

but little is really known about its origin. Batchelor gave me two plants, one of which I sent to you. Mine made remarkable growth, but was winter-killed two years ago. It is a beautiful plant, and, as you say, has remarkable foliage. I hope you can grow it, for it is a good holly for the South.

Instead of the drought you have had in your section, we had several storms in one week in August that totaled over five inches of rain, and enough rain since then to keep things green. We had our drought in June. There are apparently a number of "holly fans" and when a person really gets the "bug", he writes letters to me every week. I have had considerable correspondence with Mrs. Thacher of Orange, N.J., who knows much about holly. I'm sure with all this interest, holly will now come into its own.

Wilfred Wheeler

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December 3, 1943

The little holly plants, which came in fine condition, are now planted in the collection in my holly woods. I thought it was better to plant them this fall than to wait until spring. I have had good luck with fall planting, provided plenty of mulch is used.

I now have quite a collection - some 300 plants all told - in this place, and most of them are either named or numbered varieties. The location seems to suit them, for many have made from one- to two- foot growth this season.

The holly crop is very light; in fact, the trees on the low lands have no berries. The trees on the higher places are loaded with berries but, unfortunately, there are only a few trees on the higher places.

I have been in the woods today and located a few more places where trees are fruiting. One particular spot has some large trees with very fine foliage, but rather dense shade has the berry crop reduced. Now I wish I had a holly orchard to cut! I've had more orders for cut branches this season than ever before and cannot fill them.

I see a bright future for some man who will put his all into a holly orchard.

The trees at St. Mary's are very fine as are these at the Quinn place. One of the trees at the latter place is so densely covered with berries that the foliage is smothered. The fruit does not have an attractive color; otherwise, the tree is a wonder.

The cuttings I put in this fall are rooting better than any I tried in the past; most were in sand before September 7th, and many show roots. Some varieties, of course, are better than others. On the whole, the prospects are good.

Thank you for the hollies. The Army damaged some of the last lot, but I patched them up and they are recovering. I wish you could see what the Army did to one of the best sections of holly. It was terrible.

Wilfred Wheeler

December 8, 1943

I was interested to learn of the considerable demand for cut holly which you have been unable to fill. This year, for the first time, we have a heavy setting of berries on many of our little holly trees. We have sold many trees, but have many others which will be better for rather drastic pruning, so we shall have quite a quantity of cut holly which could be sold.

I am sending you samples of the prunings. I am rather troubled about the quality of the foliage; much of it is of poor color, largely due to the severe drought which we suffered in late summer and fall, but it may also be due to an insufficient supply of nitrogen to balance the heavy crop of berries. You will remember that our field is so uneven in quality, and wherever the rows cross slight ridges deficient in humus, the foliage is of poorer color.

I have sent similar samples to F. S. Pennock Company, wholesale florists in Philadelphia, but have not yet had time to hear from them. It is rather late to