

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



MAKING HIGH PRICED LAND PAY



BY GROWING ONIONS AS A
SPECIAL CROP

Gilbertson
GROWER OF SPECIAL CROPS

MASON CITY,
IOWA.

FOR THE UP TO DATE MAN INTERESTED
IN THE FARMING BUSINESS

The A. O. Gilbertson Company

Authorized Capital \$250,000

Growers and Breeders of Special Crops
and Gilbertson's Guaranteed Evergreens



G. G. Gilbertson
Founder



A. O. Gilbertson
Pres. and Gen'l Mgr.



Our
Master Alton



C. H. McNider
Treasurer



W. W. DuPre
Sec'y and Adv. Mgr.



Wm. H. Salisbury
Director



R. C. Lubiens
Vice-Pres.



A. J. Lindert
Office Mgr.

A COMPANY of this size incorporated for the express purpose of carrying on the perfecting and growing of special crops and of guaranteed evergreens for windbreak purposes. The breeding, improving and propagating of special plants, grains and seeds of high quality is a rare thing; in fact, we know of no other company in existence today carrying on this same work.

A. O. Gilbertson and his father, G. G. Gilbertson, have been extensive growers of special crops and advocates of intensive farming for a good many years and have carried on experimental work in the perfecting of crops for more than a quarter of a century, not only in Iowa, but in other states as well.

G. G. Gilbertson does not take an active part in the business any more, but still assists greatly in experimental work, especially along the lines of machinery. A. O. Gilbertson is the president and general manager of the company, and has in charge the superintending of the experimental work along the lines of the improvement of grains, seeds and plants, and the growing and harvesting of the special crops grown on the Gilbertson farms.

As this business has grown to a national reputation, it has been necessary for him to bring into this business such men as Mr. DuPre and Mr. Lindert, who assist him in the operation of the sales and office end of his work, and also Mr. McNider and Mr. Lubiens, whose advice along the financial end of the business is invaluable, as these men are the strongest bankers in this part of the country. Wm. H. Salisbury, one of the best-known corporation advisers, is one of the directors of this company.

Last, but not least, we show the picture of Alton, the eldest son of our president, in order to show the three generations of special crop growers, and we use his picture as a trade-mark.



Another Chapter of the *Gilbertson* CONTINUED BOOK

Making High-Priced Land Pay by Growing Onions
as a Special Crop

My Grandpa's Pride Globe Onion

Well, let us have a little visit together on this first page before I start to show you over my large fields of onions, and talk about this big paying special crop of ours. We would, of course, visit with each other a little before going out to the field, if you would come here to see me, and, as long as you probably cannot come here to see me during the harvest season, the only time to learn anything about this work, my aim is to talk to you through the pages of this book the way I would if you were here.

By study and thought and careful work a man can produce points of high quality in crops to such an extent as to increase their market value from 25 to 50 per cent above the value or price of ordinary crops. I have spent thirty-two years in working to produce points of high quality in seeds, plants and grains, and I cannot help but feel a little proud of the records we have made with the special crops we have been working with for so many years; although, I don't want you to think that I am going to brag about it. However, it is human nature to be proud of one's successes in his life-work, especially when these successes are the results of years of hard work and days and nights of study.

It gives me a great deal of satisfaction, too, I want to tell you, to be able to see other people enjoying the results of this work. For instance, look at the number of people who have Gilbertson's Guaranteed Evergreen windbreaks—and a great many of these folks had tried time and time again to grow ordinary evergreens, without success, before they set out our trees with our wonderful fibrous root system, which makes these trees grow where others have failed.

And, look at the number of people who are now enjoying my Alton Improved Red Raspberries—and especially people who live in localities where they have never been able to bring small fruit through the winter, but by study and work we have produced a wonderful red raspberry, which has stood the severest winters without protection. It is the most delicious table fruit grown—but, I must not start to talk about my raspberries, as that is a story by itself. Many people who have read the other chapters of my continued book have asked for further explanation of my Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions, and I am going to explain this part of my work as fully as I can in this chapter.

There was a time when farm work was looked down upon as drudgery, but, today, men in the cities are going back to the farms, and the time is coming—in fact, is here—when we will not

have such hard work to keep our boys with us in this farming business. Why? Because farming is a profitable business. I don't know of a business that would lure me away from the farm. I have no ambition to retire from this business. The business of seeing what you can make this soil of ours produce in the way of crops and profits is far more interesting to me than any other business.

And, think! This farm work makes it possible for us to live right in God's out-of-doors, the natural place for men and women. It enables us to live every day out where the people in the cities spend money every year to come to enjoy, for just a week or so; and last, but not least, the thing about my work that I enjoy it lets me live where I can go fishing occasionally in the Cedar River, and I have a summer cottage, right on its banks.

People used to think it didn't take any brains to farm, but, today, I want to tell you that the more brains a man has to mix up in his farm work the more money he makes. The time has passed when men farm just for a mere living. This is a time of farm specialists, who put thought and study into farm work and use judgment and originality instead of following custom and tradition.

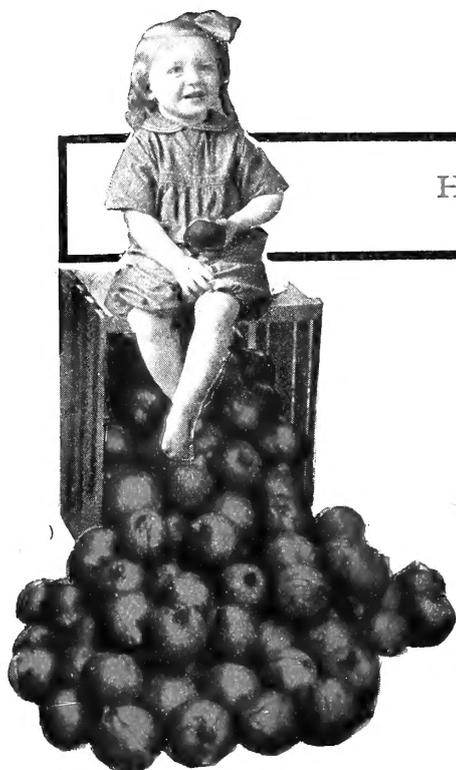
Farming is a business—a big business—and it is up to us farmers to look into this matter of special crops and systematic preparation of soil. We can farm, of course, according to the old custom—farm like our forefathers—but do we want to, and are we doing it? Is it absolutely necessary to grow the same crops everybody else does and prepare our land like our forefathers did? Not any more necessary than it is for a street railway company to use horses instead of electricity to pull cars like they used to; and most of the farmers of today realize this is true.

I am writing this book to interest the up-to-date farmers and, remember, I do not advocate the cutting out entirely of the working of our big farms and going into truck gardening, although there is money in the truck gardening business, but I advocate the growing of one or two special crops in connection with other farming in order to get the biggest profits off of our land and make high-priced land pay a big interest on our investments. That is my idea, and this chapter of my continued book explains one of my special crops, the growing of our Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions. I want you to know and feel that you are talking with a man who is vastly interested in the farming business, because that is my business and my work.



Our Little Inspector—Grandpa's Pride

How We Have Combined Thought with Toil in the Scientific Growing of Our Onion—A LITTLE HISTORY



How many men in the farming business today are growing onions for market purposes, or even for their own use? Yet, look at the big demand for this product on the market, and look at the profit there is in growing them.

We (my father and I) have devoted almost a lifetime to the growing of onions on a large scale. It started with just a hobby of my father's and has grown to a \$15,000.00 yearly onion business. As I have just said, onion-growing at the start was only a hobby, but we soon found this crop so profitable that we began making a scientific study of this work.

When we decided to go into this onion business extensively, we selected the very best variety grown at that time—the red weather-field, which, of course, was just an ordinary flat onion, as globe onions at that time, thirty-two years ago, were something unknown. We started with this onion with the object of breeding it up to our high standard of perfection and to produce the following points, which we aimed at the start to get, and we succeeded in getting.

First—Long keeping quality—so that this onion might be placed on the market after other people's onions, or ordinary onions, were out of the way. Second—Larger size and enormous yield—in order to make this onion business profitable. Third—An absolutely perfect globe, instead of a flat or oblong onion. Fourth—A high color—to make the onion popular on the market. Fifth—A small neck—to obviate the occurrence of decay caused by rains entering at this point during the growing of the onions, making extreme shrinkage or rot. And last, but not least—an extraordinary mild, sweet flavor.

The most important feature of this onion we have developed is its long keeping quality, explained on the following page. In breeding for this keeping feature, our method was to never set out a sprouted bulb for seed. Our seed bulbs are kept in rather a warm cellar during the winter, to bring out any tendency to sprout, and then, all bulbs that have sprouted are rejected; as a result, the bulbs that do not sprout have passed through a severe test and can be used for seed. In this way, with selection from year to year of bulbs that will not sprout, we have obtained a strain of onions that are extraordinary for their long keeping qualities.

Of course, it is impossible to give you a detailed report of our work from year to year and show you how each point was worked out and the progress we made each year, but the points explained on the following pages have been brought about by systematic and careful selection and restriction covering a period of thirty-two years, and through the combined efforts of my father and I. Think of it!—more than a quarter of a century of experimenting study and work.

When you take these things into consideration, it is not surprising that we have so wonderful an onion—an onion that brings a high price of its own, and we can demand about our own price for on the market. This simply brings out this point strongly: "It pays to aim high in all one's work, and stick to it until you reach this aim."

We have not had thirty-two years of ease in producing these points. It hasn't been as easy to produce these points as it is to write about them, and the men who get our book with our onion-growing experience explained, and who get this seed, and thereby have a chance to profit by the experience we gained during these thirty-two years, get this experience much cheaper than we got it, and it is a great pleasure to be able to let some of my friends I am writing to get enough of this seed to start in right.

The biggest trouble with the average seedsman is that he does not grow his own seed. The fact is about seventy-five per cent of seed stock is grown out on the Western coast, where, owing to climatic conditions, all undesirable bulbs are left in the field over winter and allowed to produce seed the following year. Now then, do you wonder why there are so many inferior strains of onions offered on the market?

Now, the grower is not wholly to blame, for he is compelled to do this from the fact that some of the large seed houses in the East care little for the quality of the seed they sell. What they are interested in is getting this seed as cheap as possible, and they offer the grower of the seed such a low price that it is of course impossible for them to take the necessary precaution in selecting seed stock; and, it is for this reason that in so many cases inferior bulbs that have proven worthless for commercial purposes are used for the seed stock that is put on the market.

Anyone with experience in the growing of onions can see the folly of producing seed from such inferior stock. Now, we never think of running the risk of buying onion seed from seed concerns; in fact, we have never bought an ounce of seed of a seed house in the last thirty-two years, excepting for experimental purposes. We use only our own seed, and this seed, as I have said before, has been the result of years of careful selection and restriction.



(B) A part of our 40-acre field of onions. Our special crop which brings us an income of \$15,000.00 a year



Wonderful Points of Superiority We Aimed For and Produced, and What They Mean to the Grower



Extra Long Keeping Quality

I honestly believe—in fact, I know from actual experience—that our Grandpa's Pride Globe Onion is the longest keeping onion in existence. As I have told you in another place in my book, this long keeping quality in my Grandpa's Pride Globe Onion was no guesswork; it did not happen over night, or anything of that kind, but it is the result of over thirty-two years of careful selection and restriction. Now, the way I have produced this extra long keeping quality in my strain of onions is by careful and systematic selection of the onion bulbs that I set out for seed each year. I go over my onion fields in the fall, just before I start to harvest them, and select the very finest specimens for seed stock. Now, these specimens that I select have to be perfect as to size, globe shape, small neck, high color, and hard as a rock. This seed stock is kept over until the following spring in an ordinary cellar—that is, no precaution whatever is taken to prevent these bulbs from sprouting. In fact, the last few years we have rather encouraged the sprouting tendency in our onion bulbs by keeping them in rather a warm cellar, so that, if there is any tendency whatever in any of our onions bulbs that we carry over for seed stock to sprout, the sprouted bulbs are rejected in the spring when it comes to setting them out for seed stock.

We have on a number of occasions kept a small quantity of our Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions over one year, or, in other words, kept a part of one season's crop until the next fall, when our next year's crop was matured; and, in looking at the two different crops, even an expert could not detect which crop had just been harvested and which crop had been kept over from the previous year. Understand, we keep these onions in an ordinary cellar. We never keep our onions of any kind in cold storage. This means a whole lot to you, whether you grow them to market or for your own use.

A Perfect Globe

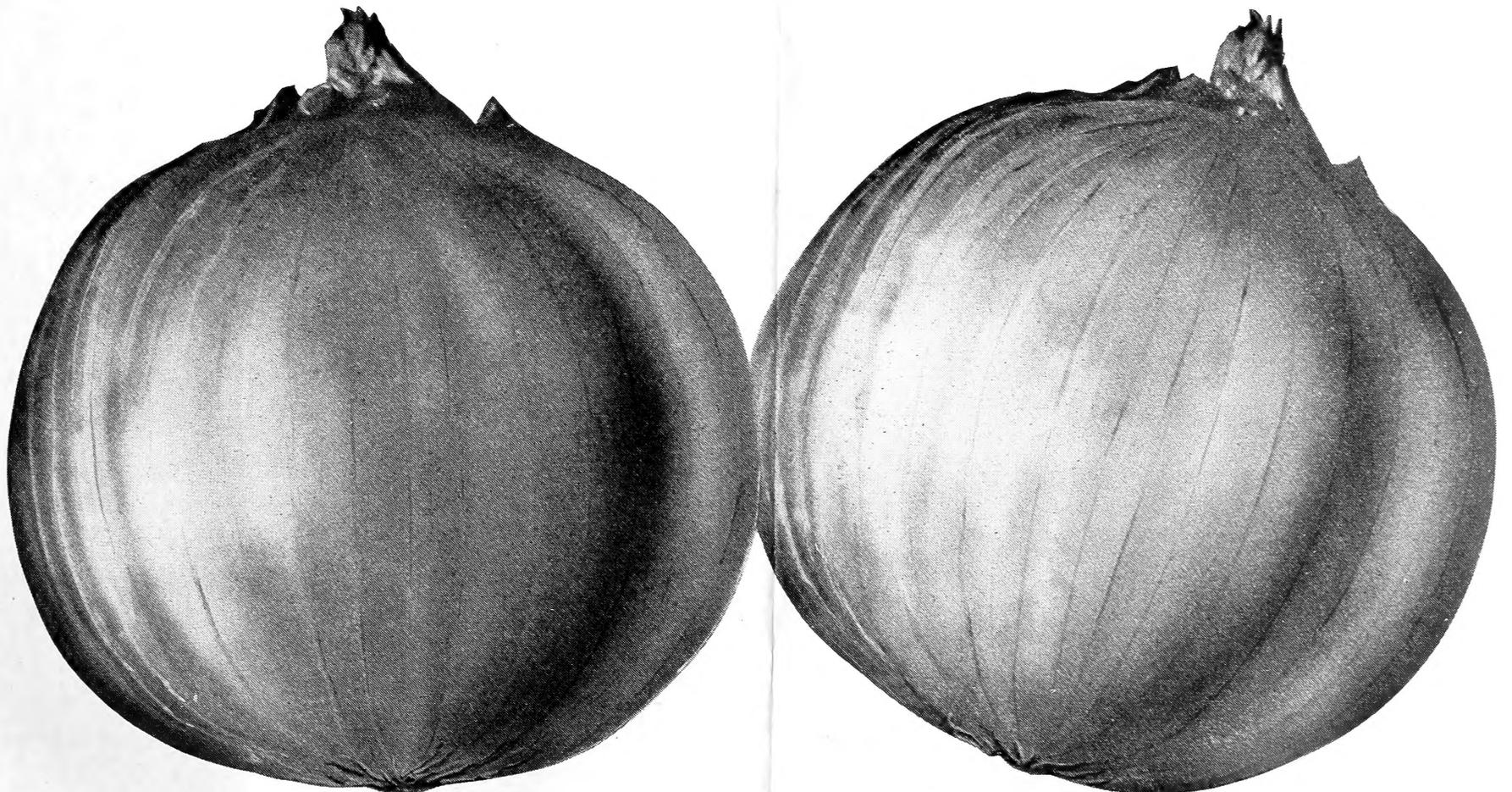
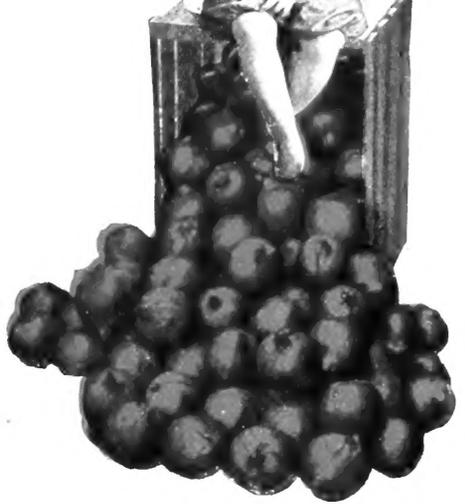
We absolutely know, from the investigation we have made in trying out the different strains of onions that are offered on the

market today, that our Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions are by far the most perfect globe onions grown today. Just take a look at the photographs I have reproduced from our onions, shown in this book. At a first glance, one might take them for a crate of apples—so perfect a globe are they, and so uniform in size. Look at these two onions on this page. The greatest trouble with the different strains of globe onions that are offered on the market is that, instead of producing a perfect globe, they have produced an oblong bulb.

At least, we have found this to be the case with those we have tried out. An onion of this shape is even more undesirable than the flat one, from the fact that onions of this oblong shape always have a tendency to produce a large neck, which is very objectionable, as an onion with a large neck is always subject to taking in excessive moisture during the growing season, which will invariably result in what we call a fall rot after the onions have matured. Another disadvantage of growing an oblong onion is that it always produces a large percentage of scullions, and an oblong onion is never as satisfactory, from the fact that it does not sell well on the market.

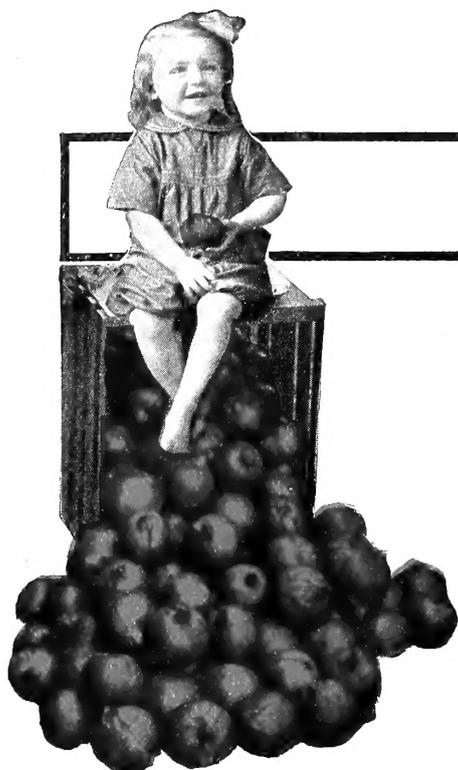
Small Neck

In the large number of years that we have been selecting and improving this strain of our famous Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions, one of the standards we have made a point to bring out is to produce an onion with an extremely small neck. An onion with a small neck has several advantages. In the first place, it will produce a smaller percentage of scullions or thick-necks. Second, an



Our Grandpa's Pride Globe. Actual size and shape, reproduced from an actual photograph

Points of Superiority— (Continued)



onion with a small neck is not nearly so apt to watersoak during the season of excessive rainfall. This is a very important point, as an onion with a large neck cannot help but absorb too much moisture during a wet season, which will always result in a heavy shrinkage in the way of rot when the onions are matured. It is absolutely necessary to produce an onion with a small neck, in order to produce a long keeper. I wish to add, in this connection, that our onion fields of forty acres did not produce as much as a peck of scullions or thick-necks the past season.

High Color

Our Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions have a dark, rich, red color, making it very attractive when placed on the market. Now, this is a point that a good many growers do not take into consideration. However, I have found in my experience that in growing a large field of onions you cannot always harvest them just at the time they have matured, and, of course, any onions that are left out in the field a long time after they are ripe will bleach out or discolor by the sun; consequently, ordinary onions, with a poor color to start with, if left out in the sun some time, will, in a good many cases, turn green. For this reason we have always considered the high color of onions very important, and have selected them for our seed stock in order to produce the desired results.

Demand or Value

In the last fifteen years there has not been a year in which we could not have sold more onions than we raised, as the demand for really good onions was much greater than the supply. We sell to produce houses or commission houses who store these onions for the late spring trade. This is where good keeping qualities bring high prices.

For ten years the average yield has been over 600 bushels per acre, and the average price sixty-four and one-half cents per bushel. This means an average income from our forty-acre field, for these ten years, of over \$15,000.00 per year. In favorable years the yield has often been as high as 800 bushels per acre, and the year 1901, a particularly dry year, 1,200 bushels were grown on a field of irrigated land, and sold at \$2.00 per bushel. The season of 1910 was a particularly unfavorable one for onions; however, at the first part of the season, some of these onions were sold for \$1.25 per bushel—considerably above the market price—and the balance we are holding until spring, at which time we hope to get at least \$2.00 per bushel.

Now, I want to ask you: "Doesn't it seem to you that this onion-growing is a paying proposition? Doesn't it seem to you to be worth a little time and work to start preparing a field for this crop? Doesn't it bring to you the idea that it pays to farm a few acres right rather than to farm great tracts of land in the ordinary way?" Of course, as I have said before, I do not advocate the cutting up of our big farms on the start, but I advocate the growing of special crops of this kind in connection with your other farming.

These points we have produced in this onion are of great value on account of the big price we can always get for this onion.

Quality and Flavor

I had a boy in my office who, when he first started to work for me, thought I was joking when I told him that people who had moved to other localities from our home town sent back here every year for our Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions, on account of not being able to get an onion with a flavor found in this onion. He thought that an onion was an onion, no matter who grew it. He knew, of course, that there were strong onions, and that some were stronger than others, but he thought that this was the same with all onions. There is a great deal in the flavor of an onion—in fact, more than any other vegetable—and so striking is the flavor of this onion of ours that men working on the trains running on the Illinois Central through St. Ansgar, where we load our onions on cars, have us furnish them every year with these onions. These men got started by getting a few during the loading season.

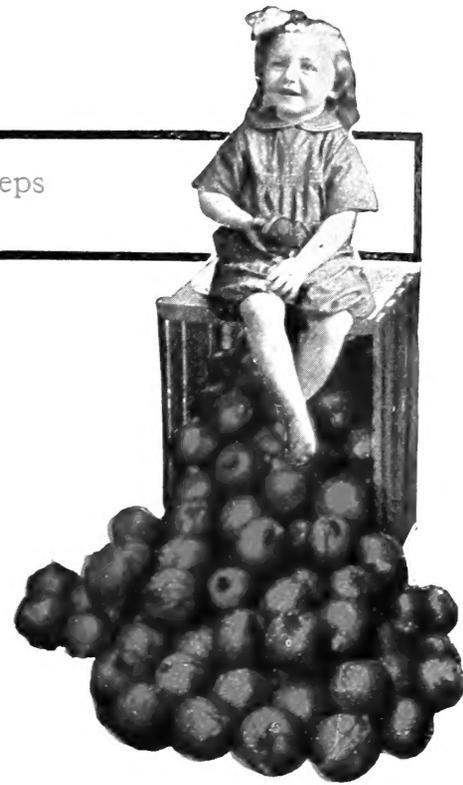
You might just as well have onions like these, with these points, for your own table.



(H) Where we grow the seed from our famous strain of Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions, protected by an evergreen windbreak, "The Gilbertson Way."



Systematic Harvesting, and by Using Up-to-date Machinery, Keeps Down the Cost of Production



About the middle of August our onions are ready to harvest—varying, of course, a few days, earlier or later, owing to the season. In harvesting our onion crop we have bushel crates enough to hold our entire crop. When the field is ready to harvest, we distribute our crates in the field—one row of crates for every eight rows of onions—or, in other words, we aim to have four rows of onions on each side of each row of crates, as shown by illustration “J,” page 10. This will leave the rows of crates the proper distance apart, after they are filled, for a team and wagon to pass between each row of crates in hauling them to our curing sheds.

We use the best grade of sheep-shears that we can buy in harvesting our onion crop. Our onion harvesters, which usually consist of women and boys, we pay by the crate, usually from two and one-half to three cents per bushel, depending somewhat, of course, on the yield of our onions. The boys, or women, in harvesting the onions, pull a handful of onions with one hand, and, with the sheep-shears in the other hand, clip the bulbs and let them drop directly into the bushel crates. In this way you will notice that we handle our bulbs only once.

We use in hauling our onions from the field to our curing sheds, a flat platform, sixteen feet long and five and one-half feet wide, as shown by illustration “K,” or just wide enough to accommodate four rows of crates set crosswise, or sixty crates to the load, single tier. We aim at all times to have our onions inside the curing sheds the same day that they are harvested, as an onion will bleach out if left in the sun any length of time, and thereby lose its attractive color. Our onions are stored in our curing sheds, as shown in photograph “E,” one crate piled on top of another as closely as they will stand.

Our onion crates are made from sixteen-inch extra heavy lath for the bottom and sides, with inch boards for each end, fourteen inches long and twelve inches wide. This size crate will hold just one bushel. The expense of building a crate of this kind, using the very best white pine lumber as well as the very best extra heavy white pine lath, is something like twenty cents a crate. These crates will last for years and pay for themselves a good many times over during the life of the crate in the way of economical handling and curing out of the bulbs.

After the onions have cured out thoroughly in our curing sheds, which usually requires about six weeks, they are run over a rack, or grader, which takes out all the dirt and surplus leaves, leaving the onions entirely clean. This grader runs the onions directly into sacks, which are then sewed up and loaded

into cars for market—that is, providing that the price suits us in the fall of the year; if not, our onions are run over the sorter, or grader, back into the crates, and stored away in our large cellars for winter and spring use, or until the ordinary onions are out of the way, when we usually demand almost our own price for them.

A very big factor in connection with keeping down the cost is the using of the right kind of machinery.

The roller we have in use on our grounds is the “Tiger;” however, this is not very important, as all rollers are made just about on the same principle. You should weight down your roller.

Our second machine that we follow up our roller with is the two-section John Deere lever-drag. The trouble with any drag that you buy from the manufacturer is that it is too clumsy, having too few and heavy teeth; consequently, we have removed all the teeth from the two-section drag and replaced it with round steel teeth, set three inches apart in the drag. You will also notice that, by a lever arrangement on each section of this drag, we can set the teeth on any required angle. One should by all means weight the drag down.

Next in rotation, we follow this drag with a Clark’s double-action cutaway disc harrow. We have adopted this disc harrow, or pulverizer, for the reason that it leaves the ground perfectly level.

Following this double disc harrow, we use another plunker, or float, of our own construction. This plunker, or float, is made from five soft pine planks, six inches wide and eight feet long. Each plank is set about one foot apart and at an angle of about forty-five degrees. The first two front sections are provided with steel teeth, six inches long, and bolted right through the plank, set two inches and a half apart. This gives us a chance to pulverize the soil still more. The three rear planks are left smooth, which leaves the ground perfectly level, ready for our seeder.

The seeder of our own construction, which is explained on the next two pages, is the most important machine we have, and has done the most in helping us to reduce our cost of production, as will be explained on the next two pages.



(E) Where we store and cure our onions “The Gilbertson Way”



(K) One of our platforms for hauling our onions “The Gilbertson Way”

The Greatest Onion Seeder Made

The Man

I want to introduce to you the man — my father — and show you the machine and the results.

My father has devoted almost a lifetime to the growing of onions on a large scale, and is the inventor of one of the greatest labor-saving devices of this age. I know this is a broad assertion to make; however, I know that people



G. G. Gilbertson

who have had any experience in the growing of onions or sugar beets will agree with me that this is not too broad a statement to make. When you can get a machine that will control and sow perfectly such difficult seed as onion and sugar beet seed, it is certainly a wonderful machine.

This machine of ours has revolutionized the growing of onions and sugar beets for us. For years the greatest obstacle we encountered in the growing of onions on a large scale was to get a machine that would sow our 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 would handle such difficult seeds as the onion and sugar beet accurately enough whereby it will not be necessary to have them thinned. I do not claim that there are not onion-seeders manufactured today that will sow onions thin enough so it will not be necessary to have them thinned, but, in doing this, all machines that we have experimented with 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 must have a full stand, and a perfect stand, and what I claim, based on over thirty-two years of actual experience, is that you can produce a perfect stand, and a full stand, with one pound of seed to the acre, and, at the very most, not over one and one-quarter pounds, 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 absolutely unnecessary to do any thinning in our onion fields. How successful he has been in producing this machine you can judge for yourself when I tell you we have never done any thinning in our onion fields since we have used this machine, and we have never sown more than one and a quarter pounds of seed to the acre. I will also leave you to be your own judge as to the perfect stand that we have produced when I refer you to our ten years' record of our Grandpa's Pride Globe Onions, which shows that our average yield, covering these ten years, has been a trifle over 600 bushels to the acre, and in some more favorable years, when we had an abundance of moisture, we have produced over 800 bushels to the acre.

Father has only manufactured three of these machines, the only machines of their kind in the world. They have been invented and patented by him, and have been used exclusively in the planting of our large onion fields.

I am showing you a cut of this machine, reproduced from an actual photograph. Every bolt, bur and disc of this machine has been turned out by my father. I have also tried to explain to you in my crude way the different parts of this machine, so as to give you an idea how it works and where it is different from the ordinary onion and garden-seeders offered on the market. There is no market gardener or onion-grower who has seen this seeder and the work it is

capable of doing but what has urged us to manufacture and put this seeder on the market. In fact, so well satisfied has every onion-grower been with the work this machine is doing that I have over a dozen standing offers of \$100 for this machine, providing we could turn out one for them at once. Now, of course, \$100 for this machine is out of the question. It can be manufactured and put on the market at a profit for a great deal less money. I am, however, pleased to say that we have completed arrangements whereby we expect to commence the manufacture of this machine and place it on the market this coming winter.

We again wish to emphasize the importance of a machine that will plant your onion and sugar beet seed so accurately that thinning will be absolutely unnecessary, and at the same time have a perfect stand. So important is this matter of having a machine that will produce these results that a manufacturer of garden-seeders in the East, in trying to overcome this difficulty of handling difficult seeds accurately, has hit upon a plan whereby he places

the onion seed between two thin layers of tissue paper. He manufactures a machine that will distribute these rolls of tissue paper directly in the ground. Of course, under this system, it will be necessary to send this concern your onion seed, and they charge you at the rate of \$9 per acre for placing this seed in long tissue paper rolls ready for planting. It will also be necessary to buy a machine to distribute these tissue paper rolls. Just imagine for one minute, Brother Grower, the idea of handling these tissue paper rolls on a windy day!

Now, I am not mentioning these facts in my book because it is a practical way of sowing onion seed. I am simply calling your attention to the fact that the manufacturers of garden-seeders realize the importance of being able to produce a machine that will handle those difficult seeds accurately—so much so, that they will even go to such an extreme method as depositing the seed between tissue paper in order to produce the desired results. What I do claim is that we have in our machine a ma-

The Machine

No. 7—Shows our adjustment whereby it is possible to raise and lower our roller 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. 14—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—Consists of a dust scraper, which can be adjusted so as to remove every particle of dry soil from the top of the ground. This is very important, especially when there is a dry spring, as it makes it possible for shoe No. 2, which opens up the furrow, for the seeder to deposit every seed in absolutely moist ground.

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

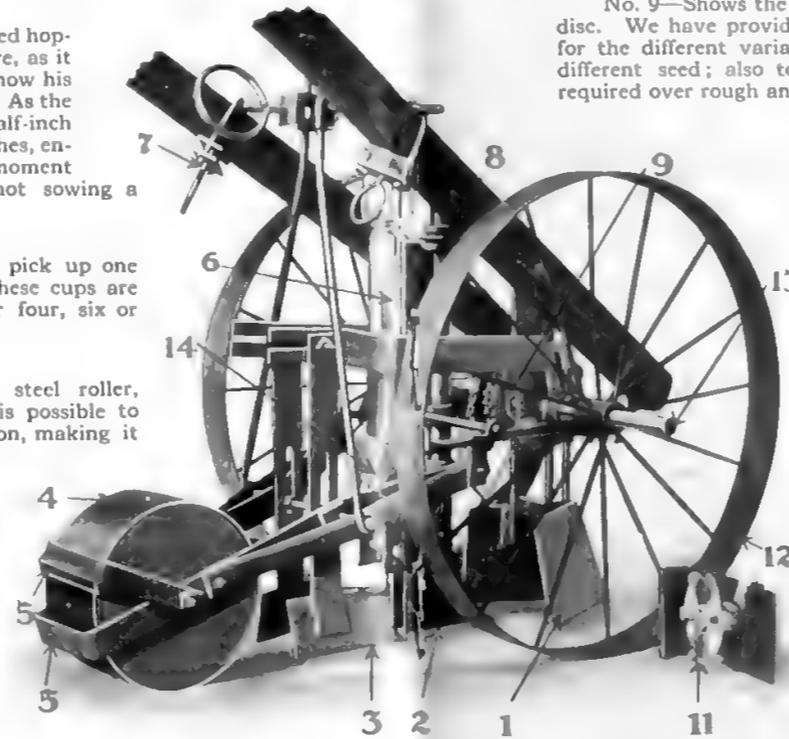
No. 9—Shows the sprocket wheels which drive our planting disc. We have provided three wheels of different sizes to provide for the different variations in speed required for the planting of different seed; also to provide for the variation of different speed required over rough and smooth ground.

No. 13—Shows our main shaft, or axle. By the combination of our adjustable wheels and main axle 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 your drive wheels. For instance, after you have planted one row, and in returning to plant row No. 2, one of your main drive wheels is run in the same mark made by this same wheel in planting row No. 1. For this convenience we have provided a double set of grips, or handles, on our machine, making it possible in operating this seeder to walk directly behind the main drive wheel in planting row No. 2, so that it is a very easy matter to keep a perfectly straight row.

No. 12—Shows our 20-inch all-steel wheels, which can be adjusted to plant any width row required from twelve to twenty-four inches.

No. 11—Shows the most vital part of our planter, namely, the planting discs. 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.

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



chine that will plant your onion and sugar beet seed so absolutely perfect that thinning will be unnecessary, and at the same time give you a perfect stand with absolutely no blank spaces in the row.

Now, the advantages of having your onion seed distributed evenly in your fields are many. First, it absolutely saves you the expense of thinning at the time when you usually have trouble enough to fight weeds; second, it prevents the disturbing of your onions after they are sown, which is absolutely necessary for you to do, providing you are forced to thin them; third, it saves you three to four pounds of seed to the acre; fourth, you can keep your onion fields clean at a less expense when you have your onions a uniform distance apart; fifth, you can produce a larger and more uniform bulb, thereby increasing the yield of your field at least twenty-five per cent; sixth, you can keep your onion field clean at a less expense when your onion bulbs are grown a uniform distance apart, as it reduces the work of hand hoeing at least 50 per cent; seventh, you absolutely have no small hulbs to contend with at the time of harvest, as every bulb has an equal show, from the fact that each bulb has had the same amount of feeding surface.

I want to again emphasize the fact that it is not merely the saving of from three to four pounds of onion seed per acre, or the saving of from twelve to fifteen pounds of sugar beet seed to the acre in the growing of onions or sugar beets, but it is the enormous cost of thinning at the time when you usually have trouble enough to fight weeds, even if your ground is supposed to be absolutely clean, especially when you grow your onions on forty and fifty-acre tracts.

Now, in order to bring out the importance of good machinery in connection with keeping down the cost of production, I will repeat a part of my article given in another chapter. Thirty-two years ago, when we first commenced to grow onions, we kept records of the cost of production, and found that it cost us thirty-five cents per bushel to grow a crop owing, principally, to the heavy expense of thinning and weeding the young onions. At the present time, with the use of our patent seeder and other special machinery, it costs us only nine cents per bushel.

The Results



The Only Absolutely Successful Onion Seeder in Existence

"The Proof of the Pudding is in the Eating"



In the spring of 1910 we had just 100 pounds of seed, which was sold in small packages only to a few of our friends and customers. I want to introduce you to these people to prove to you that these extraordinary claims are every one true. I dare say, every one of these folks will re-order, for most of them have already. Remember, we are not in the seed business, and will only sell our surplus seed, which amounts to only a few pounds every spring. I mention this to urge your early order.

Mr. Japs Says They are Great Drouth-Resisting Onions

Hopkins, Minn., October 30, 1910.

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

Friend Gilbertson:—

I want to write you this letter to tell you how glad I am that I purchased some of the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION SEED. I planted it in March, and they came up fine, and in April, when the cold spell came, they froze clear down even to the ground. I thought I would not get one onion, but after the weather got nice and warm again, they came out all right, and kept growing right along during all of the dry season that we had here.

They are the nicest onions I ever raised, and it seems as if they can stand dry seasons well, because they are nice in color and shape, have a small neck, good taste, and grow to a good size. I measured one the other day and it measured eleven inches around, and it was not one of the largest ones. The largest

ones I took to the Hennepin County Fair, and sold them right there, after the Fair, at sixty cents a peck, because they were large and looked nice.

By next spring I want some more of the Grandpa's Pride Globe Onion Seed, as I have the ground already prepared for them. It is worth while to raise them. They gave out better than any onion I raised, so I can recommend them to anyone wishing to raise onions.

Thanking you for recommending the Grandpa's Pride Globe Onion seed to me last spring, I remain

Very truly yours,

WM. D. JAPS.

P. S.—Please send me one of your Onion Catalogs.

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

Viroqua, Wis., November 24, 1910.

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

Dear Sir:—

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 a 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.

Mr. Simonson Tells About the Flavor

Swaledale, Iowa, November 5, 1910.

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

Gentlemen:—

Yours of the 3rd to hand, and I hasten to answer. I can truthfully say that the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONION



(I) A scene on the beautiful Cedar, where lurks the large-mouthed bass. Our Master Alton fishing



Letters From Folks Who Know

SEED you sent last spring proved to be all that you claimed for them, and more too. They have the best flavor I have ever tasted, and we had them for every meal almost all summer, and gave the neighbors some, and they all said they were the best they had ever tasted.

The shape and size are very good, so please send me another package for next spring, for I would plant no other. I wish I had more ground, so I could raise them for the market.

Hoping that you will have the best of luck, I am,

Yours truly,

C. SIMONSON.

Another One From South Dakota. The Best He Ever Raised

Platte, S. D., November 8, 1910.

Mr. Gilbertson,
Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Friend:—

In reply to yours of the 4th, will say that the onions are first-class as croppers and for cooking; also, for eating. They are fine lookers. It has been too dry here this year for big returns in any kind of garden stuff, but your onions were the best things that I raised.

Yours truly,

J. A. FOXLEY.

A Letter From South Dakota Says They Are All We Claim For Them

Yankton, S. D., November 11, 1910.

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

Dear Sirs:—

Having harvested our crop of GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS, we wish to write and tell you how well pleased we are with them.

In regard to the shape, color, size, etc., they are exactly as described in your catalogue. After our experience in raising onions for the past twenty-five years or more, I have not had a variety possessing the fine flavor of the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS, and we wish to recommend them to every gardener who has not yet given them a trial.

Thanking you for past favors, we are,

Most truly,

MR. & MRS. FRANK SCHAFFER.

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.



(D) Two generations of onion experts—Our Master Alton's first lesson



Letters From Folks Who Know — (Continued)



Best He Ever Saw

Wilson, Wis., Nov. 2, 1910.
Mr. A. O. Gilbertson,
Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:—

The onions did fine, and I think they are the best I ever saw.

Yours truly,
LOUIS PETERSON.

Heavy Yielders

Maroa, Ill., Nov. 3, 1910.
The A. O. Gilbertson Co.,
Mason City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:—

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.

Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain Speak of the Flavor and Yield

North Liberty, Iowa, November 17, 1910.

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

Dear Sir:—

The GRANDPA'S ONIONS are indeed very fine. They have the best flavor, and are the best yielders that I have ever seen, and we expect to plant a great many more of them.

The red raspberries are promising O. K. in spite of the dry summer that we experienced the past season, and every plant is alive.

Yours truly,
L. F. CHAMBERLAIN.

P. S.—Mr. Gilbertson—Thank you very much for your new book that you sent us. It is beautiful and interesting.

MRS. L. F. CHAMBERLAIN.

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.

A Letter from Idaho. Found Out What They Were, Anyway

Twin Falls, Idaho, November 14, 1910.

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

Gentlemen:—

Replying to yours of the 2nd inst. regarding the GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS will say that I planted the seed on March 30, and got a good stand, but during May, while I was away, the drouth killed most of them. The few that survived, however, showed a larger percentage of marketable onions than any others which I have tried, so I expect to get enough seed from you next spring to plant an acre.

Yours truly,
C. J. PAULSON.

Short, but to the Point

Traer, Iowa, November 9, 1910.

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

Dear Sir:—

Your GRANDPA'S PRIDE GLOBE ONIONS certainly beat any onions I have ever seen for quality and size, and they yield big.

Yours truly,
W. H. SPROLE.



(J) Harvesting scene showing a part of our 18,000 crates in use on one of our onion fields



How to Start Growing Onions—My Advice to a Beginner



“Whatever Is Worth Doing at All Is Worth Doing Well”

I will take it for granted that I am talking to a beginner on this page—that is, a wideawake and up-to-date man who has had no experience in the growing of onions or special crops of any kind, although he is a man chuck full of ambition and always ready for new ideas.

If you have made up your mind, after reading this special chapter of mine on the scientific growing of onions, to start a field of these onions as a special crop, my advice to you is, not to think of putting in a very large field of these onions until you have prepared your soil according to my instructions on pages 5, 6 and 7 of the chapter of this continued book, “Making High-priced Land Pay by Intensive Farming,” and the instructions I will give you on this page in regard to sub-soiling—for you can plainly see that I am not trying to sell you a whole lot of seed. The fact is, the selling of this seed is not the object of my writing this book.

You can start in to growing my raspberries right away, because these raspberries, as a special crop, need no special preparation of the soil at the start. But, to go into the extensive growing of onions without first preparing your soil would be the height of folly. Now, you can make such big money, and get such big returns, out of onions as a special crop that it will pay you to spend a little time in the special preparation of your soil. Don't be too ambitious. Don't try to start in on a large scale the first year without special preparation of the soil, and don't make the mistake of thinking that it is too much of an undertaking, and that you have to wait too long for results, for remember, your land, specially prepared, will last you for ten or fifteen years in the growing of onions. If you can make a tract of your land average you at least \$375 per acre, wouldn't it pay you to lose a year's crop, or even two years' crops, in the preparation of the soil on this tract?

Now, if you haven't already prepared your soil in a special way to raise onions for market purposes, my advice to you is to get only enough of our Grandpa's Pride Globe Onion seed at this time to furnish onions for yourself and a few of your neighbors and start right in now to prepare a tract of land, and prepare it as follows:

If the field you wish to grow onions on is fall plowed, so much the better. The first thing I would advise you to do is to plank this field two or three times, or until it becomes perfectly smooth. After this is finished, take your disc harrow and pulverize it at least twice, and again follow it up with your plank harrow about twice. This will leave your soil in the proper condition.

Just as soon as your first crop of foul weeds have sprouted

thoroughly, go over your ground again at least twice with an ordinary harrow, and again finish up with your plank drag, so as to leave your ground in perfectly level condition so that you can sprout the second crop of seed without waiting for rain. After you have sprouted about two crops of weeds, take your stirring plow and plow your land very shallow. You will see the object of this, as this turns up more foul seed from below. Plank it immediately as fast as you plow.

We always make it a practice when we are plowing our land for summer fallowing to follow up our plowing with the plank drag before the soil has a chance to dry out or become lumpy. In a few days you will find that another crop of foul weeds have started, and you treat this the same as I have explained heretofore.

After you have killed another two crops of foul seed, plow your ground again about two inches deeper than your last plowing. Now, although I strictly advocate the summer-fallowing of your soil the way I have explained at least two years for the growing of onions, if you will continue this work that I have laid out thoroughly one season you will be surprised to see what a wonderful difference even one year will make in the cost of keeping your onion field clean.

After you have thoroughly prepared your soil, as I have explained in another chapter of my continued book, pages 5, 6, and 7, Intensive Farming chapter, plant your onion seed about one-half to three-quarters of an inch deep, and about three inches apart in the row, with each row from fourteen to fifteen inches apart.

After the onions have come out of the ground sufficient so that you can see the rows plainly, use an iron age hand cultivator, and go through your fields. Do not wait until the weeds get too big a start on you. If your ground is very foul, it will pay you to set your knives on your cultivator so as to throw the dirt away from the row, thereby running up to one side of the row just as close as you can and return on the other side. In other words, you only cultivate half a row at a time. You will find that this will save a great deal of hand hoeing in the row, especially if your land is inclined to be at all weedy.



(G) Preparing the soil—rolling, pulverizing, discing and planking in one operation—“The Gilbertson Way”

You Ought to Get Started Right



AND ORDER EARLY

Well, I have shown you over my onion fields, and explained this big paying special crop and the extraordinary points we have been able to produce in this strain of onions by years of systematic selection and restriction. I have explained these things the best I could, not having you here to talk to.

On the first page, I started out with a little visit. Now, on this last page I will give you just a little farewell talk before we leave these onion fields.

In going over these pages I cannot help but feel you ought to be convinced that it pays to grow special crops, either in connection with your other farming or alone. If you are not already growing a special crop of this kind, I would like to see you make a start. Remember, you are welcome to profit by my thirty-two years' experience in using our methods of growing, and I can furnish you with a limited amount of seed to start with. I would rather not see you start at all unless you start right, for I know what this not starting right means.

In the first place, it will pay you to follow closely my instructions, given on page 11 of this book, and to order the right kind of seed. I am not advising you to do this from a selfish standpoint—just to sell you the seed—because, bless you, I could sell what little seed I have, that I won't use myself, at a big price, in just one order, and, believe me or not, just as you wish, what I get for this seed will leave me with but little profit, if any, for the expense incurred in the methods we use in selecting our seed stock, and the expense we have been to in experimental work these many years is great and can be only understood by looking at my expense record book, which is open for inspection.

Remember, I am not a seedsman, and do not buy this seed from growers for 35 cents or 40 cents a pound, as some seedsman do. This is my own seed. Some springs we find that we have a surplus of seed, and when this small surplus is exhausted, our friends have to wait until the next year.

You may be skeptical, and may want to ask: "Gilbertson, why do you go to this expense when you say that you can sell all of this surplus in one order at a big price?" For, today, it is hard to believe that a man will do anything unless it pays him big to do it. Why do I do this? There are several reasons why, and the biggest reason is this. I am a farmer; was raised a farmer; have been a farmer all

my life, and I know that my father and myself would have appreciated it very much if someone would have given us information like this in connection with the growing of onions thirty-two years ago. We would have appreciated it even if we had not intended to grow onions for market purposes, and the second reason is this—it helps people get acquainted with me. They have confidence in me, and in the lines I produce, after trying this onion seed.

For instance, the chapter of this continued book explaining my red raspberries gives some wonderful records of profit in growing this crop. Some people who haven't a chance to see my fields of raspberries might question the truth of this statement. Now, people who are skeptical like this, when they get some of this onion seed and see what these onions are, know that Gilbertson is absolutely on the square.

I am hoping that you are not skeptical enough to wait until you have had a chance to see what this seed will do before you order raspberry plants, for you ought to have some of these raspberry plants—at least enough to furnish your own table with this delicious fruit.

Re-orders for this onion seed are coming in every day. Every day the supply is getting smaller. It doesn't mean very much of an investment for you in the way of cost of seed—so order early, and the best way to do is to order onion seed along with raspberry plants, so you can include the small amount the seed will cost with the money you will send in for plants. This isn't a raspberry book, but I cannot help saying just a word to you about this fruit before I say good-bye to you today.

I will take it for granted you have read the raspberry chapter. This beautiful colored book explains fully the growing of this delicious fruit. I wish all the folks who get this onion chapter would start with at least enough plants to furnish fruit for their own tables.

Our onions have paid wonderful profits as a special crop, and I would like to see more men in this business, knowing the amount of money that can be made out of this crop, but my Alton Improved Red Raspberry is the most interesting special crop, for two reasons: First, the fruit is the most delicious fruit for table use grown; second, it is the most profitable special crop one can grow. Why, do you know that your wife, with a small field of raspberries, can make more money than a man will make with more than forty acres of ordinary crops?

If you haven't thought about raspberry plants before, get this chapter of my continued book about raspberries, and read it over again. Figure it out for profit or for table use. Remember, I am not a nurseryman, with millions of plants to sell, or a seedsman with tons of seed. My supply is limited.

Chapters of Gilbertson's Continued Book

FIRST CHAPTER: Making High-priced Land Pay by Intensive Farming.

This chapter explains the intensive farming idea, and shows how much money can be made by the growing of special crops.

SECOND CHAPTER: Making High-priced Land Pay by Protecting Your Home and Live Stock With an Evergreen Windbreak.

This chapter goes into a detailed description of how to grow evergreens for protection. It explains the success of "the Gilbertson Way" in producing a wonderful fibrous root system on evergreens that makes them grow while others fail.

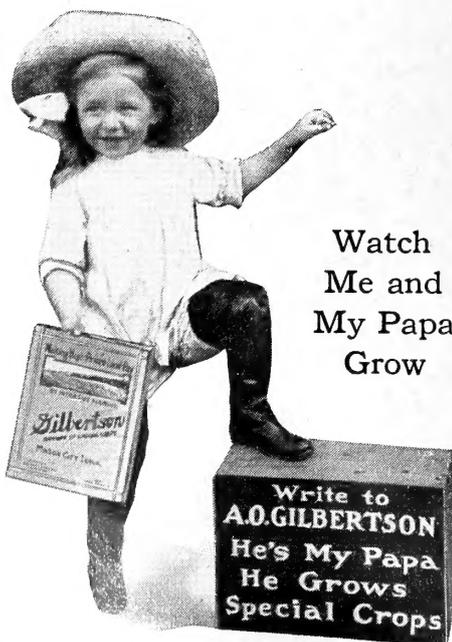
THIRD CHAPTER: Making High-priced Land Pay by Growing Onions.

This book ought to be in the hands of every farmer. Mr. Gilbertson is the most extensive grower of onions in this part of the country.

FOURTH CHAPTER: Making High-priced Land Pay by Growing Red Raspberries.

You should by all means have this chapter, because, the land on which Mr. Gilbertson grows raspberries pays him a net profit of \$1,200 per acre. This book will be of interest to every member of the family. Part of it gives some valuable information in connection with canning fruit.

There will be other chapters to follow besides those named. You will be notified of the new chapters as soon as they are printed. The chapters named above are now ready to send out to those who will send for them.



Watch
Me and
My Papa
Grow

Write to
A.O. GILBERTSON
He's My Papa
He Grows
Special Crops

HOW WE STAND AT HOME

LETTERS FROM MEN WHO KNOW US

NO. 8274
FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF MASON CITY, IOWA
 CAPITAL, SURPLUS AND PROFITS \$2,500,000
 RESERVE FUND \$1,000,000
 UNITED STATES DEPOSITORY
 MASON CITY, IOWA

To Whom It May Concern,

AUG. 6, 1910.

This certifies that the writer has been personally acquainted with A. O. Gilbertson, of the A. O. Gilbertson Company of this place and of Mason City, Iowa for many years. We have found them to have been strictly honest in all their dealings with us and honorable in their dealing with their customers. They have made a specialty of evergreens and of special crops and have developed an immense business in that line by the quality and successful growing evergreens that they furnish the farmers of the Northwest for a large number of years. Their Alton Improved Red Raspberry is the most wonderful raspberry I have ever seen. Their aim seems to be to make satisfied customers.

In this vicinity may be seen some of the finest evergreen groves that were ever grown anywhere, trees that were Gilbertson grown.

You will find their special lines everything they claim for them and I take pleasure in recommending the A. O. Gilbertson Company to those who are in need of any of their special lines. You will get honest and honorable treatment.

Respectfully,
[Signature]
 Cashier.

[Signature]
The Saint August Bank
 RESPONSIBILITY & HONOR
[Signature]
 AUG. 6, 1910.

To Whom This May Come

We take great pleasure in recommending the A. O. Gilbertson Company of Mason City, Iowa, as being perfectly reliable and worthy of confidence. We have had some years of acquaintance with Mr. Gilbertson and have found him up to his engagements in every way. He is absolutely square in his dealing, and all representations he has made concerning his business and the sale of his product have been fully and fairly met. We commend them as being honorable and straightforward and we also commend the quality of their special crops, and especially their Alton Improved Red Raspberry which has been the writer's pleasure to have served on my own table and I know it is everything they claim it to be.

We are sure anyone patronizing the A. O. Gilbertson Company will find that they will get just exactly what they order and will be perfectly satisfied with the purchase.

Yours respectfully,
[Signature]
 President



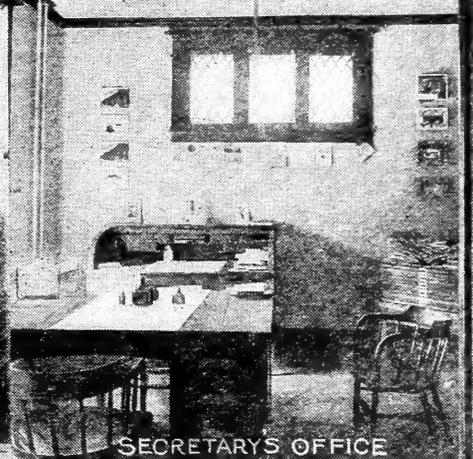
GENERAL OFFICES



ORDER DEPT



THE A. O. GILBERTSON CO.



SECRETARY'S OFFICE

THE IOWA STATE BANK
 CAPITAL \$1,000,000
 MASON CITY, IOWA

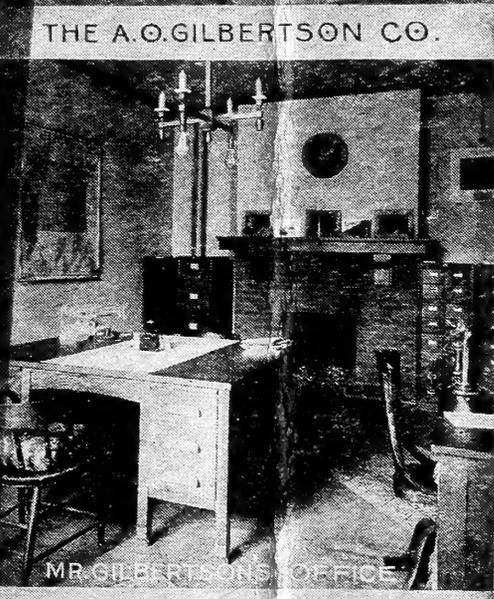
AUG. 6, 1910.

To The Public.

We know the A. O. Gilbertson Company, as does everybody around this community, and I know that their word is absolutely reliable. They are up-to-date farmers and business men, and they have had wonderful success with their special crops.

We cheerfully commend them to the public. They are worthy of your business.

Yours very truly,
[Signature]
 Cashier.



MR. GILBERTSON'S OFFICE

Commercial Savings Bank
 CAPITAL \$200,000
 MASON CITY, IOWA

AUG. 6, 1910.

To The General Public

I take pleasure in commending to the general public the A. O. Gilbertson Company of Mason City, Iowa, a Corporation engaged in the raising of special crops and of evergreens for windbreak purposes. Their product is everything they claim it to be, and whatever representations this Company makes will be carried out to the letter.

Respectfully,
[Signature]
 Vice President

These offices are the result of Growing Special Crops and Evergreens that always grow.

The N. O. Gilbertson Co.
 GROWERS OF
 SPECIAL CROPS
 MASON CITY, IOWA.

Another Chapter of the
Gilbertson

CONTINUED BOOK

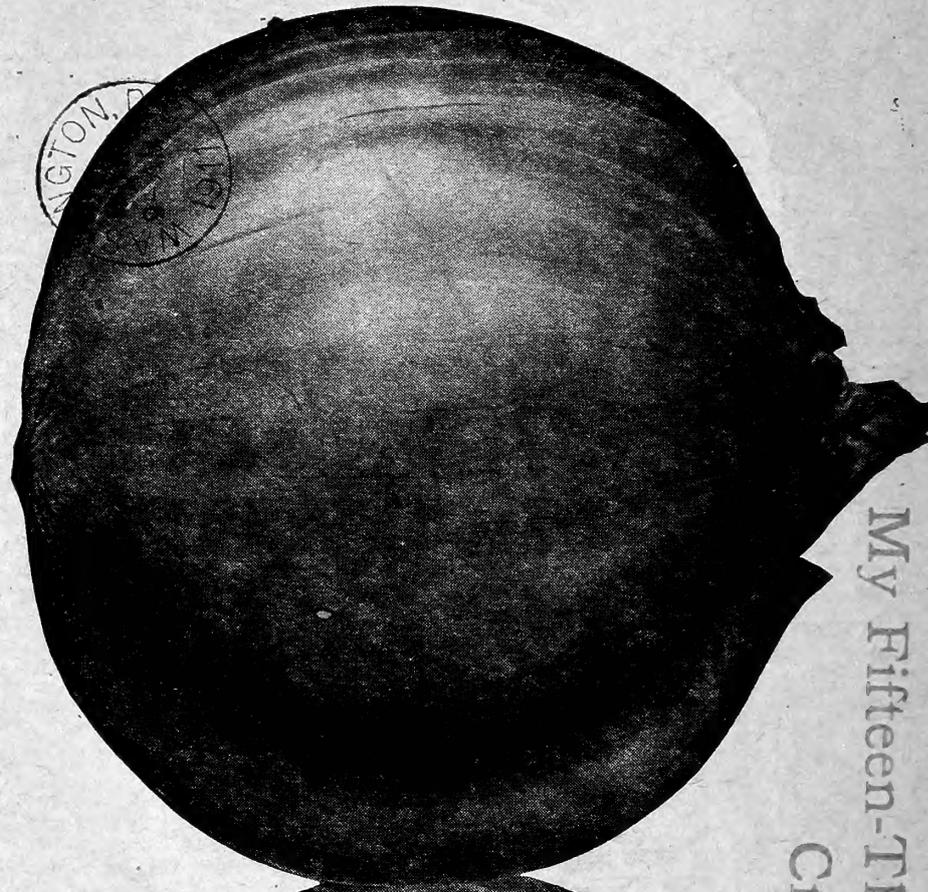
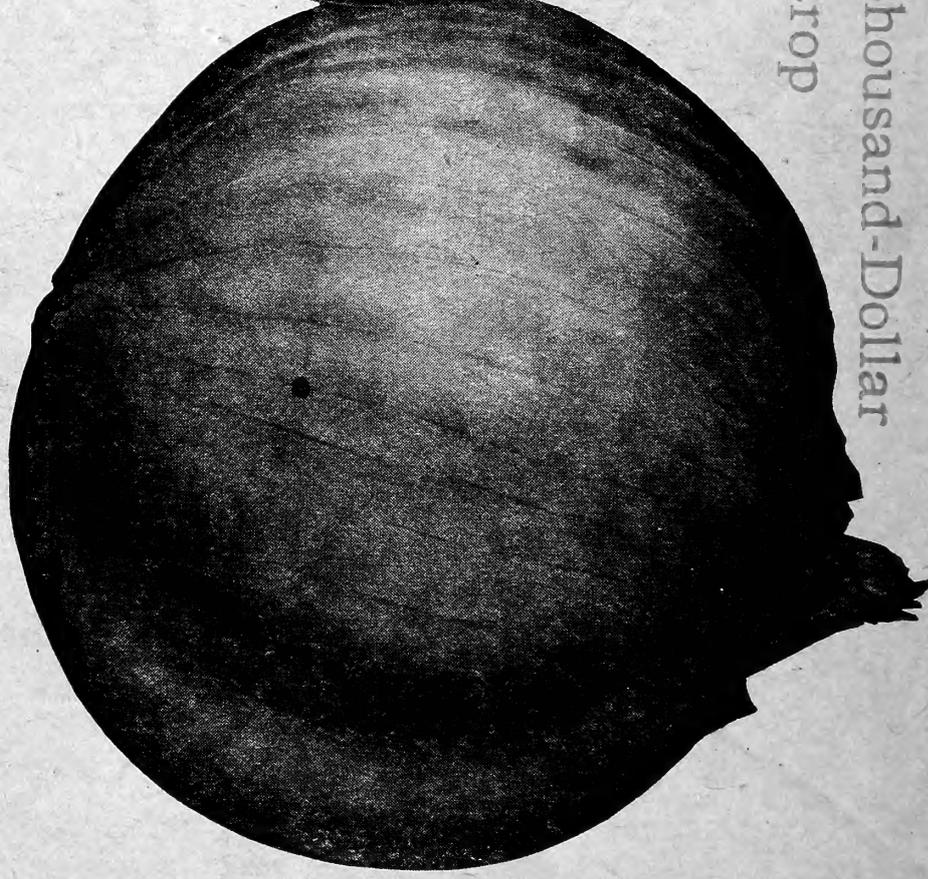


MAY 18 1914
 SONO

D. N. Shoemaker

Washington
of U. S. Dep. of Agri.
Bureau of Plant Indus.

to the U. S. Dep. of Agri. Bureau of Plant Indus. Washington D. C.



My Fifteen-Thousand-Dollar
 Crop

The Result
 of
 32 Years of
 Careful
 Selection and
 Restriction

Grandpa's
 Pride
 Globe
 Onions
 "Gilbertson"
 Grown

MAY 18 1914
 WASHINGTON, D. C.

