as being absolutely essential to the successful growing of onions, in a commercial way. However, I take up each of these points, and explain them in detail later on in my book, and trust that my readers will be able to profit from my father's and my experience.

## Kind of Tools

The first tool that you see in the above photograph is a steel roller. We always like to use this tool first on our fields in the spring, so as to thoroughly pulverize the lumps in our fields that might otherwise have become too dry to be thoroughly pulverized by any of the other tools.

Following up the steel roller, you will notice that I use a special drag, or pulverizer, of my own construction, which is made so that I can set the teeth at any desired angle by means of a lever. This pulverizer, or drag, is made with round half-inch steel teeth, twelve inches long, set two inches apart. In operating this pulverizer,

it should have a ballast of about 150 pounds to do perfect work.

Following up this pulverizer, I use a Clark's Double-Action Cutaway Disc Harrow, which pulverizes the ground twice in one operation. This disc harrow consists of thirty-two cutaway discs. The first set of sixteen discs throws the ground outward and the second set of sixteen discs throws the ground inward, leaving the ground thoroughly level. Anyone expecting to grow onions on a large scale should by all means provide himself with a tool of this kind, as it pulverizes the ground much more thoroughly in one operation than an



PHOTOGRAPH "B"—Shows a photograph of the same field, taken about July 10th. I want to call your special attention to the absolute absence of any foul weeds. Our Master Alton taking his first lesson. "THE GILBERTSON WAY."

ordinary pulverizer would in passing over the ground twice, besides leaving the ground perfectly level.

The fourth, or last, tool you see in the photograph is a plank, or float, of my own construction, which puts the finishing touch on the ground ready for the seeder. This plank, or float, is made from five planks, eight feet long and six inches wide, each plank being set about one foot apart and at an angle of about forty-five degrees. This tool should also have a ballast of about one hundred pounds to do perfect work.

You will also notice, in looking at the photograph, that it requires ten large horses to operate these four tools and prepare the soil, as I have described to you, in one operation, thereby preventing the ground from becoming lumpy. In fact, when I have gone over the ground with these four tools, it leaves it absolutely as fine as any seed-bed could possibly be made.

**Early Preparation of the Soil** We commence the preparation of our soil just as soon as it is dry enough so that it will crumble up nicely, which is usually the first week in April in this locality. Do not wait until your ground gets too dry and hard. In the photograph I have tried to demonstrate to you how we prepare our ground in the early spring, ready for the onion-seeder.

**Thorough Plowing and Subsoiling** The first and most essential thing in the preparation of the soil is a thorough plowing and subsoiling. You cannot put your soil in the very best condition, so as to carry your crops at a critical time over a dry period, without the proper plowing and subsoiling. In the preparation of my soil on my different farms for the

growing of my special crops, I always insist on plowing my land at least eight inches deep and subsoiling from eight to ten inches deep. I always make a practice of subsoiling my land every two years. In this connection it might be well for me to explain the term "subsoiling," as it may be a new one to some of my readers.

### **Subsoiler Explained**

A subsoiler is a plow, on a mould fashion, that is run in the bottom of each furrow simply as a mould. In other words, it does not throw a furrow at all. It simply follows up your stirring plow in the bottom of each furrow and loosens the subsoil. For example, after you have turned a furrow (say eight inches deep), and have followed in the bottom of this furrow with a subsoil plow, it loosens or heaves the subsoil from below to such an extent that this eight-inch furrow will be filled almost level full with loose dirt, so much so that we find it necessary to change the horses on our plow every half day, as the subsoil gets so thoroughly loosened in the bottom of each furrow that the horse working in this furrow cannot stand the work for more than half a day at a time.

### **Advantage of Storing Up Moisture in Subsoil**

You will see at a glance the great advantage of this subsoiling in the way of loosening up the soil below, whereby it is possible for this loose subsoil to store up a large quantity of moisture, which will aid you in carrying your next season's crop, at a critical time, over a dry period. In loosening up this subsoil it acts, you might say, like a sponge in storing up water.



PHOTOGRAPH "C"—Shows a part of the same field, taken August 20th, just before we commenced harvesting the crop. The average yield of this same field was something over 700 bushels per acre. "THE GILBERTSON WAY."

## Start Your Wheel Hoe Early

After the onions are out of the ground sufficiently so that we can see the rows, which requires on an average from eight to ten days after they are seeded, we start our Iron Age Wheel Hoe at once. Now, I say Iron Age Wheel Hoe, because we have tried every wheel hoe offered on the market, and have found that the Iron Age has proven the most satisfactory with us.

First—Their knives, or blades, are made out of a much better material, so that they will clear readily in almost any soil. Second—They are made lighter and stronger than any other wheel hoe we have tried. Third

—They have larger wheels, which makes them operate much more easily in our loose onion fields.

As I said before, we start our wheel hoe just as soon as the onions are out of the ground sufficiently so that we can see the rows. Here is where a great many beginners make a mistake in not starting their wheel hoes soon enough. If your ground is very weedy, you can even start cultivating your onions before they are out of the ground, by setting your knives so that you cultivate between the rows, rather than straddling the rows like most onion-growers do.

### Never Let a Weed Go to Seed

We aim to go through our onion fields with our wheel hoe at least once a week, whether there are any weeds or not, as we wish at all times to keep a dust mulch on our onion fields to prevent evaporation. However, in our forty-acre field of onions, after the first hoeing, usually two men have an easy time to keep the entire field clean. We never allow a single weed on the entire forty acres to go to seed, as this is the only economical way to grow onions—by thoroughly cleaning out your soil, never allowing a single weed to go to seed. Remember, one year's seeding makes seven years' weeding.

### Harvesting the Crop

Our onion crop is usually ready to harvest about the middle of August. The task of harvesting a forty-acre field of onions, which averages something like 700 bushels per acre, is no small task. We have therefore done considerable experimenting in the cheapest and most effective methods of getting our onions from the field into our warehouses.

### Methods Employed in the Eastern Districts

The usual way employed in the large onion districts of the East is to pull ten or twelve rows of the bulbs, and throw them into wind

rows, allowing them to lie in the sun and cure out for a week or ten days before they are stripped. After they are stripped they are put into baskets, and then, finally, dumped into sacks and loaded into cars and shipped to market.

There are several objectionable features in handling and harvesting a crop this way. First—As you will notice, your bulbs are handled several times. Second—In allowing them to remain in the field and cure out in the sun in this way, they will always bleach out more or less. Third—In putting your bulbs on the market, direct from the field, in this way, you cannot possibly get them clean so that they will look at all attractive, from the fact that they are not cured enough so that you can remove the dirt and surplus leaves.

### Never Tasted Such Sweet Flavored Onions

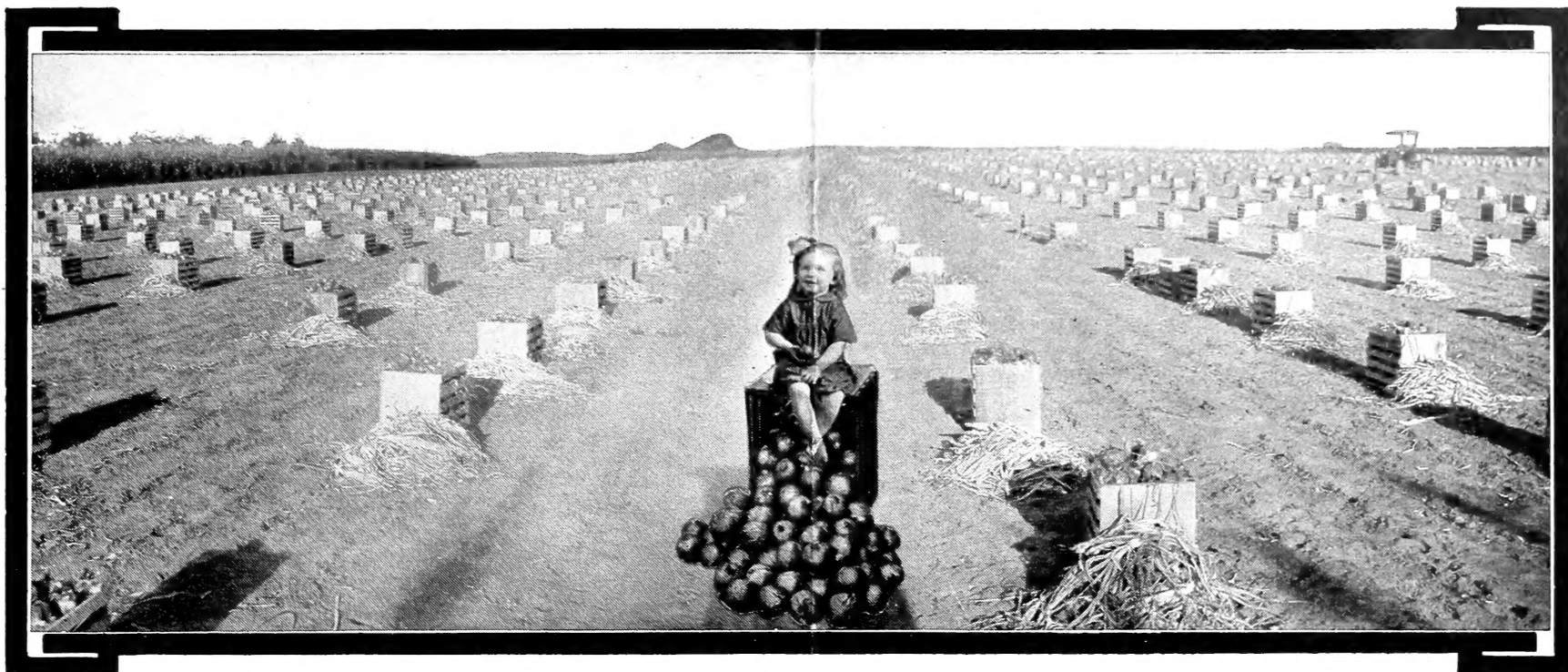
Hitchcock, S. D., December 8, 1910.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—I wish to say that GILBERTSON'S GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS are the best I have ever raised. They are very fine flavored for green table onions, and when matured, a perfect globe onion, with a very fine sweet flavor that I have never tasted in any other kind. Yours truly,

FRED BLUME





PHOTOGRAPH "D"—Shows a part of the same field as it appeared just two days later, or August 22nd, after our force of onion-strippers had gathered the crop in crates, ready to be hauled into our curing sheds. "THE GILBERTSON WAY."

### Our Method of Harvesting

In our method of harvesting our onion crop we use bushel crates, having enough crates to store the entire crop. As soon as the crop is ready to harvest, we distribute one row of crates for every eight rows of onions, and furnish our strippers (which usually consist of women and children) with the best grade of sheep-shears. The strippers, in harvesting the bulbs, pull a handful of bulbs with one hand, and with the sheep-shears in the other hand, clip the bulbs, allowing them to drop directly into the crates. In this way our onions are handled only once in getting them from the field into the crates. Another advantage under our method—our onion bulbs are not allowed to lie out in the sun and become discolored. Our onion-strippers are paid by the bushel, the price ranging from two cents to two and one-half cents per bushel.

### Size and Cost of Onion Crates

Our onion crates are made from extra heavy 16-inch lath for the two sides and bottom, with one-inch board for each end, fourteen inches long and twelve inches wide. This size of crate holds just one bushel. The expense of building crates of this kind, using the very best white pine lumber, as well as the very best extra heavy white pine lath, two inches wide, is about fifteen cents per crate. These crates, if handled with judgment, will last for years and pay for themselves a good many times over in the way of economical harvesting of your bulbs.

### More Than Pleased

Lamoure, N. D., October 11, 1911.

The A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—I am more than pleased with the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED. We had all the onions we wanted for our own use all summer, and yesterday dug the remainder of nice red onions for winter use.

Yours truly,  
GUST KRUEMPEL.

### Ask the Women Folks—They Know What a Good Onion Is

Sibley, Iowa, November 20, 1910.

Mr. A. O. Gilbertson, Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:—I received your letter of recent date asking about the onion seed that I received from you. My wife said that they were the best onions she ever saw. They have such a nice flavor, a good size, a small neck, and a very good, red color. Every one who has seen these onions say that they are a perfect globe and the best onions that they ever saw. Yours truly,

JERRY SCHLICHT.

### Got Eight Bushels From Twenty-five Cents' Worth of Seed This Dry Season

Tracy, Minn., November 8, 1910.

Mr. A. O. Gilbertson, Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:—In reply to your favor of the 11th inst., will say, in regard to the onions, I never saw anything like them. I planted the seed as per instructions, and I honestly believe every seed grew. From the 25-cent package I received I raised eight bushels. They were extra large and very uniform in size; small necks, and the color was fine. I think they are a perfect globe and the flavor very good.

I would order some of your red raspberry plants, only I expect to sell out this next summer, and will try a few later.

Yours very truly,  
E. D. JENNINGS.

### Heavy Yielders

Maroa, Ill., November 3, 1910.

The A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—In regard to the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS, I would like to say that they are heavy yielders, of fine quality, and of nearly a perfect globe shape.

Yours very truly,  
HOWARD GREY.



# The Only Absolutely Successful Onion-Seeder in Existence Today

## The Brains That Made It Possible



### Necessity the Mother of Invention

When father and I started the growing of onions a number of years ago, the greatest obstacle that we encountered was to get a machine that would sow onion seed accurately. We have tried and experimented

with every onion-seeder offered on the market. However, we have never been able to find a machine, and I honestly believe there is no other machine manufactured today but ours that will handle such difficult seed as onion and sugar beet accurately enough whereby it will not be necessary to have them thinned. I do not claim that there are no onion-seeders manufactured that will sow onion seed thin enough so it will not be necessary to have them thinned, but in doing this, all machines that we have experimented with—at least, provided they are set to distribute the seed thin enough whereby thinning will be unnecessary—will leave a large percentage of blank spaces in the row; or, in other words, will not produce a full stand. Now, this is out of the question in growing onions profitably. You cannot afford to have anything but a full stand in growing onions on a big scale on your high-priced land, and what I do claim, based on our thirty-three years of actual experience is that you can produce a perfect stand of onions with one pound of seed, or not to exceed one and one-fourth pounds to the acre, providing the seed are evenly and accurately distributed.

To overcome this great difficulty and to produce a machine that would handle such difficult seed accurately, father, being of a mechanical turn of mind, set to work a number of years ago to devise and perfect a machine which would do this work to our entire satisfaction, whereby it would be unnecessary to do any thinning in our onion fields. How successful he has been in producing this machine I will leave you to be your own judge when I tell you that we have never done any thinning in our onion fields since we have been using this machine, and we have never sowed more than one and one-fourth pounds per acre. I will also leave you to be your own judge as to the perfect stand we have been able to produce with this machine when I refer you to our ten years' record of our forty-two-acre onion field, which shows an average yield of between 600 and 700 bushels per acre, and in one or two favorable years, we have produced on an average over 800 bushels per acre.

### Only Three Machines Made

Father has only manufactured three of these machines. They have been invented and patented by him, and have been in use exclusively for a number of years in planting our large onion fields. I am showing you a cut of this machine on this page, and have also tried to explain to you the different parts of this machine, so as to give you an idea of how it works and where it differs from the ordinary onion-seeder that is offered on the market.

### Attracts Attention From Men From Other States

This machine has attracted a great deal of attention from men who have visited our farms from other states and have seen the work this machine is capable of doing, and it is through their urgent requests that we have decided to manufacture and put a few of these machines on the market.

No. 7 Shows our adjustment, whereby it is possible to raise and lower our rollers and covering device by one operation. This same device is also used in raising and lowering our handles.

No. 6 Shows our patent glass seed-hopper. This is a very important feature, as it enables the operator to tell exactly how his seeder is working from time to time. As the glass hopper is divided into one half inch spaces, running from one to twelve inches, enabling the operator to detect in a moment if his machine for any reason is not sowing a uniform amount of seed.

No. 11—Shows the cups, that pick up one seed at a time, attached to disc. These cups are used in any number—that is, either four, six or eight cups to the disc.

No. 4—Consists of our patent steel roller, turned "true as a die," whereby it is possible to use a scraper that works to perfection, making it impossible for the roller to clog under even the most unfavorable conditions.

No. 5 Shows how our scraper on wheel is attached, also shows how same can be adjusted.

No. 3—Fills in the row, or furrow, in such a way that every seed is covered to a uniform depth with absolutely no dry soil coming in contact with the seed. This is only made possible from the fact that scraper No. 1 has removed all dry dirt from the top of the ground.

No. 2—Is a special shoe of our own design, which opens up the row and deposits every seed in moist soil. This shoe is also adjustable to any depth.

No. 1. The adjustable handle-bars make it possible for the operator to walk directly back of the main drive-wheel. In this way the operator is not forced to walk in the row that you are planting. By this device it is also a very easy matter to keep a perfectly straight row.

We have hesitated in placing this machine on the market until the present time until we had thoroughly tried every part of the machine. However, we believe that we have this machine so perfect that we do not at this time hesitate to recommend it to our friends.

### Other Manufacturers Tried to Overcome the Difficulty

So important is the matter of being able to produce a machine that will handle such difficult seed as onions and beets accurately enough whereby it will not be necessary to thin them, that some manufacturers, in trying to overcome this difficulty, have hit upon a plan whereby they placed the onion seed between two sheets of tissue paper, the required distance apart, and manufactured a machine to distribute these paper rolls directly into the ground. Of course, under this system, it would be necessary for the

grower to send his seed to this concern to have it put up in tissue-paper rolls the required distance apart. It would also be necessary to buy a machine to distribute these tissue-paper rolls into the ground. Just imagine for a minute, brother grower, the idea of a machine handling these thin paper rolls on a large field on a windy day.

### Not Practical

I am not mentioning these facts to you because I believe it a practical way of sowing seed, but merely calling your attention to the fact that some of the manufacturers of onion-seeders realized the importance of a seeder that would handle this difficult seed accurately enough, so much so that they are willing to go to this extreme method of depositing the seed between tissue-paper rolls in order to produce the desired results.

### Our Claim

What I do claim is this—that we have a machine that will plant your onion seed so accurately that thinning will be absolutely unnecessary, and at the same time give you a perfect stand, with no blanks in your rows. The advantages of having your onion seed distributed evenly in your row are many.

First—It saves you the expense of thinning at a time when you usually have trouble enough to fight weeds.

Second—It prevents the disturbing of your young onion plants after they are sown, which is always necessary for you to do provided you are forced to thin your onions.

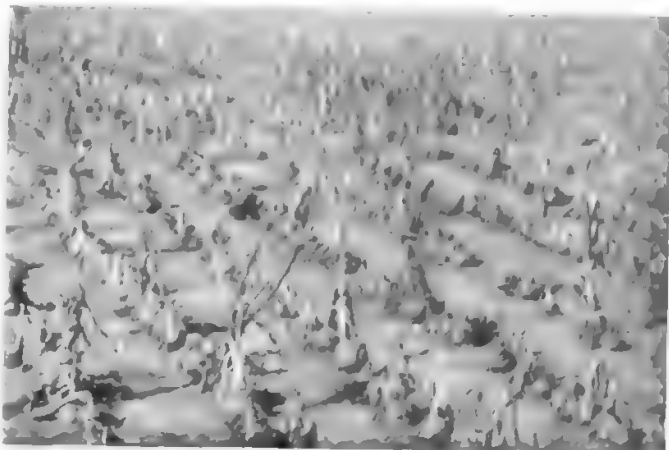
Third—It will save you from two to four pounds of seed per acre.

Fourth—You can keep your onion field clean at much less expense when you have your onions planted a uniform distance apart, thus reducing the work of hand-hoeing at least fifty per cent.

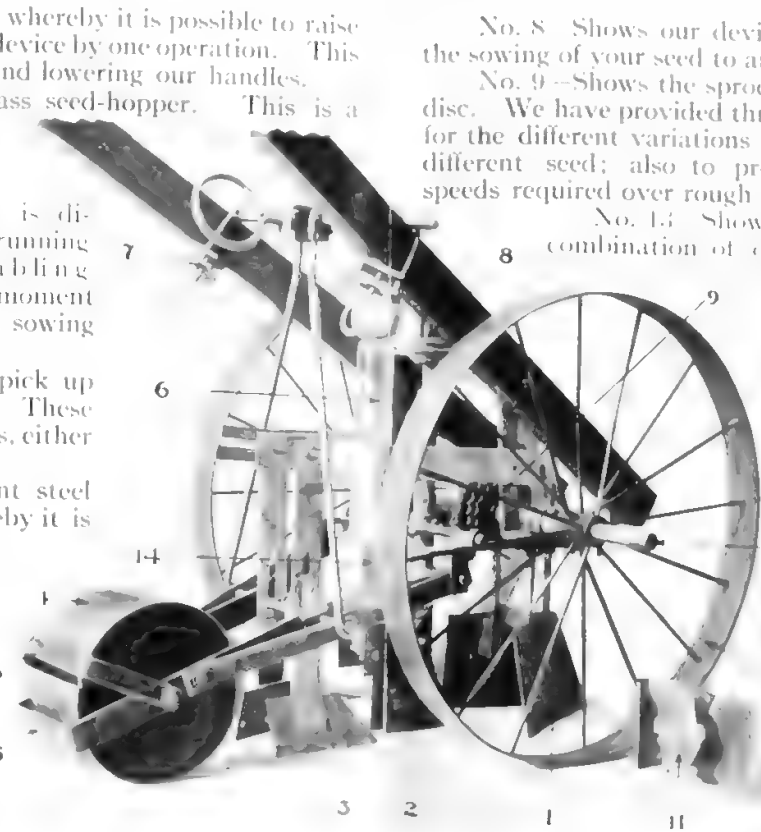
Fifth—You can produce larger and more uniform bulbs, from the fact that each bulb has the same amount of feeding surface.

Sixth—You can harvest your onions at a less expense per bushel by having your onions sowed a uniform distance apart, as you absolutely have no small onions to contend with.

## And the Results



## The Machine



No. 8 Shows our device whereby it is possible to regulate the sowing of your seed to any depth.

No. 9—Shows the sprocket wheels which drive our planting disc. We have provided three wheels of different sizes to provide for the different variations in speed required for the planting of different seed; also to provide for the variation of different speeds required over rough and smooth ground.

No. 13 Shows our main shaft, or axle. By a combination of our adjustable wheels and adjustable handle bars, we have done away with our marker, or gauge, entirely, thereby doing away with any side draught which a gauge, or marker, is bound to produce. The distance apart of your rows is governed entirely by the adjustable feature of the drive-wheels. For example, after you had planted one row, and in returning to plant row No. 2, your main drive-wheel runs in the same mark made by this same wheel in planting row No. 1.

No. 12 Shows our set of all steel wheels, which can be adjusted to plant any width of row required from two to twenty-four inches.

No. 11 Shows the most vital part of our planter, namely, the planting discs, whereby they will handle such difficult seed as onion and beet seed to perfection. These discs can be adjusted so as to plant anything from clover seed to corn or beans by simply loosening one bur and inserting a different sized disc. It is also possible with this planting device to change the amount of seed sown by using different discs with more or less planting cups. The secret of the perfect work this machine is capable of doing consists of these specially-built cups attached to the planting disc.

No. 10—Shows the device for tightening chain to any tension desired.

These discs consist of small cups, which are so constructed whereby they will handle such difficult seed as onion and beet seed to perfection. These discs can be adjusted so as to plant anything from clover seed to corn or beans by simply loosening one bur and inserting a different sized disc. It is also possible with this planting device to change the amount of seed sown by using different discs with more or less planting cups. The secret of the perfect work this machine is capable of doing consists of these specially-built cups attached to the planting disc.



PHOTOGRAPH "E"—Shows one of our low-wheeled wagons with platform which we have found very convenient in hauling the crop from the field into our curing-sheds. The bed of one of these platforms is 16 feet long and 5½ feet wide—just wide enough to hold four rows of crates, or sixty bushel crates, to the load. A platform of this kind can be built very inexpensively, and if you ever use one, you will never try to grow onions in a commercial way without it. "THE GILBERTSON WAY"



PHOTOGRAPH "F"—Shows one of our curing-sheds, where our onions are hauled and stored immediately after they are harvested. You will notice the way we pile the crates on top of each other in such a way that the onions are thoroughly cured out in about six weeks. "THE GILBERTSON WAY."

**Hauling and Storing of the Bulbs** Just as soon as our strippers commence to harvest our onions, they are immediately hauled into our warehouses, and stored one crate on top of the other, as shown in photograph "F," where they are allowed to cure out for six or eight weeks. In curing our onions in well-ventilated sheds, the bulbs retain their dark, rich color, which we find sometimes makes as much difference as five to ten cents per bushel when they are placed on the market.

**Screening the Onions** After our onions have been thoroughly cured in our curing-sheds, they are run over a screen, which takes out all the dirt and surplus leaves, leaving the onions entirely clean. If the price at this time is satisfactory, they are run from the screen into sacks, and loaded into cars and shipped to market. However, if we decide to hold our onions for a better price, they are run from the screen back into crates and stored in our large cellars and held for winter and early spring shipment. We have made it a rule that if we can get seventy-five cents per bushel, f. o. b. cars, in the fall, after they are thoroughly cured out, we do not usually carry many of them over. However, if the price is below seventy-five cents, we usually hold the biggest part of them for winter and early spring shipment, when good onions always bring a good price.

**Advantage of Long Keeper** Here is where the advantage of a long keeper comes in, as it is possible to keep our GRANDPA'S PRIDE until spring in an ordinary cellar without the slightest percentage of shrinkage, and in this way, you can almost demand your own price for the bulbs after the ordinary onions are out of the way.

### Stood Drouth; Will Plant No Other

Aldrich, Mo., No. 2, August 21, 1911.

The A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—Are you going to have any onion seed to sell for next year's planting? If you are, I will want about five pounds as soon as you get some ready for the market this fall. Send prices of same by return mail.

I tried a sample of your onion seed this season and it stood the dry weather better than any that I ever tried before. I am not going to plant any but your GLOBE ONIONS next year, if I can get the seed. They are the best I ever tried.

Send price and description of your onion-planter. Please send the above at once, as I want to get my onion seed this winter so I will be ready for early spring planting.

Yours truly, JOHN HARRISON.

### Grandpa's Pride Stood the Drouth Best

Kansas City, Mo., September 28, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—In regard to the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED, would like to ask what it will cost me per pound? I have done well with the onion seed that I received from you last spring. I had better luck with the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS than with the other onions that I put in, as yours stood the dry weather far better than the others that I planted and made bigger onions. I want to put in one or two acres if all goes well. I have been working the ground all season. The GRANDPA'S ONIONS did not have more than one-half an inch of rain all season, and you have convinced me that they are all that you claim for them. Yours truly, A. J. WILLIAMS,

1403 Wabash Ave.



PHOTOGRAPH "G"—Shows one of our fields where we grow the seed from our FAMOUS GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS. Our Master, Alton in the foreground. "THE GILBERTSON WAY."

**The Best Seeds, Regardless of First Cost, the Cheapest In the End**

In the growing of onions in a commercial way, as well as in the growing of any other crop, you cannot be too careful in sowing nothing but the very best seeds, as the best seeds that you can possibly buy, regardless of the first cost, always prove to be the cheapest in the end. It is not reasonable to believe that you can get a large and paying crop by using poor inbred seeds.

Our best class of up-to-date farmers have for a long time recognized the importance of raising nothing but the very best thoroughbred livestock, and I claim that it is just as important in the growing of our special crops to use nothing but the very best strain of thoroughbred seeds—seeds that have a past history. Remember, that like begets like in plant life as well as in animal life.

**100 Per Cent Germination**

When I say thoroughbred seeds I do not necessarily mean seeds that will germinate 100 per cent, although this is, of course essential, but what I mean is, seeds that have been grown from a strain of onions that have a past history, that have been improved through long years of scientific selection and restriction.

Now, in order to demonstrate my point in this connection, I will take for example the keeping quality that we have been able to produce in our GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS through our long years of scientific work, and, as I have told you elsewhere in my book, this wonderful improvement was not brought about by accident. It did not happen over night, but is the result of brains, mixed in with our long years of hard work.

Inasmuch as it costs but very little more to buy nothing but the very best seeds, and as the difference at the time of harvest is so vast, I cannot urge my readers too strongly to insist on using nothing but the very best seeds that they can possibly buy, and especially will this hold true with onions.

**Average Seedsmen Do Not Grow Their Own Seeds**

The biggest trouble with the average seedsman is that he does not grow his own seeds. A large percentage of the seed stock is grown out on the Western coast, where, owing to climatic conditions, all inferior bulbs, which cannot be used for commercial purposes, are left in the field over winter and allowed to produce seeds the following year. Any one with any experience in the growing of onions can surely see the folly of producing seeds from such inferior stock.

The writer, having business interests at Davenport, this state, has spent considerable time in studying the methods used in growing onions in the large onion district near that place, and as a large percentage of the onion-growers in that district grow their own seeds from year to year, I have spent some time in studying their methods, and must say that I am surprised to see the careless and crude way in which they grow their seeds.

In the first place, instead of placing their seed bulbs in a cellar during the winter, thereby giving the grower a chance to reject any bulbs that showed signs of sprouting, or otherwise did not keep well when the seed bulbs were set out for seed the following spring, they stored their seed bulbs outdoors, allowing them to freeze up solid, and kept them in this frozen condition until early spring, when they are set out for seed.

At first I could not understand their idea in handling their seed bulbs in this way; however, in questioning one of their leading growers, he informed me that they handled their seed bulbs in this way to prevent shrinkage in the way of sprouting and rot, and when I asked him how they could expect to improve the keeping quality in their strain of onions by handling their seed bulbs in this way, he told me that they cared little or nothing as to the keeping quality of their onions as their onion crop was put on the market direct from the field without curing. However, in questioning him further he did admit that some years they were handicapped more or less by being forced to market their onions in the early fall, regardless of price, from the fact that they know their onions will not keep.



PHOTOGRAPH "H"—Shows a pile of barnyard manure that was hauled on our ground during the winter and early spring, and repled once during the summer. By this method we get our manure thoroughly rotted and in the very best of condition to be spread on our onion fields during the early fall. In this way we also destroy the largest percentage of all foul weed seeds. "THE GILBERTSON WAY."

### **Barnyard Manure**

The most important step to be considered in the preparation of your soil for the growing of a large crop of onions is the kind and proper amount of fertilizer to be used. We haul and store up large quantities of barnyard manure on our onion fields annually. I wish to call your attention to the above photograph, which shows the way we pile our manure. We never make a practice of spreading barnyard manure until we have piled and repled it at least twice. For instance, manure that is hauled and piled on our onion field during the winter and early spring is repled at least once during the summer. The advantage of repling barnyard manure in this way is:—First—You get the manure more thoroughly mixed. Second—It becomes more thoroughly rotted, thereby destroying all foul weed seeds which are always found more or less in barnyard manure.

### **Quantity Per Acre**

In preparing a new onion field that has never been planted to onions before, I always aim to spread about one hundred spreader-loads of well-rotted manure to the acre. This being done, we bring our Clark's Double-Action Pulverizer into action, and go over the ground at least once—and twice is better. You will understand that this pulverizer works the ground thoroughly twice in one operation, as I have explained elsewhere in my book. Now, this pulverizing the manure thoroughly into the ground before it is plowed is very important, from the fact that if this large quantity of manure is plowed under without being first mixed into the soil, it is liable to dry out the soil the following summer by stopping the capillary action of the soil. What I mean by capillary action is that it will prevent the moisture from coming up from the subsoil.

Some people may criticize this statement of using such a large amount of barnyard manure per acre. However, in my experimenting, I have found it most

satisfactory in preparing a new onion field to use about this amount of manure per acre, as a field prepared in this way, and seeded continuously to onions, will last from ten to twelve years without any further barnyard manure.

My argument in favor of using a large quantity of well-rotted manure in a single application is:

First—That this is about the only way that you can get a full crop of onions on a field that has never had onions on before, the first year.

Second—Unless you do apply a liberal quantity (say at least from seventy-five to one hundred loads per acre), your onions will not ripen the first year.

Third—It saves a large expense in keeping your onion fields clean, as, by applying this large amount of barnyard manure in one year, in about two years you will have all the foul weed seeds, that you brought into your ground by applying this manure, cleaned out. In this way you will reduce the cost of keeping your onions clean to a minimum after the first year or two, while, on the other hand, if you apply a small quantity of barnyard manure on your onion fields every year, you are inoculating your soil with foul weed seeds every year, producing an unnecessary expense of keeping your onions clean.

Of course, the most satisfactory way is to summer-fallow your onion ground at least one year before you try to grow onions. I do not say but what you can grow onions fairly satisfactorily on new ground the first year without summer-fallowing, providing you will follow my instructions and treat your soil to a liberal quantity of well-rotted barnyard manure, so that your chances of growing a sufficiently large crop the first year, whereby you can afford the necessary outlay in keeping your onion field clean. Remember, that fighting weeds in a foul onion field is expensive, even with the most improved machinery that you can possibly buy.

# Points of Superiority That I Aimed For and Have Produced in My Wonderful Strain of Onions, and What They Mean to the Grower



**Extra Long Keeping Quality** I know from the experimenting that I have been doing with other strains of onions offered on the market, that my GRANDPA'S PRIDE is the longest keeping strain of onions offered on the market today. As I have told you in another chapter of my book, this long keeping quality in my GRANDPA'S PRIDE was no guesswork. It did not happen overnight. It was no accident, but the result of over thirty-three years of careful, scientific selection and restriction.

I go over my onion fields in the fall, before they are harvested, and make a thorough and scientific selection of the very finest specimens for my next year's seed stock. These specimens are selected to comply with a standard that I have set out to produce:

First—Perfect globe shape.

Second—Small neck.

Third—High color.

Fourth—Large size.

Fifth—Almost as hard as a rock.

This seed stock is handled exactly the same as my other field onions, being thoroughly cured during the fall, and when cold weather sets in, it is placed in a warm and rather damp cellar. Now, the reason that I keep my seed stock under these conditions during the winter is to encourage the sprouting tendency in my onion seed bulbs. In this way it gives me a chance to reject any bulbs that show the least tendency of sprouting when they are again sorted in the early spring, just before they are set out for seed.

This may seem a very simple operation, and can, of course, be accomplished by any ordinary, intelligent man, providing that this careful selection and restriction was only necessary one or two years to accomplish these wonderful results. As I said before, the improvement, even under this rigid system of mine, has been so slow that it has not been until the last few years that I have been able to reach the perfect standard that I set up a large number of years ago, and bring out the special points in this wonderful strain of onions of mine.

I leave you to be your own judge as to the keeping quality that I have been able to produce in my GRANDPA'S PRIDE when I tell you that I have a small quantity of onion bulbs that I grew in the fall of 1910 that are today just as hard and sound, without a sign of sprout.

## **An Absolutely Perfect Globe**

The best evidence that I can give you as to the perfect globe shape of my GRANDPA'S PRIDE is to refer you to the photographs which I have reproduced in my book. At the first glance, one might take them to be a crate of apples, so perfect a globe and so uniform in size are they.

The greatest trouble that I have found in the different strains of globe onions offered on the market is that, instead of producing a globe shape, they have a tendency to produce an oblong bulb. An onion of this shape is even more undesirable than a flat bulb, from the fact that onions of this oblong shape invariably have a tendency to produce large necks, which, at least in our locality, is very objectionable, from the fact that they are liable to absorb too much moisture at this point during the growing season, which will invariably result in a shrinkage in the way of rot after the bulbs are harvested.

Another disadvantage of growing an oblong onion is that they always produce a large percentage of scullions.

## **Small Neck**

In the many years that I have selected my seed stock, I have come to realize more and more that an onion with a small neck has several advantages.

First—It will produce a smaller percentage of scullions, or thick necks, which is proven by the fact that our large onion fields of over forty acres seldom produce as much as a bushel of these scullions.

Second—It is absolutely necessary for an onion bulb to have a small neck in order to be a long keeper, as the small neck will seal up and exclude the air from the bulb.

## **A Heavy Yielder**

In the selection of my seed stock to produce these special points, I have not in any way overlooked the importance of selecting and breeding an onion of large size, which is demonstrated exclusively by the record my GRANDPA'S PRIDE has made, covering a period of eleven years, with an average yield of almost 700 bushels per acre, which I consider a phenomenal record when you take into consideration that it was an average of not one or two acres, but of our entire forty-acre field.

## **High Color**

This is a point that a great many onion-growers do not take very seriously into consideration. It, however, means a great deal to me, as I find in growing onions on a large scale that some years, under unfavorable weather conditions, I cannot always harvest my onions when they are ripe, and of course, an onion that is left out in the field any length of time after it is ripe will bleach out or discolor; consequently, ordinary onions, under these conditions, with a poor color to start with, will have absolutely no color at all. In fact, some of them will turn green, and knowing the value of a high-colored onion when placed on the market, I have always been a



Alton gets excited when papa lands a nice string of bass.

crank on this point, and have selected my seed stock in order to produce in my GRANDPA'S PRIDE RED GLOBE ONION bulb with a dark, rich, red color, and in my YELLOW GLOBE a bulb with a dark, rich, yellow orange color.

### Quality and Mild Flavor Extraordinary

Being very fond of onions myself, I have been just as particular and cranky in producing an onion with a mild flavor as I have been in producing any of the other points, and it goes without saying that wherever my GRANDPA'S PRIDE is placed on the market, it is the mildest and sweetest flavored onion, except the Bermuda or Texas onion, which for a good

many purposes is almost too mild to be recognized as an onion.

### A Great Drouth-Resister

We have on a number of occasions planted our GRANDPA'S PRIDE right in the same field with several other varieties in order to test its drouth-resisting quality as compared with other strains of onions, and we have found that it possesses a wonderful drouth-resisting quality, over and above any other strain that we have ever tried out.

### A Word to the New Beginner

I wish to caution my readers not to become too enthusiastic and try to start out with too large a field of onions the first year, especially if you do not have your ground in the best of condition. My advice would be rather to put in less acreage and be sure that you are in a position to give your onion field the proper attention. Remember, "whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well." Perhaps, in this same connection, it might be well for me to mention what I mean by your field or soil being in the best condition. In the first place, I would not advise any one to try and grow onions on a very large scale, providing their soil is very foul. Second—Providing the soil is not rich enough. Third—Providing you are not in a position to be able to hire the necessary extra help required to tend to a large field of onions.

To demonstrate my point, I will give you some figures taken from our records. When father and I first commenced the growing of onions a number of years ago, we found that it cost us over thirty-five cents a bushel

to produce a bushel of onions, while, in later years, after we had received the results of the points which we have been able to obtain in our "Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions" and using up-to-date machinery, of which the most important of them all is our patent seeder, we have produced our onions at a cost of seven cents a bushel—a difference of twenty-eight cents a bushel in the cost of production.

### Summer-Fallowing

While I do not claim but what, all other conditions being favorable, you can grow a paying crop of onions on your ground without summer-fallowing, we always make a business of summer-fallowing our land the first year, planking and replanking, and reploting it, and cultivating it; in other words, killing all the foul weeds as near as possible, thereby saving the enormous expense of fighting these same weeds among your small onions the following year. But, what I do claim is that it will not pay you to grow a crop of onions on your soil the first year without summer-fallowing, unless, first, you have your ground extremely rich, so that your onions will ripen up the first year so that they will produce a full crop; second, so that you will be in a position to be able to stand the extra heavy expense of fighting the weeds in this foul ground and still leave you a profit over and above your expenses; third, unless you can get an onion-seeder that will distribute your seeds even enough whereby you will not be forced to go to the extra expense of thinning your fields, and at the same time produce an even and full stand with absolutely no blank in the rows.

### Big Profits

Do not be afraid to spend a liberal amount of money and time in preparing your onion fields in the way of fertilizer, thorough preparation of the soil, thorough cultivation, keeping them absolutely clean, etc., from the fact that a crop of onions, properly handled, will return sufficient profit, so that it will stand a large expense per acre and still leave you a good, reasonable profit, even under seemingly unfavorable conditions.

### Raised a Good Crop of Onions

Decatur, Mich., August 22, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—Most of the onions sown here will not be more than one-half a crop. On my farm I had the best show for onions that I ever saw, but the dry weather cut them short a good deal of what they would have been, and yet I think I will have about 600 bushels to the acre. I just began pulling onions today, and that is my estimate of the crop. I think that if we could have had rain ten days earlier they would have gone 200 bushels more to the acre than they will now.

People came from miles around to see my little two and one-half acres of onions grown from your seed. Up to the time of the drouth they grew to beat anything that people here ever saw.

Any information that you can give me regarding this season's crop and this season's price will be gladly received. Thanking you in advance, I remain

Yours very truly, DEXTER E. BRIGHAM.



### Best Seed He Ever Had

Eagle River, Wis., November 11, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—I am writing you a few lines in regard to the onion seed I bought of you last spring. I must say they were the best seed I ever had. Out of the fifty cents' worth of seed I bought of you I raised fifteen bushels of good big onions.

Would you kindly let me know how much seed it will require to sow one-half an acre, and what it will cost me? Would also like to know if you have any yellow onion seed.

Yours truly,  
HERMAN RADE.

### Largest and Best

LaConner, Wash., October 6, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—I planted a trial package of GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED this spring. I am well pleased with the onions. They are larger and better than any onions I have seen around here.

Yours truly, HENRY PHERSON.

### Grew Large Ones

Gladstone, Minn., September 5, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson, Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:—Without any doubt can say that the onion seed I bought of you turned out to be the best ever grown in this part of the country. Half of my onion beds washed away, but still have about ten bushels of the nicest onions I ever saw. More than half of them measure three and four inches across the bulb, so next year, if I am going to raise onions, I want some more of your seed.

Yours truly,  
E. J. EINUM.

### Speaks of Fine Flavor

Walnut, Ill., November 6, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—I will try and tell you how we liked your GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED that we got from you. They are simply fine onions—the best onions I ever ate; such a mild flavor—not rank and strong like most onions. One cannot say too much in their favor. It was a very dry season here, so the yield was not so large, but they did well for this season. They were a perfect globe; small neck and a fine color. Will try them again.

Yours truly,  
W. A. DURHAM.

### Grandpa's Pride the Best Out of Five Varieties

Viroqua, Wis., November 24, 1910.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—Will you kindly quote me prices on your onion seed before spring? Among five varieties, your onions came out ahead. And they are a perfect globe—good color and fine flavor, and have a small neck. My neighbors that have seen the difference will want onion seed from Gilbertson next spring. I have given some of my neighbors your address, and they are likely to call you up before spring.

I will want only one variety for next spring, and that will be GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS.

Yours truly, ARNT JOHNSON.

### Finest Onions He Ever Ate

Giltedge, Mont., October 12, 1911.

The A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—I am writing just a few words in praise of GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED. They produce the finest onions I ever ate. Success to the producers of such good things.

Very truly yours, WM. CLIFF, JR.

### Great Surprise to the Grocer

Woodson, Ill., No. 1, April 18, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sirs:—Please find enclosed draft, for which please send me GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED. My groceryman wants to know where I kept those onions. They kept so nice and are such a nice shape and hadn't any of them started to grow yet, and they were also so nice and firm.

Please mail these seeds at once, for it is time they were planted.

Yours truly,  
S. M. BUTLER.

Spokane Bridge, Wash., Dec. 6, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Ia.

Dear Sirs:—Your GRANDPA'S PRIDE ONIONS were highly praised by all who saw them, both while growing and when matured. They thought they were a wonder, sure. I took three sacks of them and two sacks of the common white onions to Coeur d'Alene and peddled them at 4 cents for the Grandpa's Pride and 3 cents for the common onions, per pound, and when I had sold the three sacks of Grandpa's Pride I had sold only 10 pounds of the common onions.

I had 27 sacks, but sold a lot of green onions during the summer.

Yours respectfully,  
C. A. PHILLIPS.

Belgrade, Minn., Dec. 4th, 1911.

A. O. Gilbertson, Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:—Gilbertson, your onions are by far the best onions I ever raised. I gave your onions a good test. I planted them side by side with three other varieties from a different seed company, and gave them the same care, but yours were the biggest and more of a uniform size. In spite of the dry weather and the grub-worms last spring, they certainly did fine. Some were over twelve inches in circumference.

Yours truly, A. A. F. ADRIAN.

### Best for Eating and Keeping

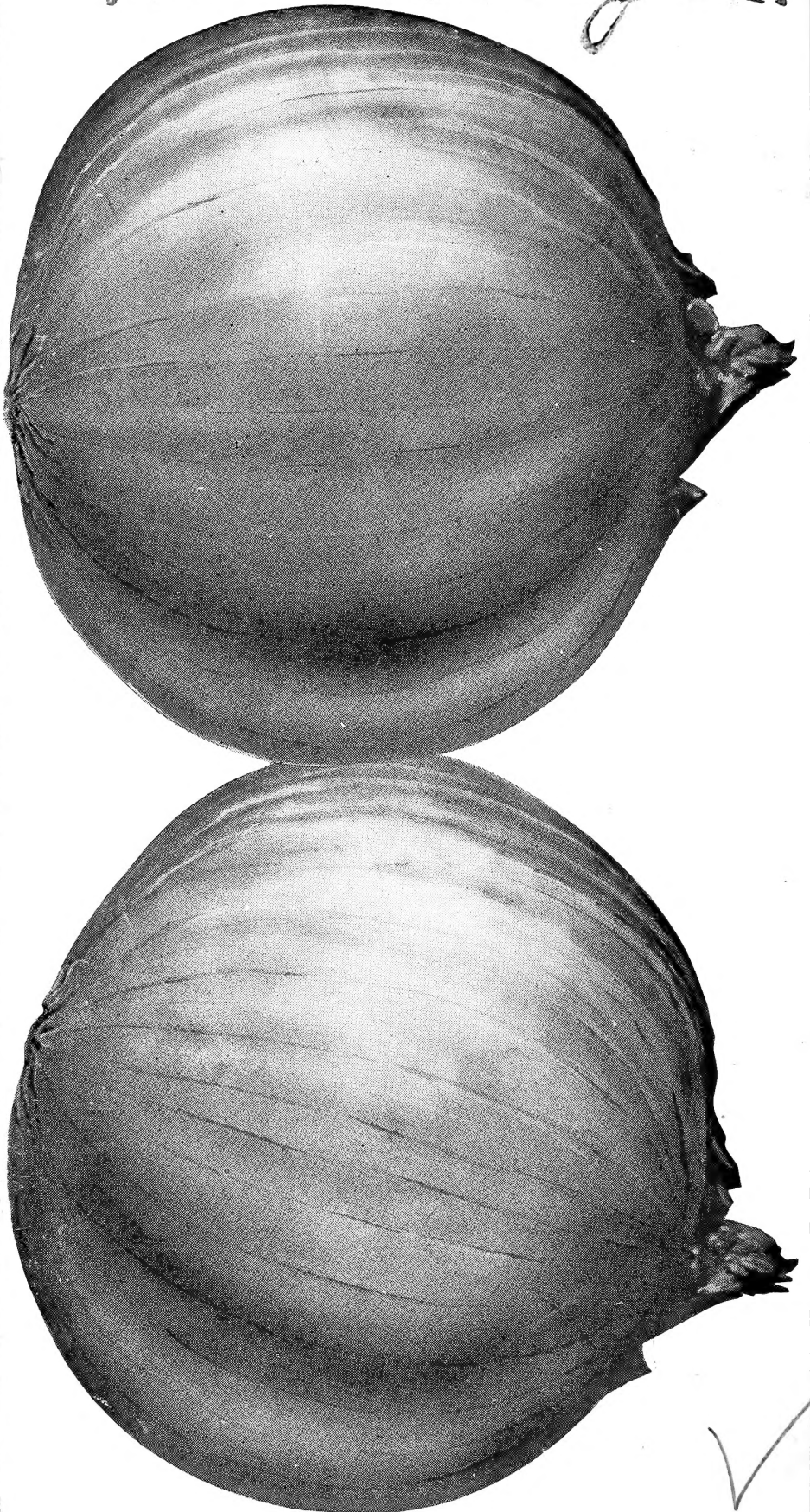
Harpers Ferry, Iowa, No. 1, Feb. 22, 1911.

The A. O. Gilbertson Co., Mason City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—Your GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS did the best of any with us last summer. It was dry here all through the growing season, so they were not very large, but had such very small necks, and they are keeping fine—better than the yellow or white that were grown right beside them—and we like them the best for eating, so I want to try them again this summer.

Yours respectfully,  
MRS. M. T. PHIPPS.

51  
Hill St. Jersey Co.



My GRANDPA'S PRIDE  
GLOBE ONIONS. Repro-  
duced from an actual  
photograph.

Our New Seed Warehouse  
at our St. Ansgar farm,  
where we store and cure  
our seed from our GRAND-  
PA'S PRIDE GLOBE  
ONIONS. The basement  
extends under the entire  
building and is used to  
store our onion bulbs dur-  
ing the winter months.

