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REPORT OF PROGRESS

EXPERIMENT STATION INVESTIGATES TREE  
BELIEVED TO BE THE OLDEST CHESTNUT IN CONNECTICUT

Many years ago, at a time when the American chestnut was still the king of the woods, a farmer set out a small orchard of nut trees on the bank of the Connecticut River flood plain north of Hartford. Now, some 60 years later, one lone Japanese chestnut survives. Dr. Donald F. Jones of the Agricultural Station in New Haven, who recently investigated the tree, believes it is by far the oldest living chestnut in the State. And the most interesting thing about the tree is that it shows no signs of blight, the disease that destroyed all the native chestnuts.

Dr. Jones' attention was called to the tree late last fall by a hunter who noticed a deposit of chestnut hulls in the river bank. On investigation, the man discovered the tree and was impressed by its size. This fall the tree was visited in search of nuts. There, rising above the brush and brambles on the edge of what is now a tobacco field, stood the chestnut, 30 feet high and 18 inches in diameter. The men were able to rescue only six nuts, their visit being a little late for the main harvest. The nuts were among the largest Dr. Jones has seen. They have been planted at the Experiment Station farm in Mount Carmel.

Inquiry in the neighborhood of the chestnut revealed that two or three people knew about the tree and had gathered the nuts that are produced profusely every other year. One of the neighbors recalled that 60 years or more ago, when he was about 12 years old, a man named John P. Jones had set out the nut trees.