

January 14, 1944

Your suggestion of using copper in connection with the fertilizer is very interesting. I shall try to experiment with it next summer.

A few days ago I had a very interesting letter from Ben Blackburn who has done some work with holly. He was with the Extension Department of Rutgers University before he was inducted into the Army. For more than a year he has been engaged in camouflage work in the vicinity of Boston which taken him down the Cape Cod canal. I am going to give him your name in the hope he may be able to call on you, because he would be extremely interested in your work with holly.

Wilfred Wheeler

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February 21, 1944

I hope the war will be over soon, for at the rate the Army is destroying the woodlands in this area, there will not be much left. The Army cut hollies to put over trucks in war games, when there are many pines they could have used. I never thought it could be possible to destroy so much so quickly. I almost have to stand guard to keep them out of my place.

My rooted cuttings are better than last year. I have some varieties which rooted about 90%, and that is very good for me. I now realize that it will be necessary to build the proper kind of propagating house; I have an idea it need not be too expensive, for it could be mostly underground so that the heat could be conserved and applied at the proper place.

The young plants I put in last year are looking well, and I am planning on setting out about 300 permanent plants in the woods this spring.

Wilfred Wheeler

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February 29, 1944

Although we are not far from Fort Dix, we are fortunately so located that the Army has not over-run the place seriously. I can well imagine how much you are distressed by the destruction.

I am glad to learn that your holly cuttings rooted so well. Ours, too, have done nicely. Those planted earliest are already potted and their place filled with blueberry cuttings. The cuttings of the two males you sent me were the latest to be put in and have not yet been dug, but they are looking very well.

Elizabeth C. White

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June 19, 1944

I have very sadly neglected my correspondence, but it has been such a sad and rather gloomy spring on the farm for the past two months since we have hardly had rain enough to lay the dust. However, it looks as though it will rain; I am sure that we shall at least have a shower which will give me courage to continue. All our early seedlings never came up, and so we hope to get in a fall crop now that rain seems assured. At best, farming and anything to do with growing plants outdoors are a gamble. We farmers are the greatest gamblers in the world.

I am wondering how your hollies are doing this spring. I hope you did not have the winter-burn we did. All the very small plants look as though fire had gone over them. Most of them recovered; but then when the new growth was well along, we had a hard freeze which destroyed the new growth. Most of the plants have made a come-back, but there will not be much new growth this season, and so I am wondering about cuttings for this late summer and fall.

I noticed a great difference in the burning; some varieties did not seem to suffer, while others were almost killed. In the whole, most are coming back but, of course, this means a year's loss in growth.