

Fruit Notes began in earnest in 1936, but occasional issues appeared before that time. The article reprinted here was part of the first issue of record, July 1935.

A Glimpse of the Pre-Experiment Station Era

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Sixty years ago, there was a dearth of information among farmers about matters which today are common knowledge. In the absence of fundamental information, their conclusions were sometimes a little off. At a meeting of fruit growers in South Haven, Michigan, in 1874, the question blight of apple trees was under discussion. One grower voiced an opinion that there were two species of apple blight, one caused by insects and the other not. And for the blight not caused by insects, he could recommend the use of salt sprinkled on the ground under the tree as a preventative. He went on to say that in New Hampshire, they used salt seaweed as a mulch for their trees with great benefit. Another grower reported finding a small worm at the end of the blighted twig. After much discussion, the group came to this conclusion. "The prob-

abilities are that an insect lays its eggs in the terminal bud early in the spring, which hatches out and eats the pith during the growth of the shoot. The worm in coming out of the limb, lets the air into the cavity, causes it to discolor, thus checking the circulation of the sap, which on bright, clear, warm days causes the limb to blight."

Unsolved problems of this kind resulted in the establishment of the Agricultural Experiment Stations throughout the country. Today we can turn to the findings of the research worker and therefore have less need to philosophize than did the grower of the 1870's. Incidentally, at the above meeting, it is reported that Master L. H. Bailey showed a jar of fall webworm on an apple twig. The Liberty Hyde Bailey whom we respect and admire was then a lad in grammar school.

