



### The Orchardist

It began two years before he did

His father saw to that in 1926

Rows of Macintoshes , Jonathans and Winesaps

Precisely pattern planted behind the barn.

Rolling fields once harboring corn blade , tassel and ear

In a few seasons filled with blossom and bird song,

High pitched hum of the honeybees nectar sipping,

With morel morsels mushrooming in May.

The orchard provided labor then a living for his father and him

And for the generations that followed, the same.

The harvest of health and crisp bite and cider sip

Welcomed those who joy journeyed the orchard's store.

Yellow Transparents begin the harvest in June  
Tartly welcome for cobbler and pie and sauce  
Or those who a relish a juicy sweet sourish crunch.  
By July the Lodi and Early Gold join in neatly tied bags.

Keeping store through the summer, fall until mid winter  
He can be found behind counter by the welcoming door.  
And when required by the chilling winds of winter  
Nestled warmly there by the welcome kerosene stove.

Chores of the orchard did not suffocate his living  
Honor for doing best learned in his youth Scouting  
Led to duty again and again on the Morgan County council  
Grateful citizens placed him there thirty two years serving.

Greeted today with the friend's, "how ya doing?"  
He'll shyly reply, "Past my prime, just past my prime."  
But for those acquainted, he is plainly mistaken.  
His prime never withers -- ever rooted and ripened.

Nine decades plus finds him reliantly store tending  
The "Closed Sunday" sign the store window's gracing.  
The chalkboard outside announcing Tomatoes and slush.  
Inside apples to sample-- with his biting wisdom crisp and crunchy.

Don Adams

Bethel Pond, April, 2019