

LUTHER BURBANK HOME & GARDENS

A Brief Look at Luther Burbank's Life

1849: Born March 7, in Lancaster, Massachusetts
13th of 15 children to Samuel Walton Burbank & Olive Ross (Burpee). 3rd and final wife of Samuel Burbank.
California Gold Rush, Zachary Taylor was President.

1868: Turning point in his career. Luther read Darwin's "Variation in Animals and Plants under Domestications"

1868: December. Samuel Burbank died.

1869: Luther sold sewing machines door-to-door (Fitchburg, Mass>) He was not a good salesman.

1873: Developed the Burbank Potato from a seed from an Early Rose potato. It has come to be known as the Burbank Russet, or Idaho Baking Potato. 2 of 23 seeds from a seed ball were selected as useful, one was the best and produced the "new" potato. LB got \$150. and 10 tubers from James Gregory, who purchased the "new" potatoes.

1874: Alfred Burbank (younger brother) joined half-brothers George & David in Tomales & Santa Rosa, CA

1875: Luther left Massachusetts for Santa Rosa with \$150. from the potato sale, and \$510 from land and tools to establish himself in California as a professional plant breeder.
US Grant was President.

1875: In October Luther wrote home "this is the chosen spot of all this earth as far as Nature is concerned." He also warned his family "not to tell anyone.....for fear that all the scuffs will come out here, get drunk and curse the whole country."

1877: Olive (mother) and Emma (sister) moved to Santa Rosa and bought a house and 4 acres of land at the corner to Tupper and "E" Sts.

1881: Warren Dutton ordered 20,000 prune trees; Luther was able to produce 19,500 that year and finished the contract early the following year, gaining him the name "Wizard" which he disliked.

1884: Luther purchased "the old Dimmick place" at the corner of Tupper and Main St.(Santa Rosa Ave.) with 4 acres of land for \$2000.

1885: Late December LB purchased land at Gold Ridge Farm in Sebastopol. He eventually owned 18 acres at that site.

1889: LB designed and built the Greenhouse.

1893: Introduced the first “Paradox Walnut” in his catalog “New Creations in Fruits and Flowers”

1893: Burbank introduced the Burbank Plum. A local newspaper dubbed LB “The Wizard of Horticulture”.

1901: Luther introduced the Shasta Daisy which had taken 17 years and 34 generations to develop.

1905: Luther received a Carnegie Institution grant for \$10,000 per year for 10 years. He lost the grant after 5 years because his record keeping was not up to Carnegie standards.

1906: Luther introduced the Santa Rosa Plum. The earthquake of 1906 damaged the old house some, but there was no damage to the glass Greenhouse. Santa Rosa was heavily devastated by the Quake. He had the pink stucco house on Tupper St. built and he and Olive moved into it that year.

1914: Planted the Paradox Walnut east of the Carriage House.

1915: The Panama-Pacific International Exposition was held in San Francisco to honor the opening of the Panama Canal. On Oct. 22 of that year Thomas Edison, Henry Ford and their party visited Luther Burbank for an afternoon. They have become his most celebrated guests.

1916: On Dec. 21st Luther Burbank (67) married Elizabeth Jane Waters (almost 29) at the Unitarian Church in San Francisco.

1926: On Sunday April 11th Luther Burbank died in Santa Rosa. He was buried under his beloved Cedar Of Lebanon tree near the front of the Greenhouse.

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