CALL HIM AMERICA'S BEST NEGRO FARMER

National Magazines Are Interested in Work of "Uncle" Henry Kirklin.

A GOOD CELERY CROP

Boone's Colored Wizard Expects Big Returns From Nov. 1 Yield.

There lives in the northwest part of Columbia a negro truck gardner who has been characterized as the best farmer of his race in America. He has attracted the attention of farm journal editors all over the country and has been written up repeatedly in such papers as the Country Gentleman and in Successful Farming, as a second Booker T. Washington.

"Uncle" Henry Kirklin was born and reared of a slave mother, on the old James Bowling farm nine miles east of Columbia. He has lived in or around Columbia all his life, has traveled in more than thirteen states.

An Institute Lecturer to Negroes.

As he sits now, sometimes, on his own little front porch, he says he likes to go over the memories of those days spent at Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Lake Erie and at John Brown's monument at Harper's Ferry. This old negro farmer is well informed upon most subjects, but when he gets started on the culture of sweet potatoes, strawberries, watermelons and celery, he is in a realm all his own.

"He has done a great work among the people of his race. While one of the old school of colored farmers, he has been wise enough to use modern methods and does so with a full understanding as to the why and the wherefore," writes one connected with the Missouri State Board of Agriculture.

"By thrift and industry he has accumulated a competence and has materially assisted others of his race. His place in the suburbs of Columbia is frequently visited by white persons who are interested in his work and who feel that they can profit by his advice. His vegetables are the finest and he finds a constant demand in Columbia for all he can grow.

"The Board of Ariculture has sent him out to do institute work among his own race and reports have always been satisfactory. In a plain, simple way, he tells of what he has done and tells others what is possible for them to do. He is constantly preaching the gospel of 'Back to the Land' as he believes that the hope of the negro is on the land."

Money in Intensive Work.

Although he cultivates only two and one-fourth acres of soil, Henry Kirklin farms that so intensively that it yields him as good a living each year as many a white man gets off his 160-acre farm. His strawberry crop alone has been so profitable that out of the proceeds in one year he built a home for a married daughter who now lives neighbor to him. The next year he built another house out of this strawberry money for a second married daughter and altogether he has five properties around him. One of them he has turned over to his wife who rents the house each year and the income is hers for spending money.

His crop of celery, which will not be ready to harvest until about November 1, is the finest Mr. Kirklin has ever grown and promises a big return for the labor and money invested. He has already sold $20 worth of sweet potatoes from a small patch which does not show that it has ever been disturbed. It will net him easily a profit of $150 or $200.

Started in Douglass Nursery.

A few years ago Henry Kirklin had charge of the working division of the Horticultural Experiment Station of the University. Under his supervision, hundreds of students learned the fine art of pruning and grafting. His knowledge of nursery work is apparently unlimited.

How did he come by all this expert scientific knowledge? When a boy only 14 years old, he was hired out to J. S. Douglass to work in his nursery and greenhouse located in the north part of Columbia. There he labored faithfully for eleven years and three months.

He worked for several of those years under two German gardeners, who were experts at their trade but who were very severe taskmasters. Night after night he would go back to his work after supper to do over some work that he was afraid would not exactly suit his bosses.

Then his work at the Agricultural College, at the time he was employed by the Missouri State Board of Agriculture, broadened his knowledge, and he picked up a fair understanding of the principles of chemistry.

Frequently, after he had left the State Board's employ, and gone into business for himself as a huckster and truck gardener, classes of students would come out to his place from the college with their professors to study propagation of berry vines, fruit trees and vegetables of all kinds. Now that the professors with whom he used to work have gone elsewhere the classes no longer visit his place and the instructors are probably reinstructed in the wonderful horticultural laboratory that is located right here in sight of the University.

A Peddler With Two Baskets.

Going into business for himself, after leaving the horticultural farm, Uncle Henry started with almost nothing. He owned his own tools to start with. The first year he peddled his produce from house to house carrying two large vegetable baskets on each farm.

Now other huckesters of Columbia go to Uncle Henry's door to buy plants and he has built up quite a business of this kind. He sells all the produce he can raise at top prices to the merchants of Columbia and they are glad to send their delivery wagons to his garden every morning in order to have his vegetables sell his berries.

Every transaction which takes place is recorded and an accurate account is kept of everything on Uncle Henry's model farm. He has built up a reputation of fair-dealing with all, not only by his integrity, but by the aid of his accurate system of book-keeping.

A Son-in-Law His Partner.

After forty years of hard work at gardening, Uncle Henry has things coming his way and he now has reached the place where he can rest on the oars a bit. He has taken a son-in-law into partnership with him who is learning the business and who is expected to carry on the business after Uncle Henry is gone.

Among the honors which have been bestowed upon him, he is probably most proud of a large sheet of carefully lettered paper which hangs framed in his parlor among large glass jars of preserved fruits and vegetables. It is a record of a gold medal prize awarded him at the Jamestown Exposition in 1907 for the best display of "vegetables in fluid." And beside it hangs another parchment given him at the same exposition which is a government certificate designating him as champion of America on this same display of "vegetables in fluid."

In 1903 Uncle Henry was a delegate to the National Business Men's League (colored) convention held in Philadelphia. He is flattered to be called the best colored farmer in America.

PICTURES AT THE THEATERS

COLUMBIA—Tonight and Thursday: "Woman", which will be shown at the Columbia Theater tonight and tomorrow, shows the development of woman from time of Eve in the Garden of Eden to the modern woman taking one through five episodes in the life of woman. A Chester-Outing Scenic and a Ford Weekly are shown also.

HALL—Friday and Saturday: Louis Gilaum, in "Sahara" a drama of the Far East, comes to the Hall Theater next Friday and Saturday. A Mack-Sennett comedy entitled "When Love Is Blind" will also be shown.

BROADWAY ODEON—Tonight: Bessie Barrisacle will play in "A Trick of Fate" and a comedy "Love and Lather." Tomorrow Henry W. Walthall in "Modern Husbands," Al Jennings in "The Long Riders" and a comedy, "The Model Janitor" will appear.

MANY NATIONALITIES GUESTS AT DINNER

Europe, Egypt, the Orient and U. S. Insular Possessions Represented.

DEAN MILLER TALKS

Women of Christian Church Entertain Foreign Students of the University.

Almost enough nations to hold a peace conference were represented last night at the Christian Church, when the women of the church served a dinner in honor of the foreign students enrolled in the University.

England was represented by Miss Helen Ware, France, by Manuel Zavaleta, whose parents are of French birth, but who has lived most of his life in Argentina. America was represented by the Rev. Madison A. Hart, toastmaster of the occasion.

U. Watada took the part of Japan, as he is of Japanese and Hawaiian descent. Chu Hsiao was one of the delegates from China. As Dean Walter Miller had been in Italy and spoke of his experiences there it may be assumed that he was there in behalf of the Italians.

A. W. Taylor Claims Ireland.

Prof. A. W. Taylor insisted that he was from Ireland, originally, if not now. Mahomet El Driny presented the claims of Egypt. Peter Vilkas, the football guard was there as the representative of Lithuania. Prof. Mateo de Molina made evident that he was from Spain. S. K. Cho was there in behalf of Korea.

The islands of the Pacific were represented by Petronia Alajna, Prodencio Cara, Austerio Carbonell, Jose Pacultad, Eliseio Quirino and C. R. Redondo, all from the Philippine Islands. The Hawaiian Islands were represented by Robert Lam and U. Watada.

The South American republics' delegates were Santiago A. Cuneo of Argentine, Ernesto Lopes of Bolivia, Augusto Paranagua of Brazil and A. Restrep of Colombia.

Miss Frances Spindel appeared as a survivor of the former Austrian nation. Ernest Y. Meili was the neutral delegate from Switzerland.

The only nation that was lacking was Germany; but without doubt a number of that descent could be traced by their bulk, who were otherwise silent about it.

The entertainment consisted of the recitation of an Egyptian poem by Mahomet El Driny, the playing from a Philippine opera by Petronio Alava, singing of a Chinese song by Hsiao-hang Hua and the recitation of a Spanish love poem by Austerio Carbonell.

Dean Walter Miller said that such an assemblage was particularly significant in that it was representatives of the growing internationality of the English tongue, that it was evident of the inter-raciality of humanity. When he honored President Wilson by saying that he was the spokesman of the language of humanity all the students applauded vigorously.

Among other guests that were present were the Y. W. C. A. and Y. M. C. A. secretaries, the elders of the Christian Church and friends of foreign students.

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"The Long Riders"
and
"The Model Janitor"

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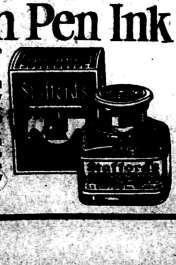

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