

April 2, 1942

I do not have the American Nurseryman and should be interested to see the holly article. I do have Horticulture, but have not yet read the last two issues. I was away all week during the flower show and have not yet caught up on my magazine reading.

We had no part in the New Jersey exhibit. There was a section of Pine Barrens which attracted favorable attention; it was put on by the New Jersey Department of Conservation and Development.

The cuttings taken last fall have come on very nicely, and we have between 3,000 and 4,000 of them potted up. They are now coming into bloom, but I find there are not so many flower buds as we expected. There has been heavy winter damage among plants of the size I brought you last fall. We did not give sufficient protection to the roots, and the loss occurred during the sub-zero temperatures early in January.

The cuttings which you sent me came late, and while they look well, they have not sufficiently rooted to pot up.

Elizabeth C. White

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April 4, 1942

A friend who has a nice place in Wareham on the water, wants to set at least 100 hollies and so I sent you a wire; "Have inquiry on 100 hollies, 15" to 18". Wire price on both balled and bare roots."

I like your circular very much. It is interesting to note that the analysis of the holly food that Mr. Parker uses is about the same as that of the Bartlett Tree Food, but the ingredients are quite different. I think the Bartlett material is better for most trees. I am afraid of sulphate of ammonia for trees, unless it is used very carefully and at the right season.

I am enclosing the directions for the New York order to be sent to Elizabeth Van Brunt, Kitchewan, Westchester Co., N.Y.; a pair would be one of each sex. I am filling a few orders near home with my small plants and some collected ones. A man near Boston rooted about 500 cuttings for me, and they will be planted out soon.

I am surprised to learn that your plants suffered from winter damage. We had a severe drop in January to 16° below zero, but it does not seem to have affected anything seriously, with the exception of forsythia buds and possibly some peach buds. The hollies never looked better in spring, although in the woods there is a lot of yellow foliage on wild trees. The plants fed with Bartlett Tree Food are as green as they were last fall. The birds ate the berries this winter earlier than usual, mostly robins - just flocks and flocks of them came in February.

As for winter damage, I feel that there should be mulch protection for young plants. In nature the seedlings come up through a deep mulch of leaves; in fact, while working about a plant in the woods recently, I found seedlings which were still under the mulch and had not come through, but will do so this spring.

We shall have to get together about naming hollies, for it seems to me we are in danger of getting too many named varieties.

Wilfred Wheeler

April 10, 1942

The winter damage was only to the holly plants in the Clover-set pots. These were set on the ground close together and nothing between them, though there was a mulch of peat moss on top of the pots. In consequence, many of the young plants which had followed the contour of the pot had nothing between them but the roofing material of which the pot is made. When I turn out the damaged plants, I find that the young roots near the pot surface are dead; and I feel confident that it was the low temperatures early in January which did the damage. I think that the larger roots and the

base of the stem of many of these plants are still in such condition that they may sprout fresh, but they have been badly set back.

The holly in the nursery came through very nicely, as did the young plants in 3-inch clay pots which were plunged in the soil and covered with pine branches.

I read with interest the holly article in the March issue of Horticulture. I have seen holly of the type pictured on the left. I think it was in Mr. Dilatush's nursery. With holly of this type, I am under the impression that it would be exceedingly difficult to get wood of the current year's growth for cuttings. I suspect it will be necessary to get a few started in the nursery - plants two feet or more high and to prevent their fruiting. It would be a slow job to remove the flowers by hand; perhaps there may be some chemical means of destroying them, although I fear that anything which might accomplish this might injure the growing tips also. Without the burden of fruit, the plants would probably make growth which could be used successfully as cutting material.

As to the danger of getting too many named varieties of holly, I agree with you. In our catalogue we mention only two varieties - "Criscom", which is such an outstanding tree, and "Clark", with which we have had a great deal of experience. While we have named many other varieties for our convenience, we do not quote on them by name, selling merely the male or female hollies. There will be a process of elimination, and varieties which root with difficulty or do not make shapely nursery plants without too much attention will be ruled out.

Your suggestion of a holly organization appeals to me very much. We need to get together on this as well as on naming hollies.

Elizabeth C. White

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April 19, 1942

You will be interested to learn that the "Croonenburg" holly, which I got three years ago from Tingle, has apparently died this past winter. I cannot understand why, for we had only one very bad drop in temperature which did not last long. I can understand how the roots of the plants in the pots might have been killed, since they did not have the protection of the ground and certainly not the necessary amount of moisture. I cannot recall the exact amount of moisture which frost takes out of a plant, but is far more than that taken by a hot sun in the same amount of time. This accounts for winter-killing, since there is no means of replacing the lost moisture. I hope that some will start from the bottom again. I have found that many hollies set in the fall will kill back and start again from the bottom.

You mentioned the difficulty of getting cutting wood from the bunching type of holly; but I believe that by cutting the tree back severely, I shall be able to get plenty of cuttings this season. Those who saw the tree or the sprays of fruit were very much interested in it, and I am sure that it will become a fine asset.

Wilfred Wheeler

April 22, 1942

I had no sooner finished reading your letter when the telephone rang and the order for the 25 holly plants came in. These will be shipped immediately.

I cannot recall the background of the "Croonenburg" holly. If it was considered very promising, it is, of course, disappointing to have it pass out; but this does happen so often with plants with which I am experimenting that I have gotten rather hardened to it.

The copy of the American Nurseryman came, and I like the article. I had planned to do more writing for the magazines, but I am always very slow in getting anything of this kind done.

The cutting back of the bunching-type holly will afford the best means of securing cutting wood, though there is not likely to be a great deal the first year.

The first ten days have been quite cool here, not enough to damage the blueberries and the outdoor holly has not started sufficiently to be injured by a hard frost. I am always glad to have spring a little late, for there is less probability of the new growth being hurt.

Elizabeth C. White

August 4, 1942

I planted the hollies that you sent to me and find that most of them are doing well, but the following will give you a correct picture of them:

"Osa" lost no foliage and is looking splendidly. "Maning" is almost the same; in fact, this one has some fruit. "Clark" lost most of its foliage, but has leafed out. "Griscom" does not look so well; but some of the plants are starting from the bottom. "Farage" is splendid; it lost no foliage and has grown six inches. Two plants of "Joyce" look badly, but the rest are fine. "Laura" lost the foliage, but three of the plants are coming along well now.

I feel sure there is great difference in the recovery power of certain strains, and this may be in ratio to the rooting power. I do think, however, that more attention should be given to the transplanting value of a variety, since this would be of much importance in shipping.

There is quite a joke about the "males" you sent to me. Three which I kept have a nice crop of fruit; these were handled two or three times before being set permanently, yet they never lost a leaf and bloomed and set fruit. I used a couple of them in some settings I made and will have to change them in the fall.