



Plant Watchman Vergil Stiles saw his two tomato plants grow into six-foot giants and yield almost two bushels of fruit.



Some of the tomatoes were approximately three inches in diameter. They kept growing into September.

Watchman Who Turned 'Green Thumb' Raised Prize Tomatoes Here Last Summer

For more than 20 years now Firestone Textile has been turning out quality products of the textile industry. And this summer just passed one of the employees added to the plant's history another story of achievement: Some of the world's best quality tomatoes.

VERGIL STILES, first shift watchman at the plant's main gate, had, for several summers, taken note of the tulips and chrysanthemums in the small plot near the safety record board. For some time they'd been failing to do their best. He figured that the flowers were not adapted to the soil, even though it was quite fertile.

So last June, Stiles obtained from Alvin Riley of Quality Control, and a successful gardener, some plants of the Oxheart variety and set them to grow where he could watch over them while on duty at the main gate entrance.

Under his careful nurture, the plants grew well—so well in fact that they reached six feet in height at season's end. They were supported by stakes and tied with discarded spinning tape. The foliage grew so dense that the tomatoes when full-grown could not ripen properly. The watchman plucked them periodically and set them a-ripening on the window sill of the gate booth.

ALL DURING late summer employees on the way to and from work watched the tomatoes grow red. And often they would stop to receive one at the hand of the generous gardener.

"Best ever," was the comment of many who sampled the fruit. The grower pointed out that the quality in this variety accounted for the firm texture of the fruit and the absence of "a lot of juice."

Stiles estimated that the two plants yielded almost two bushels, most of which he passed on to fellow employees and his neighbors around 1015 West 3rd Avenue.

The watchman, who intends to experiment further with tomatoes next summer, is a veteran gardener at home. There each season he raises okra, beans, peppers, potatoes and other vegetables.

ONE OF the original group of 20-year employees here, Stiles has been a watchman since World War II. Before that, he was a boiler fireman. His father, Manuel Stiles—once a watchman here—is now retired from the Company. Vergil's first cousin, Wade Stiles, is also a 20-year record holder. And Vergil's brother, Willard, is in the Weaving Department here.

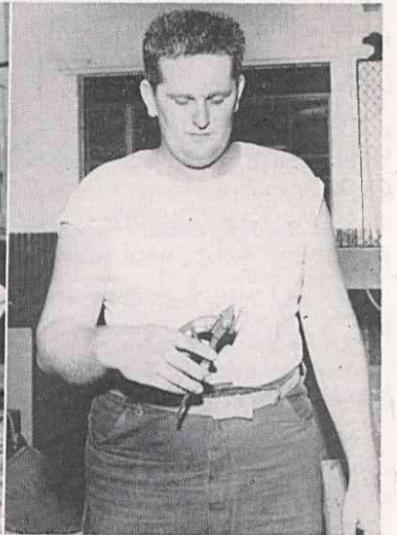
INQUIRING REPORTER

What Memory Of Childhood Or Youth Does The Month Of October Suggest?

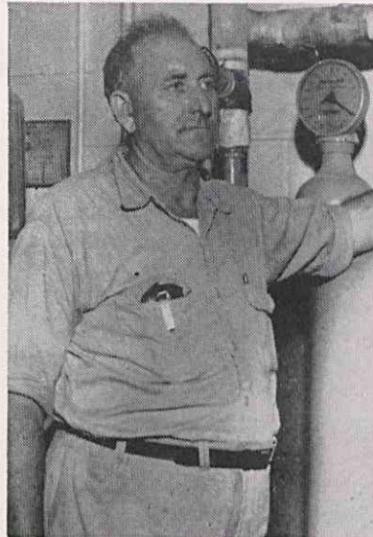
The tenth month is a month of memories. Here these employees recall their happiest experiences of childhood and youth—in October.



Edna Harris, Carding—Getting settled to the routine of school and then attending the round of fall parties, especially Halloween parties, make very pleasant memories of childhood in October. Even now I just love to dress up for a Halloween costume party.



Joel William Jordan, Cloth Room—My fondest recollection—takes me back to hunting as a youth in October—a sport I have followed ever since. Rabbits and squirrels have always been my favorite game, usually hunted with a .410 shotgun.



S. A. Buchanan, Shop—Best memories of my youthful days in October are corn huskings, bean stringings, log rollings and fence building in Swain County, N. C. These things, with autumn parties, made up our social life in the mountain country.



Margaret Whitener, Rayon Weaving—the annual county fairs stand out best in my memory as something I looked forward to in childhood in October. The things best remembered about fairs were the rides and other forms of entertainment, and candied apples.

After 20 Years: A Ride On Horseback

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A score of years is a long time for someone to suspend an avid hobby. So think Ben Davis, Men's Club clerk, and his brother Grady, employed in Carding. Thus, they decided one day last summer to renew their love for horses by going riding over some of the bridle trails around Chimney Rock, near Asheville.

It was a thrill to get back in the saddle again, they both agreed.



THE DAVIS BROTHERS

Ben (left) and Grady revived an old love for horses last summer.

the business of making a living got in the way of their riding any more, until last summer.

Ben and Grady have another brother who works at Firestone. He is Roy Davis, a clerk in the Weave Room.

Community Fund Drive to Open

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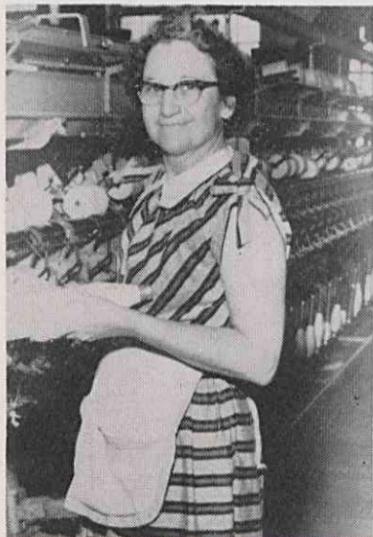
Mr. Firestone, who was national chairman of United Community Campaigns of America in 1954, has also served as president of U.S.O., board member of the National Society for Crippled Children and Adults, member of International Committee of the YMCA and the International Chamber of Commerce.

Your safety is our business at Firestone.

Stop, look and think Safety.

THEIR INTEREST in horses dates back to youth when they lived on a farm in Cleveland County, near Shelby. With a team they hauled lumber from the sawmills of the region, logged and farmed. And often they'd ride the saddle horse.

When the family moved to Gastonia in 1916 they had to leave their horses behind. And



Corene Lewis, Sales Yarn Twisting—Early fall parties, especially Halloween, with stunts and pranks. I remember going to Halloween parties and bobbing for apples in a tub of water, and taking part in taffy-pulling contests.



Boss Parson, Elevator Operator—Down in Commerce, Banks County, Ga., where I grew up, gathering apples in October and making them into cider is a pleasant memory. I would turn the apples press with a crank and sample the sweet juice as it came out.