



EPHRAIM WALES BULL.

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"Our oldest cultivated plants, such as wheat, still yield new varieties; our oldest domesticated animals are still capable of rapid improvement or modification."
—CHARLES ROBERT DARWIN.

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BULL, GIDEON, AND BUDD.

Ephraim Bull gained a place of honor among those successful pioneers who achieved large things before the days when breeding was taught in the schools. He originated the Concord grape, thus making possible the growing of hardy grapes of high quality at low cost in the Northern States and in the colder temperate regions of the earth. He also wrought out much of the science and practice of breeding grapes and other plants which are multiplied clonally, by cuttings or buds.

Peter Gideon stands first among the pioneers in the work of extending hardy tree fruits beyond the former northern limits of the fruit zone. This rugged mind in creating the Wealthy apple and other hardy fruits inspired the people with faith that they can surround their homes with fruit trees, and thereby placed all cold countries under obligations to him.

Professor J. L. Budd was first among the pioneer teachers of plant breeding in our State colleges of agriculture. Twenty-five years ago, when the botanists of the United States Department of Agriculture were debating the propriety of using the term "plant breeding" in their publications, Professor Budd was training and inspiring the first group of college-made plant-breeding experts. He also performed great service as the first of American agricultural explorers to bring new plants from foreign lands, and as one of the pioneers in American horticulture and forestry.

These men believed that to obtain new varieties of fruit or trees peculiarly suited to the needs of the climatic and cultural conditions of their respective sections of country new forms could be called into existence through breeding. Thus they effected recombinations of unit characters in countless thousands of individuals, until one

containing the desired qualities and characteristics was evoked out of the number of infinite possibilities. The century now before us is witnessing a more scientific approach to breeding operations in the creation of new fruits, trees, and flowers, and no doubt other men of genius will earn fame for themselves, but the permanent benefits to horticulture wrought in the past century by these three strong characters will endure as a monument to their memories.

EPHRAIM WALES BULL.

1806-1895.

Ephraim Bull, in breeding new varieties of grapes, created the Concord. It was not a foundling or chance seedling, but the result of very patient work and waiting, not taking into account the many preceding years spent in experimentation and futile trial. Hundreds of failures in grape growing finally led him to recognize that only in a native grape could be found the mother of the hardy American grape which he desired to produce. Such mother was a *Vitis labrusca* plant on his farm, and from the seeds of this plant sprang the Concord. Eleven years were spent in growing and perfecting seedlings and in testing the selection. In 1853 the Concord was for the first time placed upon exhibition and the stock placed upon the market. Although the first vines were sold at a good price, the control of the stock quickly passed out of Mr. Bull's hands and he reaped very little benefit from it. Ten years later the Concord grape was spread over the entire northern part of the United States and is now widely used in temperate regions of most parts of the earth.

He originated other varieties of grapes, such as the Cottage, Esther, Rockwood, Iona, August Rose, and also many other but unnamed sorts. That there were no really hardy American varieties in existence and that horticulturists were experimenting with European varieties all the more emphasizes the genius of Mr. Bull in originating the Concord after many years of patient work. The Catawba and Isabella, two southern varieties, were among the improved American varieties then in existence. From Mr. Bull's statement that: "From over twenty-two thousand seedlings, there are twenty-one which I consider valuable," one may gain an idea of the numbers handled by him.