

# PEPPER DEBACLE RECALLS HISTORY FULL OF TROUBLE

### Fiery Commodity Bone of Contention for Centuries —Black and White Pro- duced by Same Plant

WASHINGTON, D. C.—(Sp1.)—Falling companies closed their doors and 23,500 tons of pepper—several years' supply—piled up in London warehouses during the recent attempt by London speculators to corner the world supply of white pepper.

"This is not the first time pepper has caused excitement," says a bulletin from the Washington, D. C. headquarters of the National Geography Society. "This fiery commodity was long a cause of contention between the early European trading companies operating in India and the Far East. Pepper cargoes raised the ire of rival sea captains of the 17th and 18th centuries, and, along with other spices, led to pitched battles among Portuguese, Dutch, and English."

Landlords Accepted Pepper as Rent. "Native to the moist forests of southwestern India, especially the Malabar coast, black pepper has long been prized by eastern peoples to quicken languid appetites. They used it not only as a pungent condiment, but even as a medicine. For centuries pepper was the staple article of commerce between India and Europe. As far back as the fourth century B. C. Greeks relished pepper as seasoning, and sneezes from it expelled in the kitchens of Rome. It was once valued on a par with precious metals. When Alaric, king of the Goths, pounded on the gates of Rome in 1804, he demanded as the city's ransom 5,000 pounds of gold, 30,000 pounds of silver, and 3,000 pounds of pepper."

"In the Middle Ages, pepper was prized above all spices. The most important early English guild was the Peppercor Guild. At that time, the spice was so valuable it frequently took the place of money. Soldiers swaggered off with pounds of it as part of their booty. People received rewards in pepper, often paid their rent in pepper, and when a will was read, held their breath to hear how much pepper they had been bequeathed."

"The constant cry for pepper, and its high price, was largely what set canny Portuguese explorers for an all-sea route to the Indies. Vasco de Gama, sailing around the Cape of Good Hope, reached the home of pepper, the Malabar coast, in 1498. Venetians and Genoese who until then had practically monopolized the trade in pepper, now watched the Portuguese sail away with it. The Portuguese held the pepper purse-strings until the 17th century. Under their control, less pepper was raised on the Malabar coast, but its cultivation was extended to the islands of the Malay archipelago. Malacca, a port on the west coast of the Malay peninsula, became a great pepper emporium. Malays became 'pepper-slaves'."

"So flourishing was the trade in pepper and other spices that in 1595 the Dutch organized an East India company; in 1600 Queen Elizabeth chartered the English East India company; Danish, French, Swiss and other organizations followed rapidly on their heels."

"Most important commercially and historically of all these companies was the English East India company. During the 17th century English merchant vessels, with fragrant names like 'The Glove' and 'The Peppercorne' put in at East Indian ports. They unloaded cargoes of brightly-colored cloth, mirrors, guns, and metal goods, and sailed back to Europe laden with raw silk, indigo, and all sorts of spices, especially pepper."

"The directors of the company appear to have known little about the spices they dealt in, and sometimes sent out amazing orders. Once they ordered a captain in oamatra to load his ship with as much pepper as it could carry, forbidding him to waste even the slightest space by carrying sugar as ballast. They failed to realize that such a featherweight cargo would cause the ship to bob like a cork on the waves, and, when battling around the Cape of Good Hope, probably overturn."

"For years pepper was the object of England's trade with Sumatra. There the company made contracts with rajahs who were obliged to compel their dependents to cultivate pepper. Each native family was forced to plant 1,000 pepper vines, and each bachelor 50. The system of compelling natives to raise pepper for the company to buy was practiced by Dutch East Indian colonies until fairly recent times."

"A second system of cultivation fostered by European trading companies was to lend the Malays money with which to cultivate pepper. But since most of the borrowers never paid back the loans, often whole villages under local laws became liable for the debt, and in effect, 'pepper slaves'."

"Black and White on Same Plant. "Although black pepper claims a lot of relatives scattered throughout the tropics, these do not include sweet peppers, red peppers, and chillies, which belong to an entirely different family."

"The pepper vine is a symbol of perseverance, a plant that simply doesn't know when it is tired. Taken from its natural habitat in the moist deadwood of shady jungles, it will grow in plantations, though often given scant shade, and on poor soil, if fertilized. Although it climbs freely in jungles sometimes up to 30 feet, it continues to thrive on plantations when tied to a rough-barked tree, hardwood post, or even a stone post, and kept pruned to about 12 feet. "It ascends the post rapidly, but

no sooner does it get well up than cultivators sometimes detach it from its support, coil it like a snake in a hole in the ground, and bury it, leaving out only its tip. This is done to produce a stockier plant. Undiscouraged the pepper plant sends up

a number of shoots which reclaim the post and envelop it in a dense bushy mass of grayish stems and dark green leaves frequently ten inches long. "The vine's flowers are borne on spikes from one to six inches long.

Although natives thwart attempts at fruiting by nipping the flowers each year for several years, when the spikes are finally allowed to mature, they produce a thick crop. "On each spike about 50 small berries, or peppercorns develop,

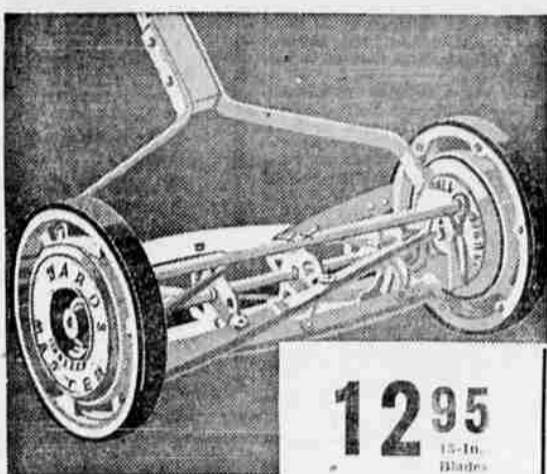
which gleam among the dark leaves as they turn from green to yellow to red. The clusters are picked by hand, and dried, usually on mats in the sun until the peppercorns turn shriveled and black. They are next rubbed by hand from the spikes, or

beaten off with sticks, cleaned and packed for export. Ground, they form the black pepper, small cans or boxes of which almost every American cook keeps handy. "Natives remove the dark skins and pulp of the more ripened berries by

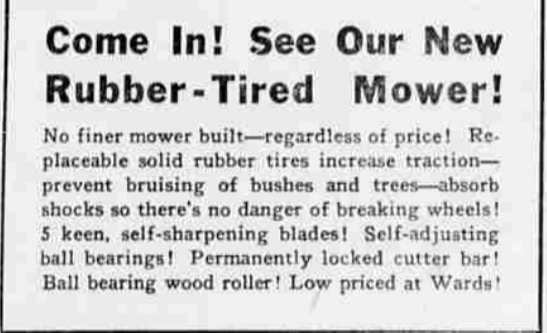
various methods, commonly by soaking them in running water and then tramping them underfoot. The revealed white seed, becomes the familiar white pepper."

Bring in your old gold. I pay the top cash price. Government license." Johnson the Jeweler. Home portraits of family groups and children at Special Prices. Shangle Studio, Phone 1208. Use Mail Tribune want ads.

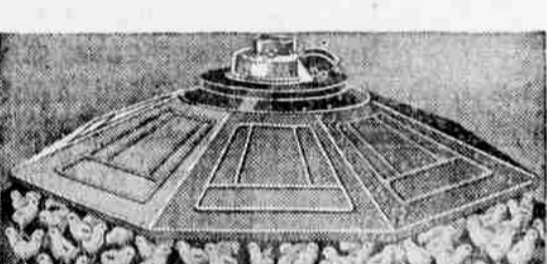
# Wards March of Values



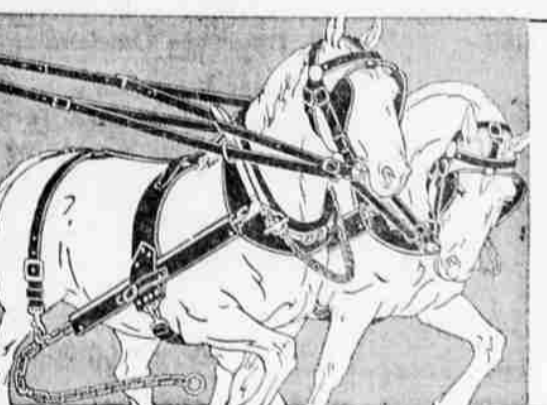
**Garden Cultivator**  
**1.00**  
Five tempered steel prong! 8-in. spread. 1-in. blades. 4-ft. polished hardwood handle.



**12.95**  
15-In. Blades.  
**Come In! See Our New Rubber-Tired Mower!**  
No finer mower built—regardless of price! Replaceable solid rubber tires increase traction—prevent bruising of bushes and trees—absorb shocks so there's no danger of breaking wheels! 5 keen, self-sharpening blades! Self-adjusting ball bearings! Permanently locked cutter bar! Ball bearing wood roller! Low priced at Wards!



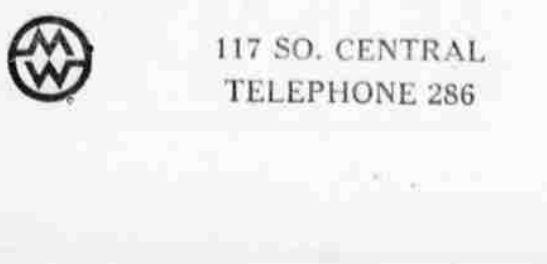
**7.95**  
11-In. Blades.  
**A Smooth, Carpet-Like Lawn!**  
Ball bearing construction! 5 keen self-sharpening blades! Heavy cast frame—rigidly braced! Locked cutter bar. Big, 10-in. closed type wheels!



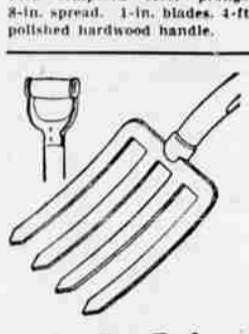
**15.45**  
500-Chick Size.  
**Improved Coal-Burning Brooder**  
Keeps chicks warm and comfortable! Burns hard or soft coal—holds fire 12 hours on coldest days. Automatic!



**26.00**  
Less Collars.  
\$1 Down, \$5 Monthly Small Carrying Charge.  
**Sturdy, Utility Chain Harness—a Ward Value!**  
Priced low to save you money! Leather parts cut from good quality harness leather! 7-ft. chain traces with 36-in. leather piping! High or low top wood hames! Save at Wards!



**53.35**  
2-In. Traces.  
\$5 Down, \$6 Monthly Small Carrying Charge.  
**Husky Harness Styled Especially for Pacific Coast**  
Built to last through years of service! Tough, pliable bark-tanned leather! Every strap cut full size! 3-ply traces. Bolt style tubular steel hames! Less collar.



**Spading Fork**  
**1.50**  
Four 11-in. tempered tines! 30-in. northern ash handle with steel D and wood grip!



**Garden Hoe**  
**95c**  
Full polished 6-in. blade! Solid socket! Finest grade northern ash handle—4 1/2 ft. long!



**Round Bow Rake**  
**1.15**  
Bow and curved teeth one-piece! 14 teeth. 5-ft. selected northern ash handle!

## WARDS PAINTS

TESTED QUALITY!—LASTS LONGER—COSTS LESS!



**Zinc-ite Quality HOUSE PAINT**  
**2.60** Gal.  
We've reduced the price of this famous paint to make it an even greater value! In a 4-year test with 43 leading nationally advertised house paints only 2 equalled Zinc-ite in any way! And they were nowhere near Wards low price! Come in now! Ask us about this quality value!



**House Paint**  
**1.99** Gal.  
Wards Coverall . . . a good standard quality house or barn paint! Wards low price!



**Super House Paint**  
**3.00** Gal.  
New! Only 1 other paint in America as fine . . . but nowhere near Wards low price!

**Highest Quality Pure Gum Turpentine**  
**1.00**  
PER GALLON  
Bring Your Own Container

**100% Pure Raw Linseed Oil**  
**1.10**  
PER GALLON  
Bring Your Own Container



**Implement Paint**  
**68c** qt.  
Certified quality! High gloss finish of fine enamel . . . toughness of oil paint! Save!



**Color Varnish**  
**1.00** qt.  
Certified Stains . . . varnishes at 1 stroke! Contains Bakelite for toughness! Save!



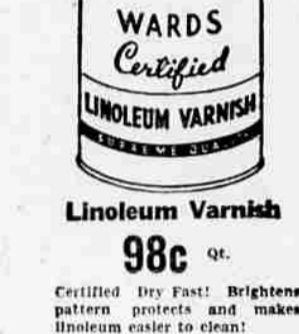
**Wards Floor Paint**  
**1.90** Gal.  
Coverall quality! Dries to good gloss in 6-8 hours! Unusually low priced! Save!



**Shingle Stain**  
**1.15** Gal.  
Beautifies and preserves shingles with good durable finish! Wards low price!



**Floor Enamel**  
**89c** qt.  
Tested 24 hours in strong soap unharmed! Ideal porch and floor enamel! Save!



**Linoleum Varnish**  
**98c** qt.  
Certified Dry Fast! Brightens patterned floors and makes linoleum easier to clean!



**Floor Varnish**  
**3.50** Gal.  
Wards Marproof! Quick dry! Brilliant finish! Unusually tough! Easy to apply! Save!



**Coverall Varnish**  
**1.98** Gal.  
Gives a clear, high gloss finish for floor and trim! Priced to save you money!



**Super Spar Varnish**  
**1.23** qt.  
Recent tests prove none better made! Dries in 4 hours to fine gloss! Low priced!



**5-lb. Package Finishes an Entire Room!**  
**35c**  
Mixes with hot or cold water . . . brushes on easily . . . dries in only an hour or two! And the soft velvety finish won't rub off! It's Wards Certified! Save!



117 SO. CENTRAL  
TELEPHONE 286

# MONTGOMERY WARD