

November 13, 1942

It was about a week ago that I received a package from you containing four very fine little holly plants, two marked "Emily" and one each of Aalto #1 and Aalto #2. These plants have been carefully potted. I shall keep them in the greenhouse this winter with other experimental plants of which I have so few that winter-killing would be a tragedy.

All our hollies have made very nice growth this summer, and since the berries have colored, I find that I have more with good crops of berries than I had thought. I am now trying to secure Christmas sales, but have not gotten very far.

The holly cuttings which were put in before September 15th are well rooted. We may begin potting them before Christmas, if rainy days make it possible for us to get the labor.

Elizabeth C. White

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November 17, 1942

I am glad to learn that the little hollies I sent reached you safely. The variety that I have named "Emily" is from a little tree on the Aalto farm. It has the largest bunch of berries I have ever seen; last year the tree was so covered with fruit that one could hardly see anything but the fruit. I bought the tree from the owner and am preparing to move it to the farm. I cut it back severely and so this year it bore little fruit.

The Aalto #1 tree is something like "St. Mary" tree, but of a more rugged character. The leaf of medium size and good texture is rather close to the tree and very thick on it. The fruit is brilliant in color, medium to large in size. Grown in full sun, the tree has had to stand all the cold winds which blow down the Cape; it shows this in its character.

Aalto #2 is more on the type of "St. Ann". Even in the wild, the fruit is as large as that of "St. Ann", so I am wondering if it will hold under cultivation. These Aalto trees are exceptional. I am surprised to learn that the cuttings rooted so soon, and this should give the plants a fine start for next season. I suppose you pot in earthen pots first.

The 2,000 cuttings, most of which were put in before October 10th, look fine so far; we had no cold weather before that date. I often wonder how the cuttings stand the hot weather of early September.

As for young plants for Christmas sale - I have been talking to some of the Boston florists about hollies. They seem to think that if they had small, well-fruited plants there would be a good sale for them. Could I help you with sale of these? Could they be shipped so far in good condition? How would they be potted? What would you have to get for them? I had many inquiries at the flower show last year and again this year, but not having any plants, I could not follow through.

I had a very nice exhibit at the November show which attracted a lot of attention. If it were not for the war, we would not be able to take care of all the holly orders.

Wilfred Wheeler

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December 13, 1942

We are in the midst of the coldest and snowiest Christmas we have ever had on the Cape, not at all like the usual December weather. I was planning to harvest quite a crop of holly branches from some trees which I bought over a year ago and which have a wonderful crop of berries, but we cannot get near them. I find that with careful cutting the trees can be made shapely. Most of these trees had been badly cut around the bottom and the tops were overloaded with branches so that it is a real improvement to cut them back.

I have been conducting a test with one of the experimental stations and find that apparently it does not make so much difference in the season of making the cuttings as