

have something outstanding in their special type of beauty, I am inclined to drop their propagation.

The tree which you say would be a wonder as a source for cut sprays seems to me to be worthy of special attention. Do you not think that the greatest ultimate use of our native holly will be in orchards for the production of cut holly for Christmas?

If you have the opportunity of visiting this holly again before spring, may I suggest that you notice especially whether the growth of the past season is sufficiently long and vigorous to provide good cutting material. On most large trees, it is not. I tried for several years to get cuttings from the "Griscom" tree started, but had no success until after the branches had been severely broken.

After the "Griscom" tree had been broken, there were at least two truck loads of branches on the ground. It was just the right time of year to take holly cuttings. I gathered the most promising material from the broken branches but had no better luck in rooting cuttings than I had had in previous years. However, from the stub of every broken branch there was a big bunch of vigorous sprouts, the best kind of cutting material. We thinned out these sprouts two years in succession and thus got a good start with this fine variety.

You certainly would not want to treat any tree as severely as the storm treated the "Griscom" holly. It might be well, however, to prune some of the branches rather hard in hopes of securing better cuttings next fall when we may be able to use the greenhouse again.

Elizabeth C. White

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I shall treat the tree a good deal as you said the "Griscom" tree was treated by the storm, that is, I shall prune it severely so that it will make a lot of new growth next season. This is the only way to get good cuttings quickly. The tree of "Emily"

was nearly destroyed by the Army; but even being half-uprooted and hacked to pieces, it yielded over 200 good cuttings last year. The dry summer finished the tree, so I have only the young plants. Fortunately, there are at least 200 which will make a good start.

I have been thinking about the problems of birds eating holly berries, and have learned quite a lot this winter. The blueberries were killed by frost in May and so no dried fruit was carried into the winter; this was true of all wild berries. Thus the birds have been after the holly berries and much earlier. I cannot quite agree with the belief in flavor, for I have tasted all kinds and to me all are astringent and bitter. Also, ornithologists tell me that birds like astringent as well as sweet fruits. You know how robins eat choke-cherries when plenty of blueberries are available. I have a row of choke-cherries near the house and in summer the robins begin to eat the cherries before they are half-colored, when to my taste they are bitter enough to be repulsive; even when ripe, they are as bitter as a wild persimmon. I have found that squirrels store berries; starlings like holly berries; and this winter a hermit thrush has eaten all the berries on a holly wreath hanging on the front door. I was also surprised to see that chickadees can swallow a holly berry. If other food were available, birds would not eat so many holly berries. With them, I feel sure it is largely a scarcity of food; with squirrels, it is a different matter.

Do you know anything about the recuperative power of hollies after complete defoliation? So many trees suffered in this manner from the hurricane, that I am wondering what effect winter will have on them. I could believe that they would recover if defoliation had occurred in winter or early spring; but it seems to me that they will suffer from standing leafless in all the winter cold. When fires have defoliated trees, they have started again from the bottom.

Is the Holly Committee doing anything this winter?

Wilfred Wheeler

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