

# Happy Holiday of Letters and the Written Word

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*On one of the finest holidays – 24 May, the Day of the Holy Brothers Cyril and Methodius, of the letters, the word and the language, we shall go back to those distant times when Bulgarian agricultural science was emerging on paper.*

As recorded in the Fund of the Central Agricultural Library, the first periodical newspaper on agricultural topics is „Stupan” – an agricultural and economic newspaper. It began to be published in the distant year 1874 in Vidin by Dimo Khranov who, after interrupting his teaching career in Razgrad, continued his education at the agricultural school in Križevci, Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia. Afterwards, together with Mihalaki Georgiev, he pursued higher education at the Agricultural Academy in the town of Tabor, Austro-Hungarian Bohemia. The first issue of the newspaper appeared with the subtitle „Agricultural and Economic Newspaper“ on 1 January 1874. Initially,

the agricultural newspaper was published in Bulgaria, and from June 1875 in Ruse and Bucharest (in the printing house of Lyuben Karavelov, in which Dimo Khranov was a partner) until 1876, when it ceased publication due to the revolutionary events that occurred in Bulgaria.

On 1 June 1874, in the 6th issue, in the article „Public schools in relation to agriculture“ the author gives valuable advice for the development of agricultural education, because „schools are one of the main means by which a nation can advance not only spiritually and intellectually, but also materially; therefore, we too, without them (the schools), cannot fully achieve the desired goal also in agricultural and economic respect“.

The content of the publication is filled with agricultural topics relevant to its time: agriculture, animal husbandry, sericulture, beekeeping, „association“, „domestic economy“ and, in general, „husbandry“. Until it ceased publication, the newspaper maintained this editorial policy and published articles related to the development of agriculture, economic news, as well as book reviews.

Among the active contributors were Stefan Bobchev, Mihalaki Georgiev, Krastyo Mirski, Todor Stanchev, Nikola Suknarov, Spas Tumparov and others. Thanks to its useful content, „Stupan“ was distributed by subscription not only in Vidin, but also in other settlements in the country.

In May 2006, the journalistic guild of Vidin, on the initiative of the newspaper „Nie“, erected a monument to the first newspapermen in the town in front of Stambol Kapia.

A large part of the teaching aids that supported the first teachers and students of agricultural sciences in our country were written and published by father and son Stribrny.

Vaclav Stribrny was a Czech-Bulgarian botanist, teacher and gardener, who is considered the founder of fruit growing, vegetable production, beekeeping and landscape architecture in Southern Bulgaria. He was the first to introduce the cultivation of strawberries and asparagus in Bulgaria. Born in the Czech lands and having acquired extensive agricultural experience in the historic parks and gardens of Count Kinsky, in 1883 he was invited as a teacher at the Agricultural School in Sadovo, where he worked for 37 years. He established a school variety garden and the park around the school.

He succeeded in creating large collections of herbariums with various plant species; unfortunately, part of them were destroyed during the bombing of Sofia in the Second World War, while the surviving ones are preserved in the Botanical Institute of Charles University in Prague, at the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, at the Department of Botany of the Faculty of Biology of Sofia University, and at the Agricultural University in Plovdiv.



*„Horticulture – Fruit Growing“ is the textbook used by Vaclav Stribny – teacher and gardener at the State Practical Agricultural School in the village of Sadovo near the town of Plovdiv. The year is 1888, and the edition is produced by the school zincography, beautifully illustrated.*

He wrote over 25 textbooks on fruit growing, horticulture, floriculture and practical manuals. He is the author of about 50 articles on various agricultural issues, published mainly in the journal „Sadovo“ and the newspaper „Oralo“.

His son, Venceslav Stribny, continued his work, but devoted himself to another region of the country – Pleven. In 1910 he was appointed as a teacher at the Agricultural School in „Obraztsov Chiflik“ near Ruse. Afterwards, he was

successively a teacher at the Pleven Viticulture and Enology School (1911) and a teacher in Sadovo (1914). In 1916 he returned once again to Pleven and remained working there for 36 years, until 1948. He headed the Hunting and Natural History Museum in the town after 1924 and was a member of the editorial committee of the journal „Lozarski pregled“ (Viticulture Review), published in Pleven during the period 1930 – 1937.

He is the author of textbooks and manuals on floriculture, horticulture and fruit growing.



One of his well-known monographs is „Guide to Fruit Growing“ (1921), as well as other works dedicated to the flora and fauna of Pleven and its surroundings.

He made a major contribution to the establishment of parks and greenhouses in the agricultural schools where he taught. He succeeded in systematising more than 150 species belonging to 40 botanical families.