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## CHICAGO, ILL.

### NEWS LETTER

#### A Half Century In Retrospect

Travel - See the world!!! That was the ambition of my early youth.

While I was still a school boy I became acquainted with a man who was selling olives to saloons (to be used for free lunches), hotels and restaurants. He gave this up to follow another line of business and I succeeded him, buying my olives from Charles Gulden. Thus I launched my business career, in preference to acquiring an academic schooling.

At that time I could not utter a single word without stuttering and whistling. This I found to be a great asset rather than a liability. I informed Mr. Gulden that I was anxious to travel and applied for a position as traveling salesman. Knowing how I stuttered and whistled in trying to talk, he laughed when I asked for the job. I told him I had saved several hundred dollars and that, if he would give me a territory, post me up, furnish me with a line of samples and the names of the buyers, I would be willing to go on the road and sell on a commission basis. This I finally persuaded him to do. He informed me that I would have to send postcards to the firms on which I was to call. I said I would order the cards myself. The cards had my picture on them, under which was printed "The best natured stutterer in the world". I also said I would call on them on a certain day and asked for five hours of their time for a five-minute talk.

The New England states were my first territory, and every buyer I called on had my card on his desk and was waiting for me. After a successful season in the east,

All quotations subject to any change of export or import duties. All quotations are subject to change without notice and our confirmation.  
All sales subject to being passed by the United States Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Gulden gave me the territory from New York to Chicago. Often I would call upon buyers that were cross or in bad humor. I would stutter and whistle and smile and they would smile with me. Then I would stutter and whistle again and laugh and they would soon laugh too. Then they would think they had to give me an order to square themselves, which, of course, was my purpose.

When I first started on the road, there were only two firms in the United States importing and selling olives to the wholesale grocers; Charles Gulden and Gordon & Dilworth. My brother represented the latter firm for the entire United States, so between us we managed to keep the olive business in the Jessurun family for a number of years.

I remember well when I first offered olives to the jobbers, fifty years ago this month - May, 1885. The majority of the orders were for twenty-five up to forty cases, assorted sizes, and a few three and five gallon kegs. Some of the larger houses would order as high as seventy-five cases, assorted. When I received an order from one of the largest houses for one hundred cases, one size bottle and one size olive, it was the largest order given in Chicago up to that time of its kind. The price was \$4.50 per case f.o.b. New York. Twenty years later this same size olive and bottle was sold by the wholesale grocer to the retailer at \$1.80 per dozen, Chicago.

I sold the first cask of olives ever purchased in Chicago. Later in calling upon Mr. Boster of Sprague, Warner and Company, I told him of the sale and he asked if the buyer was sober at the time. I replied that he had had two or three drinks but he knew what he was doing. Mr. Bolster was curious as to who would order a cask of olives, one hundred and eighty gallons, so I told him. The buyer was Chapin and Gore, who had a high class saloon on the present site of the Majestic Theatre. At my suggestion for the benefit of the advertising possibilities, the buyer placed the open cask on the floor, together with a placard stating "This is the first cask of olives ever imported to Chicago". The olives were used for free lunches. At that time almost all of the saloons used a few olives for their free lunches.

I remember the time when the steamship lines were very glad to get olives from

Seville to be used as ballast. The freight rate on a cask of olives from Seville to New York was seventy-five cents, whereas today it is five dollars.

Eighty-five per cent of the olives produced in Spain are shipped to the United States. There are very few Spanish olives sold in France, England and other foreign countries. Of course, today we all know that olives are handled in very large quantities and in assorted sizes, but I remember the time when all sizes were mixed in the cask and no buyer would order without seeing samples. Today they are sold by the count and it is not necessary to submit samples.

SPANISH PAPRIKA. I was the pioneer in introducing this article in Chicago in 1906. The first year the sales amounted to ten bags of one hundred and ten pounds each, divided between three customers. Today it is sold in carload lots.

SPANISH PIMIENTOS. I sold the first lot of twenty-five cases that was ever purchased in Chicago, to Sprague, Warner and Company, who supplied the jobbers and the retailers. This business increased enormously, especially after the meat packers and cheese packers started using them. Today there are houses that will buy from five to seven thousand cases.

My ambition to travel has been pretty well satisfied. I have made eight trips to Europe, remaining from two to six months each time; I have covered the entire West Indies four times, and have been from Maine to California and from Alaska to Old Mexico as well as visited the capitals of all the principal countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. I have also seen every Exposition held in the world since 1876, and although I am in my seventy-first year, I expect to visit the San Diego Exposition, and in 1938 the Expositions in both San Francisco and Paris.

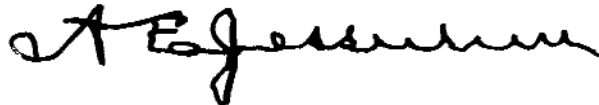
I have been accused of having a charmed life, and almost begin to believe it myself. I have had more accidents than any person I know of. I have been in railroad wrecks, automobile accidents, steamboat explosions, hotel fires, apartment and theatre fires, cyclones and earthquakes. The only accident I have escaped so far is an airplane accident. While I have not traveled a great deal in America in airplanes, I did considerable of it in Europe. I have been in eleven different hospitals in the

city of Chicago as a result of accidents; was told three times I could not live, and one time, as the result of an apartment building fire, that I could not live, but that if I did, by any miracle, I certainly would never walk again.

I have traveled in every available sort of conveyance, wood burning, steam, electric and Diesel trains; boats from canoe to ocean steamers; horse, mule, donkey, camel, billy goat, dog carts, cabooses and Irish jaunting cars.

When I look back over the last seventy years, what a wonderful era this has been; I very much doubt if there has been or ever will be a similar period with so much change crowded into it. Born during the Civil War and during the life time of Lincoln, I have seen an amazing range of great historical and economic changes and events, as well as the most tremendous development of scientific achievements. Even today we may be in the process of passing from one era to another. The house in which I was born is opposite what is now Madison Square Garden. It is the house to which my father brought my mother as a bride in the eighteen-fifties and it is still standing.

I am enjoying the best of health today and take this opportunity to thank all of my old customers and associates for their many kindnesses during these many years, and hope that they will live at least as long as I, and enjoy equally good health.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "A. E. Johnson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned centrally below the main body of text.