

*The*

JANUARY 1974

# Boxwood Bulletin

A QUARTERLY DEVOTED TO MAN'S OLDEST GARDEN ORNAMENTAL



1. Parterre of clipped dwarf box at Penshurst Place, Kent, England. The high yew hedge, finished with domes, at the back, separates the garden from the park.

*From GARDEN CRAFTSMANSHIP IN YEW & BOX, by Nathaniel Lloyd; text and all illustrations used with the kind permission of Christopher Lloyd.*

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 Experimental Farm.

Address: The American Boxwood Society,  
 Box 85, Boyce, Virginia 22620

Headquarters, Blandy Experimental Farm (U. of Va.), Boyce,  
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# The Boxwood Bulletin

January 1974

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# Garden Craftsmanship in Yew and Box

Nathaniel Lloyd

## Preface

The planting and cultivation of yew has long been an important element in garden design, but there is no adequate, reliable treatise dealing with these matters \*, and the art of topiary is jealously guarded by the professional grower. The following pages set forth in detail methods which have proved satisfactory in practice in respect of hedges, arches and clipped specimens in yew and box.

\* (1925)

THE word "garden," whether traced to French, Dutch or German origins, signifies an enclosure: indeed, it is within everyone's knowledge that the actual sense of being in a garden is not experienced (whatever the cultivation) except when there is also a feeling of enclosure. Without such enclosure, as may happen when a new garden is laid out upon an open site (before walls are built or hedges have grown up), the feelings of protection, of peacefulness and of repose are altogether lacking.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the garden maker strives to secure something more than an open fence to keep out cattle. Perhaps there is no more desirable form of enclosure than an old stone or brick wall the joints of which may be richly studied with wall-loving plants, but a new wall needs more than one generation to mature to such a state. Next, for screen and background to borders, come hedges, for which a host of bush and tree plants, suitable and unsuitable, have been employed. Deciduous bushes, such as whitethorn or quick, though excellent as screens and on account of their rapidity of growth, are not comparable as backgrounds with evergreens. Of these the common yew, *Taxus baccata*, is superior to all others. That yew is slow of growth is one of those popular fallacies the origin of which is difficult to imagine, for it is actually one of the quickest growing of all hedge plants, and no other so well responds to suitable treatment. The small leaves or needles do not look unsightly when cut as do those of big-leaved plants like laurel, and if properly clipped the plants do not become lean and stalky near the ground like privet, thuja and arbor vitae. Yew also possesses the advantage of readily being clipped to any shapes desired. This property (shared by the slower-growing box) has long been appreciated by gardeners.

The importance of the formal garden as a setting to the house is too well established to require vindication here, and yew hedges form a suitable link between the purely architectural lay-out which is essential in the immediate vicinity of the house, and such wild and more unsophisticated treatment

as may be in keeping at a little distance. Formal gardening, introduced here in the first half of the sixteenth century, became general before the end of Elizabeth's reign. It was based upon the Italian gardens of the Renaissance; but these had their prototypes in Roman gardens, and, in the first century, Pliny writes of box cut into shapes of animals. Yew was planted at Hampton Court by Henry VIII; and Bacon speaks of topiary work executed in juniper, box and yew. At the present time the sound revival of garden planting upon architectural lines has emphasized the importance of yew for hedges, even more than for topiary work. Many failures, however, occur through lack of knowledge on the part of gardeners and other persons concerned with planting and maintenance.

HEDGES. With a view to showing the rapidity of the growth of yew, when suitably treated, records have been kept of eight hedges, noting the sizes of the plants when put in, the treatment of ground, and manner of planting and describing the different kinds of soils. By this means a clear idea can be had of the possibilities of yew and the best means of obtaining matured hedges in a short time.

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### Results of Planting Yew Hedges of Various Sizes in Different Soils

Nos.	Size when planted.	Size in 12 years as clipped.		
		Height.	Base width.	Top width.
T.L. 1.	6 x 2-ft. pillars sold as hedge plants.	8½	x 4½	x 1¾ ft.

#### Situation and Treatment.

Ground dug 4 ft. wide and 2½ ft. deep, 2-in. land drain at bottom of trench, covered brick rubble. Then 9 in. soil, with dung. On this 6 in. soil, and filled up with soil and a little well-rotted dung in which plants set. Clay soil. Turf both sides. A very wet position.

Nos.	Size when planted.	Size in 12 years as clipped.		
		Height.	Base width.	Top width.
R.G. 2.	4½ x 1¾-ft. pillars.	7	x 4	x 2½ ft.

#### Situation and Treatment.

Treatment as last. Heavy loam. Turf one side: on other side (to prevent roots reaching rose beds) a barrier of galvanized iron 2½ ft. wide bedded in the ground on its edge was interposed.

O.G. 3.	3-ft. pyramids, 2 ft. at base.	7½	x 4½	x 1½ ft.
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On old hedge bank, double dug 2 ft. deep; dung dug into bottom spit; old dung in top spit. Border 3 ft. away both sides. Medium loam.



2. Yew hedge with piers and buttresses, all cut with a batter to produce a severe, massive wall effect. At Great Dixter, Mr. Lloyd's 15th-century home in Sussex.

H.G. 4. 3-ft. pillars, about 6 x 5 x 1¼ ft.  
1¼ ft at base.

Planted broadside to wind. Rough grass one side, kitchen garden other side, dug 2½ ft. No. 1A. Sandy loam.

H.G. 5. Do. 7 x 5 x 1½ ft.

End on to wind. Rough grass one side, kitchen garden the other side. Sandy loam.

H.G. 6. Do. 8 x 5½ x 2 ft.

End on to wind. Garden both sides. Sandy loam.

O.7. Nursery plants In nine years:  
1 ft. high. 6 x 3½ x 1¼ ft.

On old hedge bank; ditch both sides, over-shadowed by trees and high hedge 8 ft. to S.E. Dug, etc., as O.G. 3. Medium loam.

H. 3-ft. pyramids, In four years, as clipped:  
scanty foliage. 4 x 3 x 1 ft.

Situation and Treatment.

Well dug and manured herbaceous border; sandy loam, overlying sandstone rock.

These tabulated records show quickest and most economical results with the 3-ft. pyramids, and this advantage is still more marked in view of the severe losses experienced with the 4½-ft. and 6-ft. plants, the mortality of which was from 30% to 50%. Moreover these large plants, not being fully furnished down to the ground, were very thin and scanty looking for several years; whereas the 3-ft. pyramids, which were bushy near the ground when planted, formed a solid hedge in less than four years, and with few losses. The 3-ft. pillars sold as plants for making hedges were not bushy near the ground, and took many years to fill out low down; whereas plants which started thin at the top soon grew together into good hedges. It may be laid down as an axiom that it takes two to three times as long to grow a good base to a plant as to fill in at the top.

All plants grow quickly if the ground is well and deeply dug. as illustrated, but thorough drainage is essential in heavy soils. Without this, water lies in the dug ground and the roots is that the foliage turns coppery, and if the waterlogged condition continues, the needles turn a pale colour and the plant dies. Where it was necessary to keep the yew roots out of a rose border, as in R.G. 2, by interposing a vertical barrier of sheet

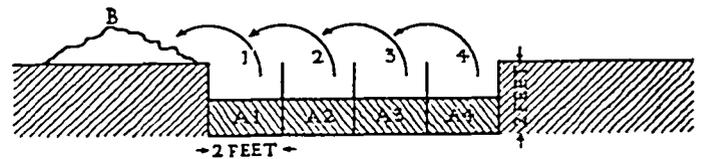
It should be noted that the dimensions after several years are much less than if the clipping each season had not been very drastic; the object being to obtain close, compact growth rather than large size.

galvanized iron, the ground on the other side of the hedge was dug and cultivated 4 ft. out. Roots were not allowed to come within 6 ins. of the dung at the bottom of the trenches, and only short, well-rotted manure was mixed with the soil in which the yews were planted. The roots were planted rather high (about 4 ins. up) that water might drain from their stems, and trodden in very firmly.

It was found that spring was a better time to plant than autumn, when the looser soil tended to become waterlogged. In an exposed situation, April was found a good time to plant. when the gales, which strained the roots, had abated. Where a hedge was planted broadside to the south, it was sheltered for a year by canvas screens 3½ ft. high to protect from the pressure of wind. In some years, long droughts, with bright sun and drying winds, were experienced in early summer. The labour of frequent watering was reduced by setting one 2-in. land drain on end in the ground between each plant, one end being just on the surface (this was covered with a piece of tile to reduce evaporation) and water poured down it to the roots of the plants. This served a double-purpose by substituting weekly for daily watering and by drawing roots downwards into wet ground instead of upwards to be scorched by sun, after water poured on the surface had evaporated. In exceptional seasons an occasional drenching of foliage in the evening was also very helpful to the larger plants. (By the same method yews could be maintained in countries where summers are fiercely hot or droughty.)

Yews should not be clipped until at least one year after planting: actually not before the September twelvemonth after planting. The roots will then have had time to make fresh growth and so to consolidate as to be firmly established. It must be remembered that cutting away the top shoot or leader always throws a plant back. The heights of trees will vary a little, no matter how even a lot may have been sent out by the nurseryman, an effort should be made at first clipping to bring these to an average height. Cutting the tops out of the taller plants will cause them to fill out sideways while the shorter ones are growing up to them, and so to fill up the intervals between the plants. The second clipping, a year later, should produce a fairly even level and ,compact hedge.

The foregoing remarks apply particularly to plants several feet in height, such as are put in to get a good hedge in the shortest time. It will be seen, however, that the most economical and satisfactory results in other respects were obtained with nursery plants only 1 ft. high. These cost one-twelfth what the 3-ft. plants did; practically none were lost, and they required little attention after planting. Although they caught up to the 3-ft. plants in about nine years, they did not make so good a hedge after only three or four years growth. At the other extreme were the 6-ft. plants, which were very costly, and difficult to keep alive in an unfavourable season; notwithstanding their height they made but a thin, poor hedge for several years.



DOUBLE DIGGING

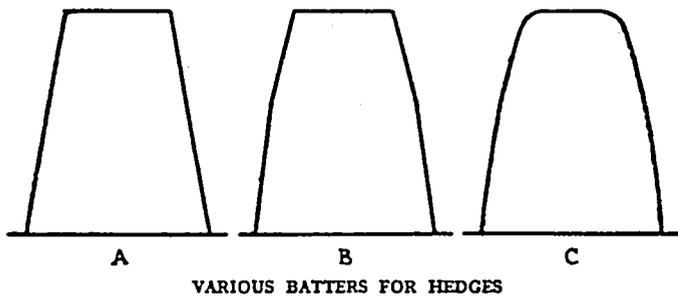
Lower spit, A1, A2, etc., forked up with dung. The top spit from No 1 is thrown out at B until wanted to fill up at the other end of trench.

Whatever sized plants may be chosen, it is well to obtain a sample plant from the supplier who quotes, and it should be stipulated that the sample shall represent the minimum size which will be sent in execution of order. The usual practice of sending an average sample may result in disappointment when the bulk comes forward. In inviting tenders from nurserymen, regard should be paid to the class of soil in which the plants have been grown. To bring plants from poor or clayey soil to put them in rich, well-drained loam will result satisfactorily; but to take them from rich soil and plant in that which is light and hungry, or to set them in stiff waterlogged clay, will result in many losses, slow growth and poor hedges. If very large plants (5 to 6 ft. high) are contemplated, it is well to ascertain that they have been moved every few years, and that the last move took place not more than three years previously. Plants which have been moved from time to time will have many compact, fibrous roots; whereas trees which have not been disturbed for many years will probably have large, coarse tap roots, which must necessarily be severed in the operation of lifting and make the plant's survival after replanting an exceedingly doubtful prospect.

When plants arrive from the nurseryman, the roots should be examined, and if dry they should be soaked in water for twelve hours or longer before laying into trenches pending planting. The sooner they are planted, however, the better their chances of survival. The distance plants should be set apart will depend upon their size and upon how urgently a compact hedge is required. If possible, 2½ to 3 ft. between stems should be allowed, but small plants or those having scanty foliage may be set closer. When hedges are well grown they may suffer severe injury if a heavy fall of snow lies on them, and snow, therefore, should not be allowed to accumulate.

After yews are established, the ground for a least 2 ft. round them should be well hoed or forked up three or four times a year, and once a year well dressed with such manure as basic slag, sprinkled on the newly worked soil and allowed to wash in. A good month in which to do this is March.

CLIPPING. If yews are clipped late in August or during September, the work will be completed before frosts are severe, and, as the growth will then have been made for the season, hedges and topiary



work will remain sharp and tidy until fresh growth is made the following summer; actually for eight or nine months. In hedge-clipping there is only one essential to be observed, which is to have the greatest thickness at ground level and gradually to reduce this all the way up. The sloping face thus produced is what a mason would call the "batter" of a wall; but whereas a batter of 1 in. to each foot rise is sufficient for a garden wall, yew hedges should have from 2 to 4 ins. batter to each foot of height. Batter has two merits: one that it makes the hedge look substantial, the other that it allows the lower boughs of the plant to receive sun and air, which stimulates their growth. On the other hand, should this lower foliage be recessed and overhung by that above it, the result will be weak growth, resulting eventually in exposure of the stems and spoiling of the hedge.

Where this has occurred in old hedges, the only course to pursue is to cut all branches and foliage back severely, even as far as the main stems of the plants, and thus to encourage fresh growth to break, which in a few years will form a good battered face to the hedge. This was the course adopted some years ago to the high hedge at the foot of the sunk garden at Penshurst Place, Plate 1, (cover), which is now greatly improved and would be better still if cut with a batter. The practice in this garden is to aim at a vertical face to hedges, with the result that the foliage of the upper branches thrives more vigorously than that below, and thus tends slightly to overhang, so destroying just that vertical effect it is desired to produce. It is not necessary that the amount of batter should be the same all the way up. The hedge round the Rose Garden at Dixter, Plate 2, has a batter of 3 ins. to the foot: but the buttresses have a batter of 1½ ins. to the foot for the next 2 ft. The sketches A. B. C show sections of three methods of battering: —

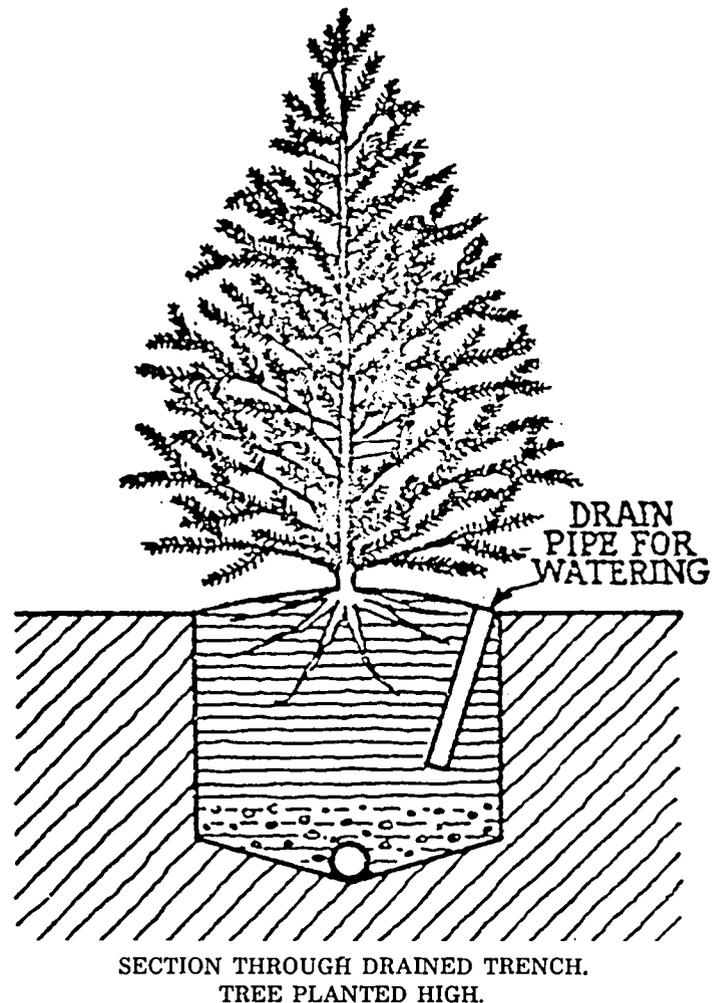
- A. A uniform batter of 2 ins. to the foot, cut flat at top, with sharp angles.
- B. A batter of 1½ ins. to the foot for the first 3 ft., and 3 ins. to the foot for the next 2 ft., cut flat at top, with sharp angles.
- C. A batter of 1½ ins. to the foot for the first 3 ft., and of 3 ins. to the foot for the next 2 ft.; the top is cut flat but the angles are rounded.

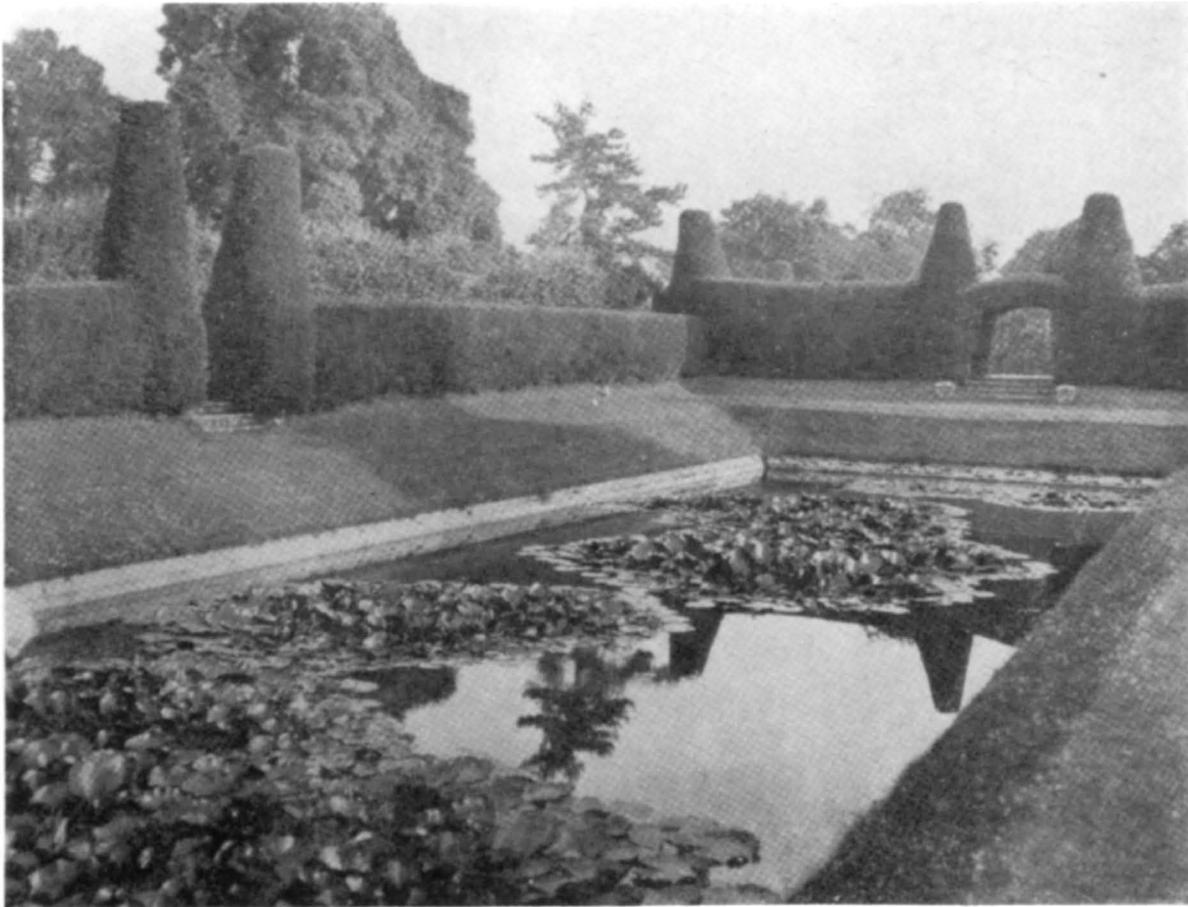
A is good treatment for hedges such as those at Penshurst, which are to have domes or semicircular finials rising from the flat tops.

B produces a more substantial effect and is suitable when a walled appearance is desired as for the Rose Garden at Dixter, Plate 2.

C is the most substantial and matured-looking treatment of all and is particularly suited to homely, old-fashioned garden design, as distinguished from more formal and classic layouts. The illustrations of hedges nearest this section are those of the hedge beyond the pool at Brickwall, Plate 3, and the hedge in the cottage garden at Frant, Plate 4. The batters mentioned are not the only ones that may be employed; indeed, there is room for considerable exercise of judgment in varying the batters of hedges in different situations; batter exceeding 4 ins. to the foot may be given and will encourage thick growth.

The introduction of piers, buttresses and simple finials at well-considered intervals greatly enhances the importance of yew hedges, but these should be plain and simple in form, or the air of repose and dignity which the garden should possess will suffer. Fanciful forms of birds, etc., on hedges are better suited to the cottage garden and to specimen trees of the topiary garden proper, of which mention will be made later. As will be seen in the illustrations, yew hedges owe much of their charm to





3. Pool garden at Brickwall. Extreme simplicity with consequent reposeful feeling is the characteristic of these hedges and piers.

the accuracy with which they have been trimmed and to the care taken to keep their tops perfectly level. One has only to compare such a hedge with a quick-thorn hedge as trimmed by farm labourers. Though wide at the top, it is thin at the bottom, with many gaps, and its levels wander up and down with the contour of the ground. As a matter of fact this is all quite unnecessary, and is the result of carelessness and ignorance. Such thorn hedges have been taken in hand and had applied to them the treatment given to yew hedges, with the result that (following drastic cutting in the first year) in a few years they were narrow at the top, wide near the ground, evenly covered with verdure and not only pleasing to see, but efficient as fences and no longer requiring repairs and expenditure for stakes and labour.

When the height has been determined to which a yew hedge is to be cut that season (if desired, the height may be increased according to the growth made each year), a strong stake of, say, 2 ins. diameter should be driven into the ground through the branches near to the proposed top of batter. This stake should have its top the exact height to which the hedge is to be trimmed. Five or six feet along the hedge another stake is to be driven into the ground in a similar position, until its top is on the

same level as the first stake. This level is determined by means of a straight-edged board of sufficient length to bridge the interval and rest on the tops of the stakes (any carpenter will plane a "deal" for the purpose); on the upper edge of this board the spirit-level is laid. Plate 5. The stakes having been tested and found level, a string is stretched between them, resting on their tops and continued to another stake as far along the hedge as required. If this cannot be strained sufficiently to prevent sagging, it must be supported by slight intermediate stakes, but, even where this is done, the level must be tested from time to time to ensure its having been preserved, as it is liable to be disturbed during cutting and also by the intervention of twigs of yew with which the string will be in contact. When the hedge has a very wide top, it will be necessary to find and mark the level (as described with stakes and string) on *both* sides. Once a hedge has been properly levelled, the annual cutting can be done by eye (assisted by a short piece of batten and a spirit level, Plate 6) except for long levels, for which a guide string is desirable. Of course the levelling stakes are removed after cutting, but the first two should not be drawn up until the whole length of hedge has been cut, for it is from them that all extensions of level are projected.



4. Above. Yew Tree Cottages, Frant. A good example of yew hedge and finials as treated by cottagers. Too much of such treatment would be tiresome.

5. Below. Clipping top of hedge for the first time. Level of stakes tested with straight-edged board and a spirit level.



More excerpts from *GARDEN CRAFTSMANSHIP IN YEW & BOX* will appear in later issues of the *Bulletin*.

# The Garden Jefferson Planned — and The Garden Club of Virginia Brought Into Being

*Mrs. George M. Cochran*

The Garden Club of Virginia has been about the business of garden restoration since 1929. Since that time they can boast of such major accomplishments as the grounds of Kenmore, Stratford, Woodrow Wilson's Birthplace, Wilton, Monticello, Gunston, Woodlawn, Scotchtown and the Mary Washington House. All together the monies spent on restoration and preservation come to well over two million dollars. This impressive sum has been raised by the forty years of Historic Garden Week tours made possible by the many generous people who open their homes and gardens annually for this worthwhile cause.

Of all the many restorations undertaken by The Garden Club of Virginia the most ambitious was the job done on the East and West Lawns at the University of Virginia. This work was done in two separate operations, the West Lawn finished in 1952 and the East Lawn in 1965. The ten gardens that can be seen today represent seventeen years of research and study as well as the long months spent in construction and planting.

Fortunately for the archaeologists there was an original drawing done in 1822 for Mr. Jefferson showing the then existing buildings, walled gardens and connecting gates. This (drawn by Peter Maverick) is known as the MAVERICK plan. Although no plant material or interior garden design was shown, it could easily be determined where to relocate walls, remove buildings, reroute roads, move power lines and rebuild outbuildings to achieve the symmetry and balance Mr. Jefferson originally designed. Archaeological excavations confirmed the authority of the Maverick plan. There were also drawings available showing the exact brick placement used to construct the original serpentine walls.

The theory has been advanced that Mr. Jefferson's advanced age was responsible for the lack of specified plant material for the designed garden areas. He was eighty in 1822.

Research into appropriate horticultural varieties was done in several contemporary gardens. Records were available for the gardens at Monticello and at Castle Hill, in Albemarle County. The gardens at Mount Vernon and Hampton, near Baltimore, were also studied. Mr. Jefferson's library was a fund of gardening information and his writings frequently showed his interest in and knowledge of horticulture. In 1814 he wrote in his diary,

"No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture comparable to that of the garden. I am still devoted to the garden. But though an old man, I am but a young gardener."

The basic garden restoration plans for the East and West Lawns were drawn by Alden Hopkins, then resident Landscape Architect for Colonial Williamsburg. At his death the work was carried on by two other eminently qualified gentlemen, Donald H. Parker and Ralph E. Griswold. At the time of the presentation of the West Lawn gardens Mr. Parker wrote: "Mr. Jefferson's dream for the creation of a great University came true within his lifetime. It is hoped that were he to walk among us again he would recognize and enjoy these gardens as an integral part of his great plan."

The Garden Club of Virginia believes their work has been consistent with Mr. Jefferson's ideas and ideals and that he would indeed feel very much at home in these gardens.

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THE AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY  
THIRTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING  
In May 1974

Date and place to be announced as soon as possible after the March meeting of Officers and Directors.

HISTORIC GARDEN WEEK IN VIRGINIA  
April 20 through April 28, 1974  
MARYLAND HOUSE AND GARDEN  
PILGRIMAGE  
April 27 through May 11

EAST GARDENS

HOTEL F EAST RANGE — PAVILION X EAST LAWN  
"DORIC OF THE THEATER OF MARCELLUS, CHAMBRAY"

Large quantities of existing Tree Boxwood outline the pattern for the Hotel garden. Smoke trees are planted at the entrance to the garden and Hackberry trees are planted in the four corners. Against the serpentine cross wall are Flowering Crabapples. Along the same wall on the opposite side near the center are Cedars of Lebanon. The main portion of the Pavilion garden has been divided by paths into three turf areas enclosed by mixed plantings of shrubs and flowerbeds.

PAVILION VIII — EAST LAWN "CORINTHIAN OF DIOCLETIAN'S BATHS, CHAMBRAY"

Pavilion VIII houses the office of the President and other administrative offices of the University. Perennial borders, English Yew and Dwarf Box form the terrace planting. Crape Myrtles are featured extensively throughout the enclosure. The blooms ranging from white, pink and watermelon red present a colorful summer garden in the midst of Weeping Willows, Red Maples, Golden Rain, Hollies and Norway Spruce, Southern Magnolia and English Walnut form a background below the orchard.

HOTEL D EAST RANGE — PAVILION VI EAST LAWN  
"IONIC OF THE THEATER OF MARCELLUS, CHAMBRAY"

The Hotel garden features one of four spires of Merton College Chapel, Oxford, England erected in 1451. The spires were removed in 1914. Each stone was carefully labeled and one shipment arrived at the University in 1928. Faithfully re-assembled, "The Merton Pinnacle" stands as a token of esteem from Oxford. Plantings in the area consist of Franklinia, Shadbush, Sourwood, Black Tupelo and an orchard. Pyracantha, Box, Roses, and Bulbs are emphasized on the Pavilion terrace.

PAVILION IV — EAST LAWN "DORIC OF ALBANO FROM CHAMBRAY"

M. Schele deVere came to the University in 1844 as professor of Modern Languages. Because of his love of flowers, the garden received his expert care. Existing box near the house and within the circle set the general design of the present garden. Flower beds and shrubs are complemented by handsome Magnolias, Scarlet Oak, Sweet Gum, Chinaberry and Tulip trees. An herb garden and plantings of fruit trees reflect the necessity of culinary use as well as decorative purpose.

HOTEL B EAST RANGE — PAVILION II EAST LAWN  
"IONIC OF THE TEMPLE OF FORTUNA VIRILIS, PALLADIO"

Two handsome Yew trees balance the entrance to the Hotel garden which features varieties of plum and apple trees. The Pavilion garden is designed around existing Dogwood, Mimosa, Ginkgo, Walnut, Pecan and a Cucumber tree (Magnolia Acuminata) planted by the late Dean Ivy F. Lewis, professor of Biology 1915-1953. Muscadine grape and common Fig espaliered lend interest to flowering shrubs and a contrast to Phlox, Jonquils, Iris, Hyacinths and Columbine.

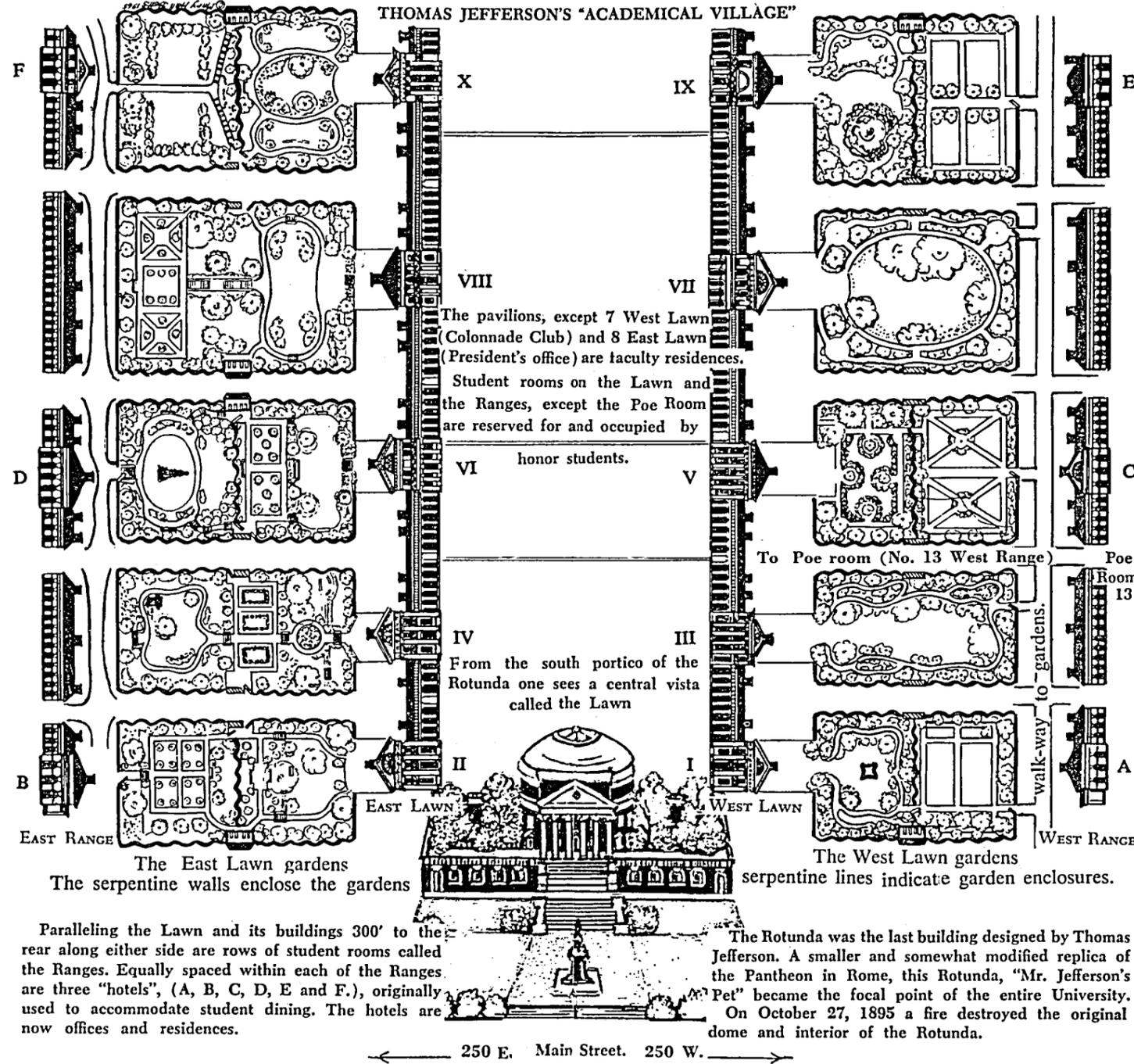
From THOMAS JEFFERSON'S BUILDINGS AND GROUND-PLAN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA — published by the University and used with their permission.

Cabell Hall, at the south end of the lawn, was designed by Stanford White and inaugurated in 1899. Its auditorium contains 1500 seats.

In 1951 a five-story addition was completed on the south side of the Hall for academic offices and class rooms.



CABELL HALL 1899



WEST GARDENS

PAVILION IX WEST LAWN — HOTEL E WEST RANGE  
"IONIC OF THE TEMPLE OF FORTUNA VIRILIS, PALLADIO"

Plain turf areas and fruit trees comprise the planting of the Hotel garden. Simplicity is reflected in this pavilion garden because of its outstanding feature "The McGuffey Ash" (Biltmore Ash), planted about 1826 by George Tucker, the first Professor of Moral Philosophy. In 1845 he was succeeded by Professor William A. McGuffey, famous for his "Readers." Masses of Azalea are planted under the spread of this magnificent tree. Along the meandering walk are mixed shrubberies, Flowering Almond, Lilac, Peonies, and Roses.

PAVILION VII — WEST LAWN "DORIC, PALLADIO"  
DERIVED FROM AN ILLUSTRATION IN CHAMBRAY.

The cornerstone of the University was laid at Pavilion VII on October 6, 1817. Since 1907 the Pavilion has been the home of the Colonnade Club, a social club for faculty members, administrative officers, alumni and their friends. The garden is designed to provide space for club gatherings. Expanse is created by an oval lawn layout, encircled by walks and borders of periwinkle interspersed with bulbs. Existing trees and plantings of shrubs give the entire area seclusion.

PAVILION V WEST LAWN — HOTEL C WEST RANGE  
"IONIC, PALLADIO"

Primarily, the Hotel garden served the utilitarian need of growing fruits and vegetables. The more elegant design of the Pavilion garden is presented here in a series of circles within a rectangle, edged with dwarf box to accent its layout. Periwinkle provides an ever-green ground cover, while narrow borders of flowering perennials and bulbs give brilliant color in early Spring. Pink Crape Myrtles supply color in late Summer and their interesting trunks form a pleasing pattern against the serpentine walls.

PAVILION III — WEST LAWN "CORINTHIAN, PALLADIO"

Thomas Jefferson visited many gardens abroad in 1786. He made notes of plant material and layouts of famous gardens including "Blenheim", which delighted him with "small thickets of shrubs in oval raised beds, cultivated and flowers among the shrubs." A similar layout exists in this garden, although the turfed area is formalized on either side with Yaupon hedge. Flowering shrubs, Spring flowers and bulbs are cultivated among Dogwood, Mulberry, Deodar Cedar, Golden-rain and Kentucky Coffee trees.

PAVILION I WEST LAWN — HOTEL A WEST RANGE  
"DORIC OF THE BATHS OF DIOCLETIAN, CHAMBRAY"

This is the first of three gardens along each side with a serpentine cross-wall dividing the enclosures into separate gardens for the Hotels (former dining halls) and the Pavilions (professors' residences). The Hotel gardens are reconstructed to reflect their former culinary uses and as a contrast to the decorative planting of the Pavilion gardens. This garden features an unfinished native stone capital which proved unsuitable for carving and use in the original buildings.

Paralleling the Lawn and its buildings 300' to the rear along either side are rows of student rooms called the Ranges. Equally spaced within each of the Ranges are three "hotels", (A, B, C, D, E and F.), originally used to accommodate student dining. The hotels are now offices and residences.

The Rotunda was the last building designed by Thomas Jefferson. A smaller and somewhat modified replica of the Pantheon in Rome, this Rotunda, "Mr. Jefferson's Pet" became the focal point of the entire University. On October 27, 1895 a fire destroyed the original dome and interior of the Rotunda.

← 250 E. Main Street. 250 W. →

The "Maverick Plan"; Compiled, updated and designed by Mary Hall Betts, Rotunda Hostess, and reprinted with her permission.

# PERFORMANCE RECORDS OF WOODY PLANTS IN THE SECREST ARBORETUM

## 1. Holly Family and Box Family

*Aquifoliaceae and Buxaceae*

**JOHN E. FORD**

*Curator, Secrest Arboretum\**

There are presently more than 2,000 different species, varieties, hybrids, and cultivars of woody plants growing in the Secrest Arboretum. These represent more than 200 genera distributed in some 68 families. More than 600 individual hollies and boxwoods have been outplanted, with some 800 plants still in the propagation facilities. There are 189 different types of holly and box currently growing in the Arboretum.

Although the first plantings of trees in the area which became the Secrest Arboretum were made in 1901 and 1903, the first holly was not set out until 1916 and the first boxwood was planted in 1923.

The majority of the plantings in the Arboretum have been set out on a 12 foot by 12 foot spacing. As plants mature and need additional growing space, adjacent plants are removed. Plants in the Arboretum are pruned when they are set out but no additional pruning is done except to remove dead or broken branches. Plants are allowed to grow into their natural shape. Hollies and companion plants in the Holly Display Garden (Compartment T) are set out following a landscape plan so that the distance between these plants will be variable.

Proper interpretation of records is essential. Plants which succeed or fail in the Arboretum might do differently in other situations or locations. The loss of a plant may be due to a number of factors.

Many hollies and box have been killed over the winter when they are on sites excessively wet or exposed to the wind. The same cultivars on sites well drained and protected from the wind came through the same winter in perfect condition. Many boxwoods were planted on a site which appeared to be well drained. They grew well until 1972, when a wet year left parts of the area quite wet. Boxwoods in this area deteriorated rapidly.

Size of plant can also have a bearing on survival. Hollies and boxwoods of the same clone were set out side by side in the nursery. Many plants less than 1 foot high were either killed or partially killed the first winter, while adjacent larger plants 1 to 2 feet high showed no sign of winter injury. Established



*Leaves and flower buds of Buxus sempervirens 'Asheville'.*

plants will often survive climatic extremes, while recently planted shrubs and trees may be killed.

Many hollies and box are sensitive to full winter sunshine, especially when planted on the south side of a building. Convexleaf Japanese Holly (*Ilex crenata* 'Convexa') plantings on the north side of a building have come through recent winters in good condition, while those on the south side of the same building have considerable killing and browning of leaves and twigs each winter. A number of Asheville Common Box (*Buxus sempervirens* 'Asheville') have died when planted on the south side of buildings fully exposed to winter sunshine. This same cultivar has been successfully used as a hedge where the plants are partially shaded from the winter sunshine and are not against a building.

Many plants require two or three growing seasons' to re-establish themselves after transplanting. This is especially so with many cultivars of American Holly. Some recently planted shrubs or trees presently rated as only fair would undoubtedly receive a rating of good in another year or two.

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\*Ohio Agricultural Research & Development Center  
Wooster, Ohio.

## ENVIRONMENT

The Secret Arboretum contains more than 75 acres of diversified terrain ranging from areas fairly level to areas with considerable slope. Aspect, moisture, and related site conditions are considerably varied. Elevations are from 1,000 to 1,100 feet above sea level. The predominant soil type is Wooster silt loam which was derived from glacial till. The soil is moderately acid, which is quite suitable for hollies. The mean annual precipitation is 37 inches.

Extremes of temperature have varied from  $-24^{\circ}$  F. in 1912 to  $105^{\circ}$  F. in 1918. The Arboretum is located in Plant Hardiness Zone 5, where annual minimum temperatures average between  $-20^{\circ}$  F. and  $-10^{\circ}$  F. The coldest most recent temperature was  $-20^{\circ}$  F. in 1963. Extremely fluctuating temperatures in January and February 1972 caused a considerable amount of damage to plants in the Arboretum. There were several periods when January thaws with temperatures between  $40^{\circ}$  F. and  $50^{\circ}$  F. were followed within a week's time with temperatures falling to zero or below. The most extreme fluctuation came in January 1972, when a maximum temperature of  $60^{\circ}$  F. was followed 3 days later by a minimum temperature of  $-12^{\circ}$  F. A good many small boxwoods and hollies were killed outright or suffered considerable killing of leaves and branches.



*Buxus sempervirens* 'Asheville', a box which has survived temperatures to  $-20^{\circ}$  F.

## PLANT DESCRIPTIONS

Plants reported are listed alphabetically by genera and species. Common and botanical nomenclature follows the International Checklist of Cultivated *Ilex* (1), the 1970 Handbook of Hollies (2), Standardized Plant Names (3), and Manual of Cultivated Trees and Shrubs (4). No one reference contains all plants listed.

A number of symbols and abbreviations have been used to describe the history and present status of each plant.

**Location:** The first letter and number following the name of a listed plant is the plot location or compartment where the plant was set out.

A through T—arboretum plantings.

O—other plantings. Includes ornamentals on campus and around buildings at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center.

**Number of Plants Set Out:** This numeral in parentheses following plot location is the number of plants set out.

**Year Planted:** The year the plants were set out follows the number of plants set.

**Status:**

(—)—Indicates a plant is in poor condition.

(+)—Indicates a plant is in fair or average condition.

(++)—Indicates a plant is in good or above average condition.

'—Indicates present height of plant in feet.

"—Indicates present height of plant in inches.

(1)—Numeral in parentheses indicates number of plants remaining.

1973—Year indicates when observation was made.

F—Failed due to:

Fc—local climatic extremes

Fd—diseases

Fm—mechanical injury (mowed off, broken off by vehicle, etc.)

Fp—planting (too small, wrong season, etc.)

Fs—site (unfavorable site factors)

Fw—wind, snow or ice breakage

NP—Not present.

Re—Removed to develop Arboretum or for other reasons.

Ts—Transplanted.

V—Volunteers (usually indigenous) growing in Arboretum.

All hollies and box have been planted on sites well drained and protected from winds unless otherwise noted.

Example of meaning of lettering and symbols following a plant name:

H2. (4)1953, (1)1968. Ts 1970 B.5. (+) 4'(1)1973

Four plants set out in Plot H2 in 1953. One plant remaining when checked in 1968. Transplanted in 1970 to Plot B5. Plant presently in fair condition, 4 feet tall, and one plant in place when checked in 1973.

## INDEX OF COMMON NAMES

- Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens*
- Anderson 350-35 Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Anderson 350-35'
- Anderson 351-35 Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Anderson 351-35'
- Anderson 353-35 Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Vardar Valley'
- Anderson 789-34 Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Anderson 789-34'
- Asheville Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Asheville'
- Bosley Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Bosley'
- Colprit No. 4 Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Colprit No. 4'
- Columnar Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Fastigiata'
- Dwarf Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Nana'
- English Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa'
- Forgetmenotleaf Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Myosotidifolia'
- Golden Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Aurea'
- Handsworth Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Handsworth'
- Hardwick Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Hardwick'
- Joe Gable Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Joe Gable'
- Mulsted Selection Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens*, Mulsted selection
- Myrtleleaf Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Myrtifolia'
- Nish Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Nish'
- Northern N. Y. Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Northern N. Y.'
- Novicularis Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Novicularis'
- Pyramid Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Pyramidata'
- Roundleaf Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Rotundifolia'
- Schmidt Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Schmidt'
- Silver Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Argenteo Variegata'
- Spreading Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Spreading'
- Truedwarf Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa'
- Truetree Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Arborescens'
- Vardar Valley Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Vardar Valley'
- Weeping Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Pendula'
- Willow Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'An-gustifolia'
- Willowleaf Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Salicifolia'
- Woodland Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Woodland'
- Wooster Common Box — *Buxus sempervirens* 'Wooster'
- Harlands Box — *Buxus harlandi*
- Himalaya Sarcococca — *Sarcococca hookeriana*
- Japanese Pachysandra — *Pachysandra terminalis*
- Japanese Spurge — *Pachysandra terminalis*
- Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla*
- Chinese Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla* Sinica
- Curly Locks Littleleaf Box — *Buxus Microphylla* 'Curly Locks'
- Green Pillow Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla* 'Green Pillow'
- Japanese Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla* japonica
- Kingsville Dwarf Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla* 'Compacta Kingsville Dwarf'
- Korean Garden Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla* 'Korean Garden'
- Korean Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla* koreana
- Largeleaf Asiatic Clone Box — *Buxus microphylla* (Largeleaf Asiatic Clone)
- Morris Medium Dwarf Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla* 'Morris Medium Dwarf'
- Morris Upright Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla* japonica 'Morris Fastigiata'
- Morrison Garden Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla* 'Morrison Garden'
- Wintergreen Littleleaf Box — *Buxus microphylla* koreana 'Wintergreen'

Excerpts from RESEARCH CIRCULAR 139 (Revised) November 1973, issued by the Ohio Agricultural Research and development Center, Wooster, Ohio; by permission of John E. Ford, Curator of the Secrest Arboretum at Wooster.

*This is one of 13 locations of the Research Center, where scientists can make field tests under conditions similar to those encountered by Ohio farmers.*

*Admiral Phillips says of this RESEARCH CIRCULAR, "The data of Buxus are very interesting. The records therein of Buxus survival (or not) in the severe Ohio winters are of great importance. I recommend that the report, so far as it relates to Box, be printed in the ABS Bulletin in its entirety."*

## BOXWOODS

When you think of boxwoods, the gardens of the Colonial Tidewater South come to mind. Because of this association with the Old South, boxwoods usually are not considered as shrubs to plant around Wooster or in Northeast Ohio. It is true that many kinds of boxwood are too tender to survive the climate in this area. However, some of the hardiest types have been growing in the Secrest Arboretum for nearly 50 years.

In 1923, six specimens of Asheville Common Boxwood were planted in the Arboretum and have grown well ever since. This boxwood holds its color well through the winter and is green in early spring when some of the other hardy boxwoods have reddish or yellow-green foliage. Growth has been rather slow. These plants are now between 6 and 7 feet tall, indicating an average height increase of less than 2 inches a year. Slow growth is often an advantage in a boxwood as the plants do not have to be continually pruned. Through the years, many of the boxwoods set out around the Ohio Agricultural Research & Development Center campus have been rooted cuttings from these Asheville Boxwoods. The original plants came from the grounds of the summer home of a son of President Hayes in West Asheville, N. C.

Five different types of boxwood have been growing in the Arboretum for more than 25 years. Four different cultivars of the Common Boxwood and one of the Littleleaf Boxwood have done well. These are Asheville, Roundleaf, Edging (sometimes known as Truedwarf), Wooster, and Korean Littleleaf Boxwood. Although the Korean and Roundleaf types have off-color leaves by the end of the winter, they green up as soon as spring growth begins.

Harland's Boxwood was tried in 1948 and survived 3 years. This species was tried again in 1969 and didn't live through the winter. Some 82 different kinds of boxwood have been set out since the initial plantings in 1923 and 54 of these are still alive. In 1967, 25 different types were set out and 8 of these have been winter-killed, 60 different boxwoods were set out in 1969 and 25 of these have died to date. Several types have their tops killed back each winter.

Some of the newer boxwoods which have been outside for four winters and show promise are Curlylocks (Littleleaf Box). Weeping, Vardar Valley and Mulsted Selection. The last three are all types of Common Boxwood and have doubled or tripled their height since being planted outside. Two others which have tripled their height are Largeleaf Asiatic Boxwood and Schmidt Boxwood.

Even the hardy boxwoods in the Arboretum require protection from wind and good drainage. Boxwoods planted in wet areas with poor drainage haven't done too well and in many cases have died.

Exposure to direct winter sunshine can also be harmful. Small-sized plants have not done as well as large plants when they have been set outside. Many small plants less than 1 foot high haven't survived, while larger, well-developed plants of the same clone have done well when planted in the same location.

*From SECRET ARBORETUM NOTES, Summer 1973 Published by the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, Wooster, Ohio; and reprinted by their permission.*

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SECRET ARBORETUM NOTES for Winter 1973-74 reports that a new boxwood plot was set out in the fall of 1973. Twenty different cultivars of Littleleaf Box and Common Box were planted. Most of these plants had been growing in the Arboretum nursery for several years. These are especially hardy strains of boxwood which show promise of being hardy enough to grow in the Wooster area.

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### BOXWOOD PERFORMANCE LIST TO BE IN APRIL ISSUE

*Limitations of space make it necessary to postpone the detailed rating list of about 80 different kinds of boxwood, as well as pachysandra and sarcococca, which have been test-grown at the Ohio Agricultural Station at Wooster. The complete list will be printed in the next (April) issue of The Boxwood Bulletin.*

*This regrettable necessity may turn out to be a blessing in disguise. It may prove more convenient to have this List and that of Plant Descriptions side by side for reference, rather than continually turning the pages back and forth in one issue. We hope so.*

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### The American Boxwood Society

*The second year of the Research Project in Boxwood Decline will be completed in June 1974. If you wish to help and have not already done so, please make your check out to The American Boxwood Society (Research Fund) and mail to our Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Andrew Kirby, Box 85, Boyce, Va. 22620.*

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### CONTRIBUTORS TO THE RESEARCH FUND

(October 15, 1973 to January 15, 1974)

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# Boxwood Problems in Virginia

Arthur Dugdale

Within the last few months we have received more than a few phone calls, letters and inquiries regarding boxwood that seems to be dying, but "just in spots," as the concerned callers described it.

The January issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin: A Quarterly Devoted To Man's Oldest Ornamental*, features a splendid article by Wirt H. Wills and R. C. Lambe, plant pathology experts at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg. It is captioned "The Status of Boxwood Decline In Virginia."

Virginia gardeners who are interested in growing boxwood will find this article, and the entire magazine, of special interest. We believe that *The Boxwood Bulletin* will prove most helpful to anyone who is really interested in growing these living antiques of southern gardens. It is produced by The American Boxwood Society, Box 85, Boyce, Va. 22620. Are you a member of this unique and worthwhile organization?

For details of culture and pest control of boxwood, procure Extension Bulletin 503 — "Boxwood In The Landscape," from your county agricultural agent's office, or from Extension Division, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Va. 24060. This informative publication also describes many uses of boxwood in landscaping home grounds.

## ORGANIC MULCH

During both summer and winter, boxwood needs an organic mulch 2 inches deep when settled, to hold moisture and keep shallow roots cool during hot weather, and to prevent roots from freezing during the bitter winter season.

Good materials for mulching these plants include compost, old sawdust, processed pine bark, ground corn cobs and pine needles.

*Caution:* do not work boxwood plants with a hoe; their roots are near the soil surface, and serious damage can be done in this way.

Boxwood Leaf Miner is perhaps this plant's most serious pest. However, good control may be obtained by spraying with Diazinon or Malathion, between mid-April and the third week in May. Cygon, a systemic insecticide, also give good control, but it must be used during the growing season in late April and late August.

## VARIETY OF SOILS

Boxwood thrives and seems contented in a wide variety of soils, from heavy clay to light sandy loam. It does equally well in full sunshine or partial shade, but in full shade it is prone to become thin and open.

It is believed that much more damage is done to boxwood in Virginia by allowing the soil to become too dry, than from other causes. Established plants can withstand a considerable moisture deficiency without dying, but it does weaken them, which lessens their resistance to severe winter weather and freezing winds, also to insect and disease attacks.

## DELAYED SYMPTOMS

Boxwood that has been weakened by drought conditions in summer, may not show it until fall or mid-winter, when the leaves turn a sickly brownish-red color, and some of them fall off.

These plants and all evergreens need a certain amount of water at all times, even during winter months, when they are not growing. In their "breathing" process, the foliage gives off moisture by transpiration, and the roots must supply more.

Boxwood is one of the few plants that have two separate growing seasons each year — during April and May, and again in August and September. The shrub prefers to grow slowly and naturally, and it responds best to slow-acting organic foods, such as equal parts bone meal, cottonseed meal, and processed sheep or cow manure.

## LIGHT PRUNING

The faster growing varieties of boxwood need light pruning every two years, during early winter or very early spring, before new growth starts. This makes them more shapely and compact. It also strengthens the slender branches, making them less vulnerable to snow and ice damage in winter. Do this pruning in late Autumn or in early March.

Avoid shearing boxwood plants as if in a formal hedge, since it deprives them of their natural beauty. When sheared, boxwood becomes too dense, which prevents sunlight and free air circulation inside the plants.

*Reprinted by permission of Mr. Dugdale, from the Richmond News-Leader, August 17, 1973.*

# The American Boxwood Society

January 1974

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Elected by the Society for their contributions of knowledge, appreciation, and preservation of Boxwood to the world.

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THE AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY

## INFORMATION

### DUES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Regular membership dues of The American Boxwood Society are now \$5.00. This includes a subscription to *The Boxwood Bulletin*, to the publication of which the Society allots about 2/3 of the money received from dues.

Non-member subscriptions are for groups and institutions such as botanic gardens, libraries, etc. These are \$5.00 a year, and run by the calendar year.

The Boxwood Society year runs from one Annual Meeting to the next; from May of one year to May of the next year. Those joining the Society at other times are sent all the *Boxwood Bulletin* issues for the current Society year, beginning with the July number. Their dues are then again due and payable in the following May. This was voted by the Society in order to lighten as far as possible the heavy work load of our busy Secretary-Treasurer.

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The *Boxwood Bulletin*,  
415 West Clifford St.,  
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