

The male tree that I found a few days ago seems to be the most remarkable male tree I have seen. I am sorry I did not know about it when you were here.

As for the orange-berried tree, it is very beautiful, but I am not sure that it will compare with the real red ones. For a novelty, it might be welcome.

The holly exhibit in Boston was awarded a medal by the New England Wild Flower Society as an educational exhibit in growing one of our most important native trees. I am receiving a good many letters asking about holly trees.

Wilfred Wheeler

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November 21, 1941

The cuttings were in fine order, moist and fresh as if they had just been packed. The foliage of "Edward Thomas" is certainly remarkable for its beauty. How large is the tree?

Are you expecting to send cuttings of the other two trees we located in the woods? They were near the Girl Scouts' camp, were they not?

The first cuttings, which we put in the last of August and the following two weeks, now have many good roots. I am hoping to pot up 1,000 to 2,000 of these next January and to get small plants with berries on them for Christmas '42.

We have always had considerable bloom on the cuttings in the greenhouse. There has never been any care in pollinating these cuttings, nor have we used the new fruit-setting chemicals. Nevertheless, we have gotten a small percentage of the little plants with berries on them, though the greater number of varieties dropped their berries when such plants were potted after the first new growth had hardened about the end of May or early June. The work has been done this late because of the difficulty of fitting it in with the rush spring season. This year I am planning to pot as many as I can in January before any top growth is made. If my scheme works out and I

find there is a demand for such plants, I shall be warranted in asking for more greenhouse space to care for them.

Elizabeth C. White

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November 19, 1941

The cuttings were all named; there were about 200 from the "St. Ann" tree and about 100 from "St. Mary". I think we had better omit the final s.

As for the Wheeler #3 and #2, these are trees which I have in the woods and are good, not outstanding but better than the average. The Allen tree is the one you will recall as being in the open. This tree has taken all kinds of weather; other than that I do not consider it of particular value. You might keep some of it for stock.

You wrote that the Peekskill Nursery in Peekskill, N.Y., is advertising grafted hollies from Massachusetts trees, but you certainly have the largest stock from good sources. As it looks now, I shall need about 200 plants. It may be best for me to get them with the truck; I shall let you know about this later. I am looking forward to the named plants which you are going to give to me, and I am preparing places for them this fall.

In the package of cuttings is an orange-fruited variety that I named "Laura Thomas" after the wife of the man who owns the tree. We shall have to distinguish it from your "Laura" in some way.

By the way, I have made arrangements to move the "Dorothy" tree to my place and also several other good-looking trees which were near it.

I am indeed glad you think I have encouraged you in your holly work. It is such a pleasure to work with you, for I feel like an amateur compared with what you know. I have learned so much from you about what to look for in hollies. I find myself looking for the things you have spoken of and being very hard-boiled over a tree which does not have these qualities.

I have permission to scout a section near Rochester, Mass., a good deal north of us. I have heard that there are some fine hollies there. It seems to me there will always be a call for good hollies, even though they may not be outstanding. These can be propagated and sold as better than average. Rochester is in the coldest section of Massachusetts that grows hollies abundantly; it is about forty miles back from the sea.

I have heard of a place in Rhode Island which has some fine hollies. However, I find that people know so little about that subject that almost anything looks good to them.

Wilfred Wheeler

November 25, 1941

Almost thirty-five years ago, when on the Garden Committee of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, I visited a garden in Marion in which there were some holly trees. Looking over some old pictures the other night, I came across a picture of one of these trees. I went to Marion today to see it.

The place is still in the same family, but what a change. The hurricane wiped almost everything off the point, including the large house and several others, but the holly tree and several others which I had forgotten were still standing. In spite of the fact that twenty feet of salt water had covered them, all are in splendid condition and especially the one that I had remembered. The tree reminds me somewhat of the "Griscom" holly in that it is much the same shape, although not as large, being somewhat better than 35 feet. It also reminds me somewhat of a large edition of "St. Mary" in that the leaves are very close and dark. The fruit is borne more like that of "St. Ann". The tree spreads about 25 feet at the base, but has a straight trunk. It is not heavily fruited this season, but one side is quite good and suggests what it might be if fully covered. I shall send you some cuttings and hope to get a

picture to give you a better idea of the tree, though I have never found a holly tree which takes a good picture.

The trees in Rochester were not good; most of them had little fruit.

Wilfred Wheeler

November 26, 1941

Will you be so good as to write your procedure in planting holly? I remember that you told me, among other things, you tramped in a bag of fresh oak leaves for each tree. We are planning to give more space to holly in our new circular, and I should like to include your directions for planting.

You suggest that in getting berries on the holly cuttings it would be advisable to have some large male plants in the greenhouse. We have tried this; but in the absence of bees, the pollen does not spread effectively. Experience indicates the probability of certain strains of holly setting berries quite early without pollen, and the Boyce Thompson Institute has discovered that certain of the root hormones will cause the setting of berries, though the seeds of such fruit will not sprout.

I am making a very serious effort to get from 1,000 to 2,000 one-year old plants with berries for Christmas '42 and am planning to use the hormone on them.

Elizabeth C. White

November 28, 1941

That "Edward Thomas" tree is one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. It is about 10 to 12 feet high and very symmetrical. I wish you could have seen the trees where the orange-fruited one came from; they have been planted about ten years and have made wonderful growth. All are collected trees, and on the whole very good. There are some 15 to 20 of them. Most people in starting with hollies, plant them

too close, and these trees are no exception. Ed is moving some of them this fall. Fortunately, he knows how to do it.

I am glad to learn that the cuttings are rooting so soon. I think you could get bloom on the young plants, but that it would be advisable to have some larger males in the greenhouse.

Yes, I am getting some more of the cuttings from the Mashpee area very soon. I may be able to get some from Rochester.

Wilfred Wheeler

November 30, 1941

This is the method I use in planting hollies as permanent trees. I make a hole at least three feet in diameter and as deep, although this depends somewhat upon the soil. If the soil is good, I only turn it over to the depth of three feet. The hole is filled with oak leaves, dry or partially decomposed and trodden in hard; then the best of the soil which came from the hole is put on top of the oak leaves and this, too, is trodden down. This should bring the hole to about the place where the tree can be set. If the tree is small, you can fill the hole completely and use a mixture of the best soil with oak leafmold, rotted manure, and old sods preferably from the woods. I also use ground tobacco stems and some cottonseed meal - in a hole of this size, about one pound of each thoroughly mixed with the top soil.

I believe that even in setting small trees which are to be permanent, this method should be used. I am preparing to set about 500 in the spring and shall follow the method, using furrows instead of holes.

When I was in the woods yesterday, I came across several very good-looking trees, and I am sending you a sample of the fruit from one of them. I have come to the conclusion that the type of tree represented by "St. Ann" of the Wilson place is the best of our types, and I am finding it repeated in many places in the woods.

These trees are in the section where I took you through the bars and down the cow pasture; there are over 100 acres of holly, and it is well-fruited this season. You will recall the tall tree we looked at; it is very fine now.

Most of the trees have very little new wood; but as I have a collecting permit for this area, I am going to move several to my place and cut others back so that there will be new wood another year. I am convinced that this is the best area on the Cape, for it is one of the oldest and pretty much untouched.

Under cultivation this type of tree has much better foliage and more glossy fruit; this is the reason for the color on the "St. Ann" tree. I am sure that I have at least six as good as "St. Ann" in these woods. You will see by the size of the berries that they are as large under wild conditions as "St. Ann" under cultivation. I found a small tree in a garden in the same locality, and of this type it has the largest fruit I have ever seen on an I. opaca.

Wilfred Wheeler

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December 14, 1941

I am mailing to you today a box of about 200 cuttings from a tree which I am naming "Helen Makepeace". This tree is on the property of William Makepeace, and I have a relative Helen Makepeace which will give the personal touch to the name. The tree is one of the finest I have found, more in its general make-up than in any one particular. The fruit is so bright that it really shines.

We have had a miserable gunning season when it was unsafe to go into the woods. I hope that I can now do the things I have had to delay on this account.

The Mashpee trees are not so good as the above.

Wilfred Wheeler

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