



large) is of course their cha or teh, namely tea. Just imagine what we do first thing in the morning — we pay obeisance to the Arabs with a cup of coffee (they brought it to us in the 1600s) or to the Chinese with our steaming cuppa.

### Introduction of apple

Compared to this cornucopia, the British brought us little in terms of food. Fish and chips or Yorkshire pudding pale in comparison to what we got from the Arabs, Portuguese and Moghuls, but the British did sensitise us to at least one fruit, namely the apple. Local varieties of apple are recorded to have occurred in Kashmir (called amri, tarehli and maharaji), and Dalhara in 1100 AD talked about a "ber as big as a fist and very sweet, grown in North Kashmir", which is likely an apple. But it was the colourful Britisher Frederick "Pahari" Wilson who established a flourishing apple farm in Garhwal, where they grow red and juicy Wilson apples to this day.

In these days of American imports into India such as Pizza, Burgers, French fries and colas, it is well to remember the best import we have had from these, namely apples and express our gratitude to the American Mr. Stokes.

He settled in Kotgarh near Simla in the 1920s and started apple orchards there, and helped in the proper grading, packing and marketing of the fruit.

### India-America amity

The two varieties he introduced, called 'Delicious', have now become the major Indian apple varieties, making the Himachal apple growers happy and more prosperous than before. He married a local girl and settled down.

His descendants Smt. Vidya Stokes (politician) and Dr. Vijay Stokes (scientist) are well known. Though Australian apples are increasingly found in the Indian market, it is still the Delicious that rules the roost. Next time you bite into an Indian apple, you are celebrating Indo-American amity!

One wonders, going as far back as the scriptures, what Lord Rama ate. Perhaps it is easier to tell what Lord Rama did not eat.

No potato, no tomato, no cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, corn, tapioca, rajma, nor of course chillies in any form! But then, I could be wrong since the sarva vyapi or the omnipresent might very well have partaken of all these whenever He was in Europe and the Americas.

(Concluded)

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