

Wilson #2, but not of such good color. If you were to write Dr. Zimmerman, I believe he would send you cuttings of this tree.

I was much impressed with the annual growth on their young trees. I saw four-year-old trees from cuttings in 1936; they are now four feet, six inches high, with apparently no severe forcing to make them soft. Their winters are much more severe than ours.

They use "Rootone" on all cuttings; you know that Boyce Thompson Institute invented the process.

We had such a splendid time with you, enjoyed every minute of our visit. I was impressed with the Griscom tree, and shall write you more about this and about the food formula.

Wilfred Wheeler

November 6, 1940

At the fall exhibition in Boston this week, I had a display of hollies. It attracted much attention. I had collected many native types and had asked friends in the South to send me types so that they could be compared with the local ones. This was the first time that such an exhibit had been made in the Boston show. I hope that it will stimulate the planting of holly and call attention to its possibilities.

Today, when I was scouting in the woods for holly, I came across some very interesting trees. The Lawrence (named for the owner of the land) #1 is a very old tree but has been sadly cut so that only a part of it is alive. However, it is full of fruit as this branch indicates. No. 2 is a very beautiful tree, standing alone in full sun, which probably accounts for the light foliage; but the fruit seems good and its size fair. Other trees had shaded #1 quite a lot, and this may account for its darker color. I believe that all these trees would bear larger fruit if fed properly.

Now they are all fighting for life in competition with other trees. I was amazed to find such a place; there are really hundreds of trees in the area.

I am making some cuttings and using a corner of the greenhouse for them. I hope I can get some to root.

Batchelor has sent a score on holly. I'll send it to you after I have looked at it.

Wilfred Wheeler

November 11, 1940

I am very pleased to learn of your exhibit of various types of native holly and the recognition it received.

I shall await with interest the material from the trees you have just collected.

Mr. Myers of the Philadelphia Branch of the Bartlett Tree Expert Co. has seen the Griscom holly and Mr. Griscom; and the three of us have arranged for Mr. Myers to put the tree in the best possible condition for another century of life. I know you will be as pleased as I am that this noble tree is in the hands of such expert people.

Mr. Batchelor was here last week with his score card. We spent more than half a day in visiting all the available hollies with which I have worked during the past ten years. He evaluated them by the new score. This score is a valuable beginning, but I am not much interested in using it in my own work. Nevertheless, I do appreciate having such a score card built up.

Elizabeth C. White

November 30, 1940

Since writing to you, I have come upon the best holly tree I have ever seen, that is, in the wild state. This tree compares very favorably with the Wilson #2, in color and size of the fruit and in the leaf. The tree, about 30 feet high, has much the same

shape as that of the Griscom tree, tapering gradually and symmetrically. The fruit is held in bunches on the outer branches, which gives the appearance of the whole tree being red. Yet the foliage is very good. In its location, full sun, the leaves on the south side are somewhat yellow; but on the north side and on the lower branches, the leaves are dark green. I imagine that this tree has never had anything to encourage growth and is therefore all the more remarkable. I have permission to take all the cuttings I want from the tree, and wonder if you can handle 1,000 or more. Perhaps you would not want to take as many as this from a tree with which you are not familiar, but I should gladly pay for the rooting and other expenses. Please let me know as soon as possible.

I am glad to learn about the Griscom tree and hope it will turn out well.

What would you advise about supplying some hollies, 6 to 8 feet, to a client in Boston? Would you risk southern trees? There are none in the North which are large enough, that is, nursery-grown. Do you know the Waynesboro Nursery in Virginia, and what would you think of trees from that section? Dilatush has some trees, but his price is too high.

Wilfred Wheeler

December 4, 1940

The new holly tree of which you write in your letter of November 30th sounds extremely interesting, and we shall be very glad indeed to take care of all the cuttings you can send.

It was very cold here this morning, down to 5°, and each such cold spell lessens the probability of a good stand of plants from cuttings. Nevertheless, it is well worth trying, and the pruning that will be given the tree by taking the cuttings now will improve the quality of cuttings for another year.

Such a large quantity of cuttings should be sent by express. The container should be lined with waxed paper. The branches, from which the cuttings are to be made, should be fairly small and packed in layers, accompanied by moistened material, preferably live sphagnum moss.

I would not dare make any suggestions about supplying hollies to your client near Boston. I know nothing of the origin of the Waynesboro trees, but I think there is more risk in moving southern trees to a northern section.

Elizabeth C. White

December 18, 1940

I have been hoping for a spell of mild weather so that I could get the cutting material from the new tree, but the weather has been unusually cold for this season, so I decided it would be better to let the cuttings go for this year. I gave the tree a good pruning the other day, cutting in the long branches, and thought I might get some wood this way. I found, however, that there had been little growth the past season; the pruning may start new growth. I am more than ever impressed with the tree and all who have seen its fruit comment on its large size and color. I shall feed the tree this spring, which may result in better color of the foliage. The few cuttings I have in the greenhouse may give some indication of the tree's future.

I have thought a great deal about your plan to keep small plants in pots for a couple of years after rooting. From my own experience with plants, particularly hardwooded, I find there is danger in this method in that roots are likely to twist and later form girdling roots which strangle the plant. Of course, if the roots are straightened out carefully when the plant is set in the ground, this trouble will be avoided. But there is considerable work in doing this.

Batchelor is taking a trip to Maryland and Virginia to see the hollies after Christmas.

Wilfred Wheeler

December 28, 1940

I am very much interested in your report of the condition of the new holly tree. It is just what I would expect of so large a tree, and it is decidedly late in the season for the best results with cuttings. You have done a very wise thing to prune it now and plan for feeding next spring.

I am interested also in your opinion that holly plants kept in pots for a couple of years are likely to be in danger of being girdled by their own roots, and should like to hear more about your experience in this connection. I should expect girdling to occur if the roots of two plants of different species were wound together in their youth; but if the roots of one plant became twisted so that, as they grew, they pressed against each other strongly, I would expect a natural graft to take place so that there would be no girdling or strangulation.

My own close observations on developments of this nature have been contained to blueberry bushes. For many years I had seedling plants sent to me from Washington which had been in pots with crocks for drainage. I have dug such plants, after they had been in place seven to ten years and had developed into large bushes, and in a number of instances I have found the drainage crocks entirely embedded in the wood base. Sometimes I could see by a division of dark bark where two roots had been twisted together and sometimes the dividing line between the original roots was obliterated.

Holly wood is not nearly so hard as blueberry wood, and I should have expected that the same sort of development would occur.

Elizabeth C. White

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April 9, 1941

We are hoping for spring weather to get the farm going, but so far it has been very cold.

I am planting hollies in various places; there seems to be quite a demand for them.

How did your cuttings come out? Did they root well? I put in about 1,000 and many are coming along all right, so I hope to have some from good trees which I have selected.

I was in Washington with Hatcheler for a couple of days, and we saw some nice hollies in Maryland and Virginia. I found a very fine one at Mt. Vernon; the big holly there, which I told you about, was better than ever, although the foliage was not too good.

Hope you got some of the Griscom holly started.

I am moving quite a lot of hollies from the woods; so far, they look all right.

Wilfred Wheeler

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April 17, 1941

Our holly house looks very fine indeed. Last year we potted up 10,000 rooted cuttings, and it looks to me as if we were going to have better luck this year. Our small stock of the Griscom holly has come through the winter very nicely.

Would the Mt. Vernon trees of which you wrote be those immediately about the house? About a year ago I looked over those larger hollies and, while the trees were fine specimens, they appeared to me to be so inferior in foliage that I was not tempted to make an effort to get cuttings.

Of course, magnificent hollies can be found in Virginia and Maryland, but I feel that these are not so reliably hardy in New York and farther north as those which have

been developed through centuries in the harsher climates of New Jersey and more particularly of Cape Cod. I get a greater thrill out of the very fine quality trees you have been able to locate than out of the trees which can be found farther south.

Elizabeth C. White

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July 3, 1941

We heard of your locality being menaced by forest fires this past spring. We had the same trouble ourselves, mainly because of the large number of soldiers in the woods.

I had fair success in rooting hollies this year and planted in the woods about 300 which I had rooted from several selected trees.

I have been watching several trees, some of which will fruit heavily, so I shall be able to get a better line on them this fall. I have also found that some of the trees root much better than others.

We have had a very bad season, but things look better now that we have had some rain. The cranberry bogs are showing heavy bloom and, on the whole, look very well.

Wilfred Wheeler

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July 26, 1941

We learned early that there is a great difference in the ease of rooting cuttings from different trees. There is also a great difference in the habit of root growth of the plants from cuttings of different trees. Some, without any root pruning, make a compact ball and are easy to move successfully, while others make long, stringy roots and are difficult to move successfully. This difference is very important when establishing a nursery business in holly.