

The

OCTOBER 1967

Boxwood Bulletin

A QUARTERLY DEVOTED TO MAN'S OLDEST GARDEN ORNAMENTAL



18th century children buying their "Palmpasen" from a street vendor; probably in Amsterdam.

From a print by Jacob Buys, published about 1771-1773.

From Dr. A. J. Bernet Kempers, N.O.M., The Netherlands. Article begins p. 19.

Edited Under The Direction Of
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The Boxwood Bulletin

October, 1967

Vol. 7, No. 2

EDITOR — MRS. EDGAR M. WHITING

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That Question Again:

WHAT IS AMERICAN BOX?

Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pa.
June 15, 1967

Dr. Henry T. Skinner, Director
U.S. National Arboretum
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Henry:

May I write to you in your position as a Director of the American Boxwood Society, to ask what American Boxwood is? I had always thought it was *Buxus sempervirens* growing in the United States, but the fact that the term is used so liberally in "The Boxwood Bulletin" leads me to believe that it must have some taxonomic standing. However, I can find no mention of American boxwood in any book.

I will greatly appreciate any light you can shed.

Yours sincerely,
Dutch
D. G. Huttleston
Taxonomist

United States National Arboretum
Washington 25, D.C.
June 22, 1967

Dr. D. G. Huttleston
Taxonomist, Longwood Gardens
Kennet Square, Pennsylvania 19348

Dear Dutch:

Your enquiry regarding "American" boxwood touches upon an interesting — and confusing — subject.

Without doing any research on the matter, I can merely state my impression that the term "American" is probably of Virginia origin where it has evidently been used for many years to distinguish "other" forms of *Buxus sempervirens* from the dwarf var. *suffruticosa*, known also variously as True-dwarf, English B., etc. I had not met this term before coming to the Washington-Virginia area and doubt whether it occurs in any of the woody-plant texts, other than the *Boxwood Bulletin*. If it carries a patina of age and interest, it is also, admittedly, confusing. The term "Colonial" would seem more appropriate to me if a division of Common Box is needed, but where this has been sometimes used I suppose it has been a substitute term for "Common", including the Dwarf Box as well, of common Colonial planting. But if you wish to raise questions about "American", as printed either with or without quotes around it, I believe the puzzle is equally intricate regarding the identity of Tree Box, Common Tree Box, etc. as distinct from or as a segment of the would be taxon "American". Glancing at the January ('67) issue of the *Bulletin*, I note the comment of F. F. Rockwell that because Common Tree Box seems to be a term for *B. sempervirens* in general,

its var. *arborescens* should logically be designated Uncommon Tree Box. Facetious, maybe, but what actually is var. *arborescens* of this highly variable species? A clone? Rehder calls it both a "tall shrub or small tree" and "the typical form" of *B. sempervirens*. Incidentally Rockwell, being a New Yorker, does not use the term "American".

In view of these several confusions, it seems abundantly evident that the Boxwood Society could perform a real service by promoting a study in this area of common name usage towards formulation of some acceptable guidelines for application in its own publications and for the help of all horticulturalists. I am happy to so recommend to the Society President through transmission of this correspondence.

Thank you for the question which I have not answered.

Sincerely yours,
Henry
Henry T. Skinner, Director

Permission to print the above letters was asked, and granted. Dr. Huttleston, in his second letter, said:

"I was not being sarcastic. Nor did I intend to be critical; I asked from a real desire for information.

Since the meanings of the terms 'American Boxwood' and 'English Boxwood' are clear to boxwood enthusiasts, there must be differences in the plants. If these differences have been elucidated in print, I am unaware of it. From the number of times the question has been posed to me, I am sure the distinction is not clear to many people. Although the terms aren't even mentioned in the standard horticultural reference works, they are in rather common usage.

I do feel that they should have some taxonomic standing. The term "cultivar" presumably wouldn't apply since I believe there are varieties of both, though I may be incorrect in this. At least an article in your *Bulletin*, explaining English, American, dwarf and Italian boxwoods, would be helpful."

Dr. Skinner wrote: "We know from long experience that name usage can seldom be decreed or legislated. You" (the Boxwood Society) "and the *Bulletin*, however, can wield a great deal of lasting influence".

Since popular usage as well as scientific terminology is involved, we should like everyone to join in this debate — garden clubbers as well as taxonomists, nurserymen as well as botanists. The more widespread the discussion, the more we can hope to gain from it. Please let us have your experience, opinions and comments.

't Is Paasch-Feeft, dat is ligt te merken,
Daar Jannetje de Koopvrouw seit,
Dat zy door yverig te werken,
De Palm-Paasch-lieaen heeft bereid,

Op dat de Kindren sich vermaaken
Met al het lekkers en al 't groen,
Gehecht aan groote of kleine itaaken:
Zo kan de Jeugd haar keus voldoen.

N^o. 27.



Ziet, Vader koft een klein Palmpaasje
Voor 't Dochtertje, dat hy bemint,
Hoe vrolyk is daar meê het Kind!
Maar Mietjes Broër koft haar een Baasje.
Een groote met een Klatervog,
En dubble Heuâjes, op het topje,
Gelyk ook met een Ei in 't dopje,
Bakket en Koek, dat zy wel mag.

Intufichen is het zo gelegen,
Dat het Gebruik het hart der Jeugd
Kan strekken tot vermaak en vreugd,
Die zy al fpeelende mag ploegen.
Der Kindren hand is rafch gevold,
Een klein Gefchenkje doet hen leeren,
En noue Leffen wel waardeeren.
Dus zet men hen daar toe in fchuld.

Wilt wakker dan uw Pigt betrachten,
ô Kindren! zo wordt gy beloonf
Met voordeel, dat uw yver kroont,
Zo moogt ge eens leders gunft verwachten:
Zo ftrekt ge uwe Ouderen tot vreugd,
Ja zelfs tot roem in ryper Jaaren:
Zo zukt gy al het goede ervaaren,
Gehecht aan Vlyt, Verftand en Dengef.

te Amsterdam, by de KAPGEN, van de Wel. C. STICHTER, Boekverkopers in de Warmoestruat, fchuin over de Oude Kerkftoeg, in de Oude Berg Calvarie, in N. 139.

Fig. 17a. Another Amsterdam street scene, with children buying their "palmpasen".

From a print by J. Robijn, about 1790

The first verse under the picture (very freely translated) says in part:

"Father buys a small Palmpaasje
For his darling little lassie.
How happily she holds her toy!
But Brother chooses like a boy . . ."

picking out a tall "whopper" with a flag on top and as many ornaments of pastry and cake, shaped like cocks, eggs, squares, etc. as can be crowded on to one stick. Like all the other boys, he hopes that on Palm Sunday his Palmpaas will prove the greatest of all, the "Baas".

Part II Of The English Summary Of

OM EEN STRUIK DIE PALM WERD

(A Humble Bush That Became A Symbol)

By Dr. A. J. Bernet Kempers

VI. The consecration of the palms.

Nowadays the palm-processions in the Netherlands are restricted to a mere round through the church or at the utmost in its immediate neighborhood if it is built in the enclosure of a cloister. Before this procession the palms (here mainly boxtree twigs, as said in the above) are consecrated. The twigs are either taken from the gardens (fig. 11) or bought or again given in church. In the earliest prayers used for the occasion in the monastery of Bobbio in Italy (685) mention is made of the protection against illness and the devil, provided by consecrated palms. In the liturgy of a later period (since the 10th century) the consecration got the character of a Holy Mass with the distribution of the palms instead of the Communion. The palms were regarded as symbols of our good works, as signs of the victory over death of both our bodies and our sins. In yet more recent ceremonies only a blessing was asked for the palms and for the people who brought them into their homesteads, whilst in the version of 1965 the text was further spiritualized.

In some places in Limburg and Brabant (where processions are still allowed) the palms are nowadays consecrated in a schoolyard or somewhere else in the village. After the ceremony the priest and his flock go to the church. Sometimes especially children are concerned with the consecration (figs. 12, 13, 14). After the service the palms are taken home (chapter VIII), presented to fellow-villagers in exchange for a small reward (fig. 15) or, incidentally, sold at the doors.

Besides boxtree-twigs, likewise privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), holly, yew, cow-berry (*Caccinium vitis-idaea*) and willow boughs although very incidentally are consecrated in the Netherlands. Again very seldom, the palms — as all of them are called — are decorated with a little cock made of bread (fig. 14) or with oranges, nuts, sweets, etc. Similar types of boughs are well-known in the Netherlands, to be sure, but these are not consecrated. They will be discussed in chapter VII. In other countries decorated boughs (of various species of trees and bushes) which have been consecrated in the Catholic churches are found in South Germany and Austria, sometimes of a very large size, up to 10 metres! (fig. 16). In southern Europe consecrated palms are of a more moderate height. They often consist of finely woven figures of dried palm leaves.

VII. Secular palm-branches

A characteristic feature of the celebration of Palm Sunday in the Netherlands is the occurrence of, side by side, palms consecrated in the churches and various types of palmbranches which have not been consecrated. These secular palms are called "palmpaas", "palmpasen" or "palmpaasje". There is, no doubt, a very close resemblance to the decorated varieties of consecrated palms known from Germany and Austria (apart from the difference in size and the secular character of the "palmpasen"). In the course of time this special type of palm-branches



Fig. 10. Palm procession at Hougaarden, Belgium, in 1965. Boxwood (Palm) is in the hand of the carved wooden figure of Christ; the figure of the ass is surrounded by a large wreath of box branches; all the participants carry bunches of branches of boxwood.

Photograph,
Dr. A. J. Bernet Kempers, N.O.M.

in the Netherlands has developed, in the present author's opinion, from one of the green boughs carried around in spring-time, as shown e.g. in Bruegel's painting of the contest between Carnival and the Fast (1559) and as referred to in municipal prohibition orders.

The Catholic palm-procession, for that matter, derived its variety of indigenous consecrated palms (mainly box twigs) from these spring customs. To all appearances there is a certain tendency to a richer composition and decoration of symbols like trees and boughs used as harbingers or spring. At the same time there is a tendency to delegate to young people and eventually to children various festivities concerned with them. In Catholic countries it was possible to change the consecrated palms themselves into such richly decorated boughs and "Palmbuschen". In the Netherlands the Reformation brought about a reaction against "Papism" strong enough to keep the consecrated palms restricted to a mere box-tree twig. On the other hand, the secular — not especially Protestant, but rather "neutral" — round

with the "palmpasen" developed from the earlier spring customs, offered a welcome opportunity for a rich, if not profuse, decoration. This could happen because they were not related to any official ritual and rested safely in the hands of innocent children (at the time not taken seriously in religious matters).

We do not know when, nor exactly how, this development took place. The version given just now, consequently, is a hypothetical one. Fortunately, however, there are at least a few descriptions and pictures of "palmpasen" from the last quarter of the 18th century and to all appearance referring to Amsterdam (fig. 17). At the time, the "palmpasen" were bought for and carried by children. They were often more than 1 metre or 1.50 metres high, the largest one was "een basje", a whopper, and its lucky possessor was esteemed to be "baas", a crack. Evidently there was a certain rivalry at the time, as there still is in some of the organized palmpaas marches of our time. The "palmpaas" is not the reward for winning the contest, as the real palm used to be, but is itself the subject of the contest!



(Cover picture) A street vendor has brought her wheelbarrow-load of "palmpasen" into a dignified 18th-century neighborhood, probably in Amsterdam. Mother and grandmother are sharing the children's joyful excitement.

The original colored print shows plainly the decorations of red, white and blue flags and cakes, mixed with green boxwood. One of a series of 12 prints depicting the months, by Jacob Buys; published 1771-1773. From Dr. A. J. Bernet Kempers, N.O.M., The Netherlands.

Fig. 11 (left). Children gathering boxwood for the Palm Sunday processions and services, Nieuw Schoonebeck. Photograph, N.O.M.

Fig. 12 (p. 21, opposite, above). Consecration of the boxwood Palms in the church at Asselt. A blessing is asked for the Palms and the people who take them into their homes. Photograph, N.O.M.

Fig. 13 (p. 21, opposite, below). Palm procession at Hougaarden, Belgium, 1965. The boys carry large bunches and branches of box to be blessed in church. Photograph, Dr. A. J. Bernet Kempers, N.O.M.

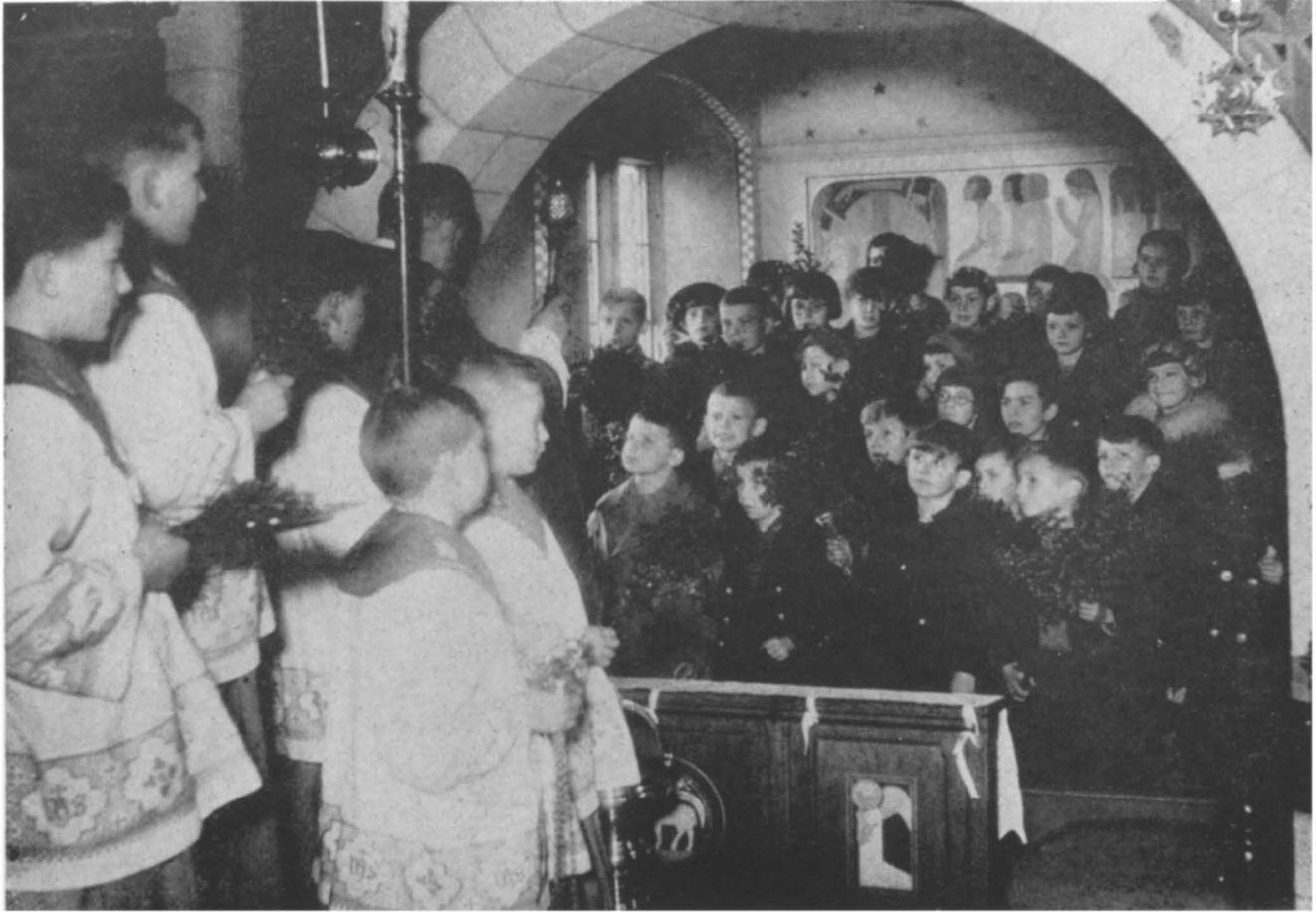




Fig. 14 (above). Children leave the church at Nieuw Schoonebeck, carrying their consecrated "palmpasen". Most of the children who participate in this traditional Palm Sunday observance are about 7 to 12 years old. Photograph, J. A. van Beelen, N.O.M.



Fig. 15 (left). Some of the children carry around the blessed "palmpasen" to their neighbors in Nieuw Schoonebeck. The children take many of the "Palms" to older people, shut-ins and to other childless homes. In exchange, they are then given small Easter gifts, which may take the form of sweets, eggs or money. Photograph, J. A. van Beelen, N.O.M.

Fig. 16 (p. 23, opposite, above). "Palmbaume" in the church of St. Roman, Scharding, Austria. These Maypole-like rods are 5 and 6 meters high, sometimes more. They are painted or peeled spirally or wound with ribbons, with decorated bunches of box at the tops. Photograph, Prof. Dr. Ernst Burgstaller, Linz.

Fig. 18 (p. 23, opposite, below). A c-type "palmpaas" from Doetinchem — a horizontal wheel of bread decorated with one large bird and four smaller ones, as well as fans and boxwood. Photograph, N.O.M.

In the towns children and their parents bought their palmpasen from petty merchants. In the rural districts in the East and South of the Netherlands the palmpasen were — and in part still are — made by the parents or elder brothers of the children who are to walk around with them, visiting friends and relatives and getting sweets, oranges and the like in return. In a way they still function as heralds by showing their boughs proclaiming that spring is near or has already come. Or — likewise originally — they convey the blessings of spring by carrying around their symbol of spring, loaded with auspicious powers. No doubt, nowadays only people who have been reading books on folklore and articles in popular magazines will connect notions of this kind with the gay “palmpaasjes” of their children. Even tradition has hardly a place in the keeping up of this apparently old custom. “Palmpasen” are made for children, carried around and rewarded by the neighbors just because they represent a really nice custom, enjoyed by the children, by their parents, in short by everybody about.

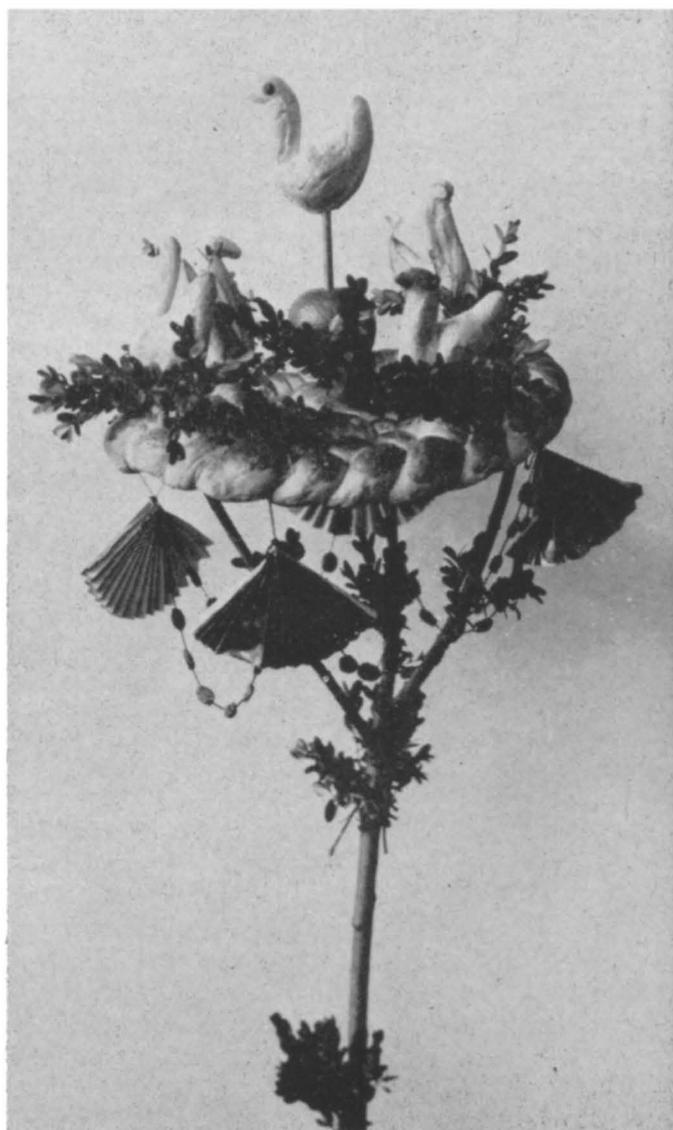
Nevertheless, there are interesting features in it for the research worker, undoubtedly old symbols and usages which are bound to turn up over and over again. People who are intrigued by such customs should direct their attention to both the synchronistic and the diachronistic aspects. The former include the views and interests (at all times and in all places more or less different) of the people doing and using it. The diachronistic point of view — while not neglecting the former aspect, and certainly not its dynamic and changing characteristics — takes into account the shape of customs and symbols in the course of perhaps many centuries and the values attached to them. This remark likewise applies to other aspects of the “green bough” (and therefore in the Dutch text is included in chapter II). There are several types of “palmpasen”, grouped into three categories by Dr. C. Catharina van de Graft, the main authority on this subject:

a. A fir-tree branch decorated with a bread cock (box twigs on its head and tail), sometimes a large cock on a big branch (figs. 18, 19) or two, three or more birds;

b. a long stick with cakes, eggs, paper flags, etc. like those in the early pictures (fig. 16, 17) the so-called Frisian type;

c. a “palmpaas” consisting of a wheel (made of bread), either placed horizontally and supporting a large bird and four smaller ones surrounded by box-tree twigs (fig. 20 a, b, c) — or attached to a big fir-branch placed vertically (fig. 20d).

The green, used for the decoration of the bread-birds or for the “palmpaas” as a whole, often consists of box-twigs, but other species in the evergreen group are also used. Only very rarely consecrated twigs are worked into the “palmpaas” and very seldom indeed the “palmpaas” itself is taken to the church to be consecrated.



The "palmpaas" is often called "a miniature may-pole" and the manner in which its stick is treated — the rind being taken off, either entirely or in spirals — is quite in accordance with this relationship. May-pole, bough, "palm", "palmpaas", all of them go with springtime and, consequently, easily influence each other.

In some places a more christianized effect is given to the secular "palmpaas" by shaping its stick like a cross or by adding elements like a string of raisins as a "sweet Jesus" or by interpreting two tiny birds at the lower part of the stick as "praying hands".

Since the end of the 19th century the custom of walking around with "palmpasen" has greatly diminished. In order to get a survey of the places where it was still in use enquiries and exhibitions have been held. Again, in many places committees and societies, boy-scouts, etc. have tried to organize the palmpaas march connected with it, naturally stressing its festive character, especially as an attractive children's diversion, e.g. by introducing the local brass band. Only when a small party of children are about in the village the old song about the approaching Easter time and the eggs going with it have a chance to be sung like in former days. Most of them include the curious words *ei koerei* supposed to be derived from *Kyrie eleison*.

Dr. A. J. Bernet Kempers' English summary of his book, *Om Een Struik Die Palm Werd*, is being published in *The Boxwood Bulletin* in three parts, of which this is the second. The third and concluding part will appear in the January 1968 issue.

The American Boxwood Society is grateful to Dr. Bernet Kempers for his kind permission to reprint his work. He has taken the trouble also to assemble and send the original photographs from which the illustrations have been made. They are selected from about three times as many, which appear in the book.

Those who have wondered about N.O.M. may be answered by the following quotation from the section on the Netherlands in Fielding's *Travel Guide to Europe*:

"If you are wandering near the German border, the Netherlands Open Air Museum in Arnhem is the European cousin of the Jamestown and Sturbridge Village projects. As a wise New Jersey friend of the *Guide* comments, ". . . if travelers to Holland could see that — and only that — they'd have a true idea of Dutch folklore.' Plan on a good half-day to roam this 82-acre park at leisure; superior snack-type food available; open from April 1 to November 1; wonderful."

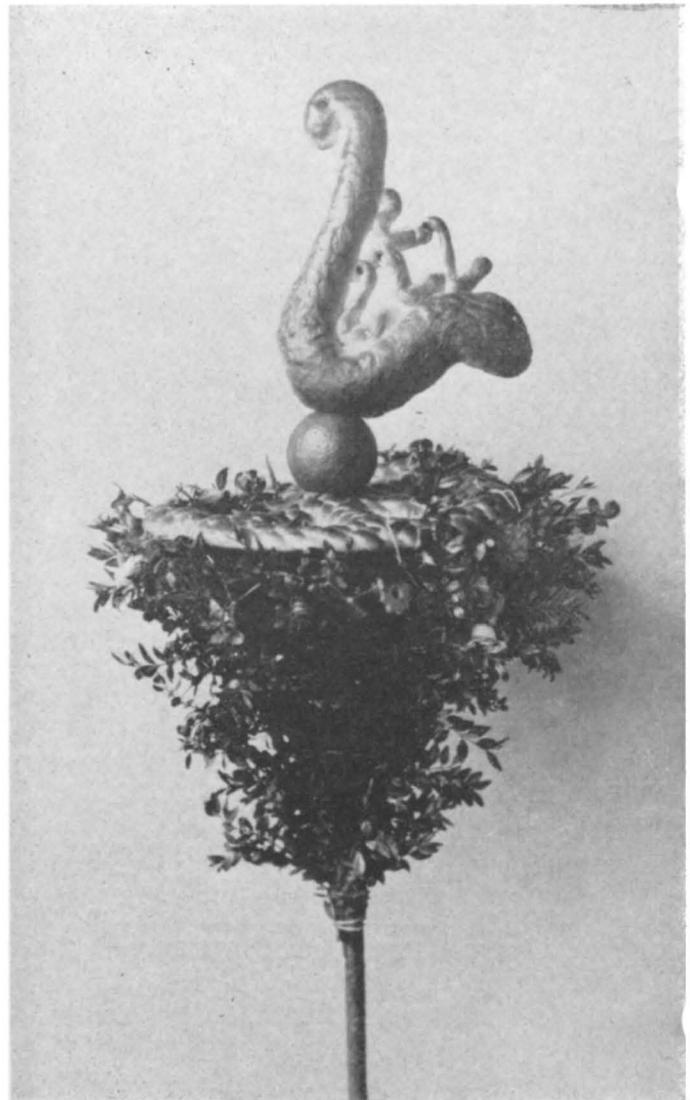


Fig. 19 (above). "Palmpaas" from Delden. A horizontal type simple in style, resembling those carried by the smaller children in Fig. 14.

Photograph, N.O.M.

Fig. 20a (opposite, upper left). "Palmpaas" from Deventer. Of the a-type in Dr. van de Graft's classification.

Photograph, N.O.M.

Fig. 20b (opposite, upper right). "Palmpaas" from Borger.

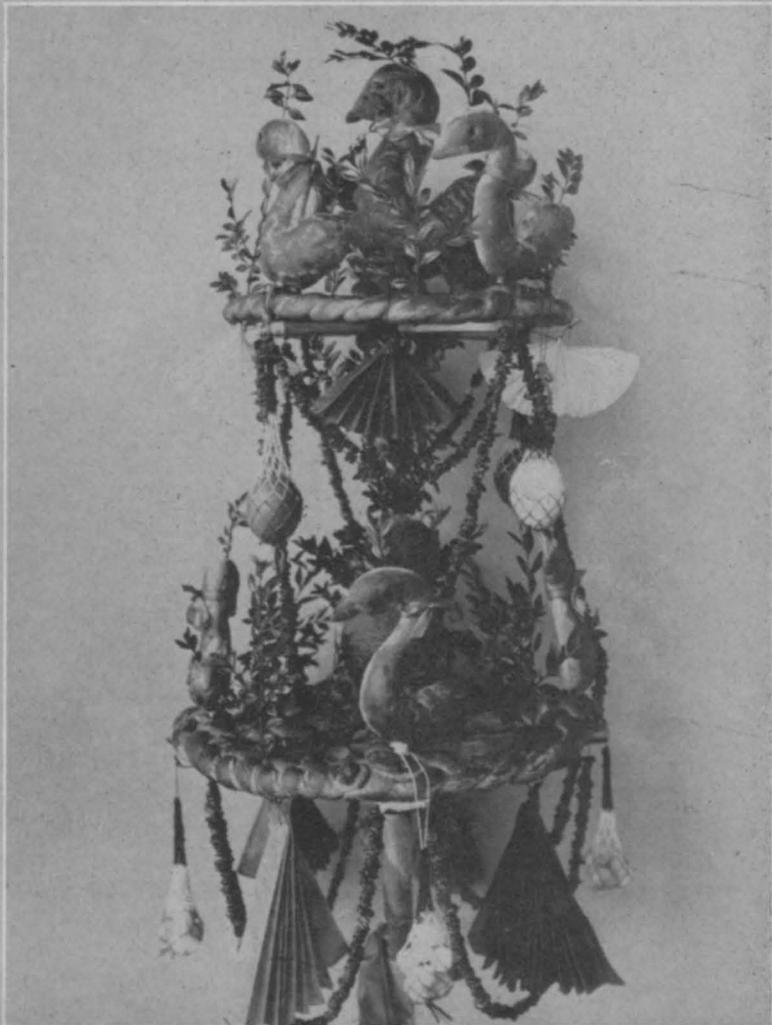
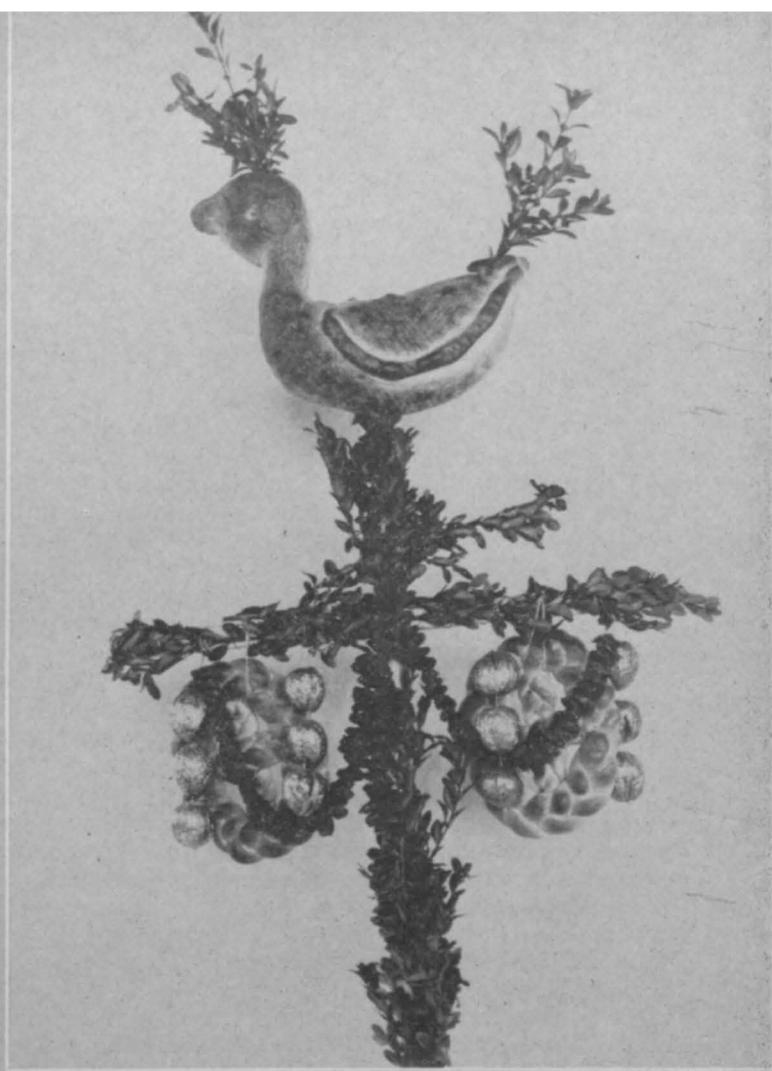
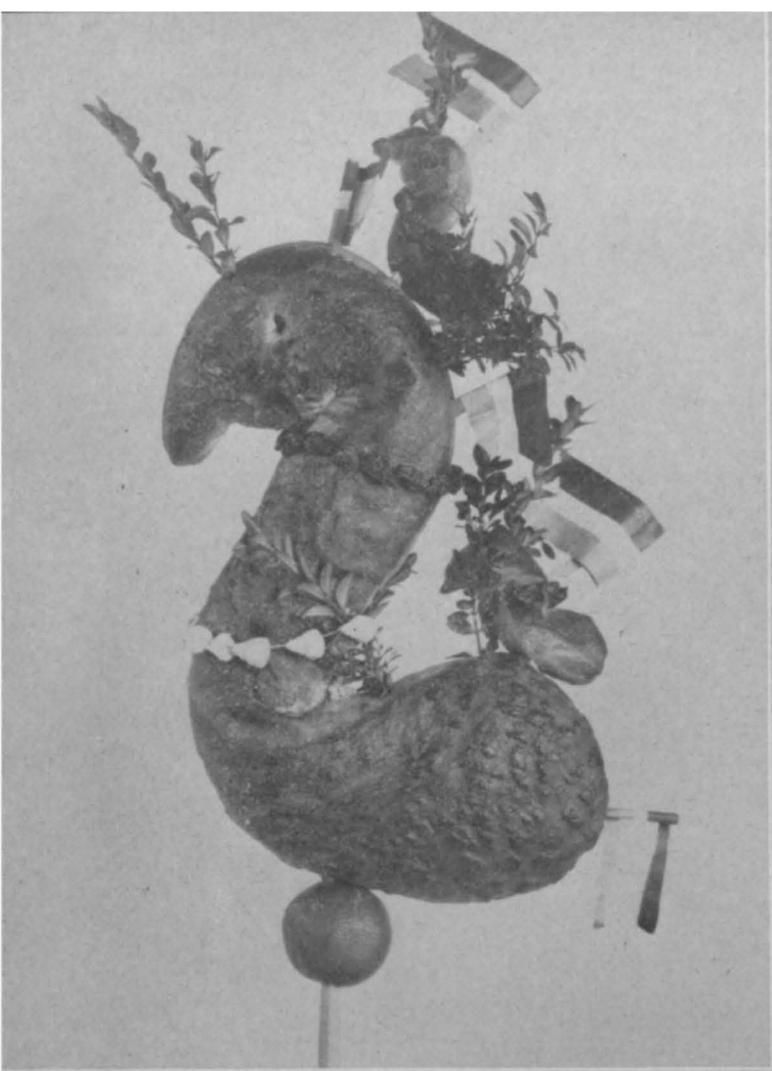
Photograph, N.O.M.

Fig. 20c (opposite, lower left). "Palmpaas" from Enschede. Of the c-type, horizontal.

Photograph, N.O.M.

Fig. 20d (opposite, lower right). "Palmpaas" from Vorden. Of the c-type, with two horizontal wheels of bread.

Photograph, N.O.M.



NOTES ON KOREAN BOXWOOD

BUXUS MICROPHYLLA VAR. KOREANA

By DR. RICHARD W. LIGHTY

It is always informative to see familiar garden plants in their native haunts and note the variation which is a natural characteristic of wild populations. Dr. Edward G. Corbett and I were fortunate to be chosen as a team exploring South Korea for plants of ornamental potential. This exploration was part of a continuing program of ornamental plant introduction sponsored jointly by Longwood Gardens and the U. S. D. A. We traveled throughout the Republic of Korea for four months during the summer of 1966 and returned with 540 collections.

South Korea, lying as it does in North East Asia, has a flora in many ways similar to that of the eastern United States. Lilies, Solomon's Seals, Hepaticas, Maples, Walnuts and many other genera are represented in both areas. Other groups are shared with adjacent Japan, whose flora intrudes in a dominant way in several parts of Korea. Among these plants *Buxus microphylla* which is represented in Korea by its variety *koreana*, sometimes given specific rank as *B. koreana*.

We saw this boxwood mainly around Seoul where it seemed to be a plant which colonized denuded and burned-over areas. Usually it grows intermixed with *Rhododendron schlippenhachii*, *Rhododendron mucronulatum* and *Pinus thunbergii* so the soil may be assumed to be quite acid. Texturally the soil was composed of coarse decomposed granite with little or no organic matter and was apparently well-drained. Bushes ranged from eight inches to two feet in height and were usually roughly as broad as high. Growth was typically open and loose although individuals varied for compactness. Indeed, the plants varied widely for almost every characteristic but none were superior to clonal collections we made from plants under cultivation.

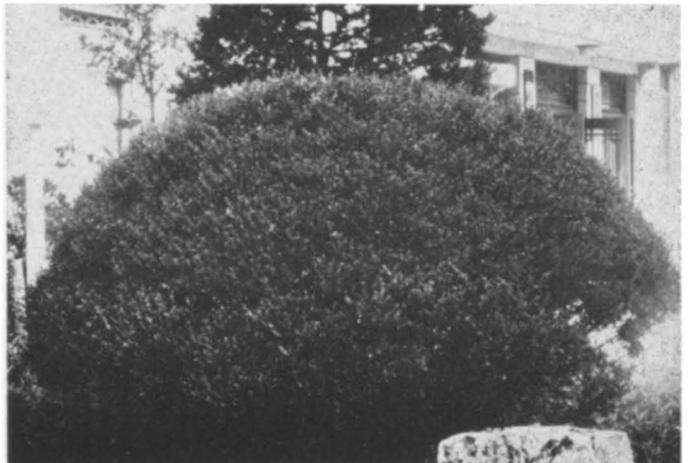
The Koreans seem to appreciate the merits of this shrub and will often transplant specimens from the wild to their garden. Only one instance was noted where asexual propagation had seemingly been used to create a uniform planting. This was at a temple in Seoul where several very old specimens, three and one-half feet high, appeared identical. These, very attractive specimens, had small leaves and had been clipped to produce dome-shape bushes of excellent form. Cuttings were obtained with the permission of a Buddhist monk.

Between Seoul and Suwon there is a Forestry Experiment Station near the little town of An Yang. Here we saw large plantings of seedling shrubs and trees and among these was a planting of *Buxus microphylla* var. *koreana*. Every plant was different.



A tree-form Buxus microphylla var. koreana growing in a temple yard near Suwan, Korea. Trunk diameter, 7 inches; height about 7-8 feet.

Buxus microphylla var. koreana growing in the courtyard of the largest Buddhist temple in Seoul. These are 3-3½ feet high, and probably represent a clone.



There were tall upright forms, low lax plants, ones with large leaves (1.5cm long) and ones with tiny scale-like leaves 4mm in length. We collected some of these as cuttings.

Further collections were made on the campus of the Agricultural College of Seoul National University at Suwon. These were plants taken from the wild and used in landscaping. One was very compact and neat of habit, another had dark green leaves rather than the yellow-green sort which typifies the species.

The bulk of our remaining boxwood collections were made further north near Taek Wal Young, Kangwan-do where low temperatures comparable to any occurring in the eastern United States are reached. Here, at the Alpine Experiment Station, we inspected plantings of boxwood collected in the wild. Cuttings were made of a dwarf plant and one with a definite horizontal growth form as well as of some which had the usual open and rounded form.

We feel that our collections of Korean Boxwood form a representative sample of the variants we observed. Certain extremely dwarf forms with small leaves may make excellent low hedges or material for *parterre* work in climates not permitting use of the usual cultivars of *B. sempervirens*. Other rapidly growing types adapted to clipping will produce taller hedges or specimens in a short time.

One of the most striking examples of unusual use of boxwood was seen in a temple garden near Suwon. Here two plants had been trained as trees on either side of a walk and steps. The larger of these

had a trunk diameter of seven inches and must have been incredibly old. Its height was roughly seven or eight feet.

Another temple had a clipped hedge of box almost six feet high and fifteen feet long. Plants of this size and age were seen only around temples.

One of the greatest attributes of *Buxus microphylla* var. *koreana* is its hardiness. Forms from Japan tend to "burn" in winters around Philadelphia, although I have knowledge of one surviving and increasing in size in Ithaca, New York, over a period of ten years during which temperatures fell well below -20°F . several winters. The Korean boxwood should survive these temperatures with little or no injury. An intense program of selection and breeding might well yield a desirable replacement for *Buxus sempervirens* in the north although the forms we have selected may be considered desirable in their own right in the appropriate place.

The material from this trip will be made available to cooperators of the U. S. D. A. over the next few years. After testing by these institutions some, at least, should become available to the public through specialist nurseries. Individuals cannot obtain these plants from either the U.S.D.A. or Longwood Gardens.

Hedge of native Buxus microphylla var. koreana in a temple yard at Kwan An, near Seoul. Hedge is about 4½ feet high.



Some Large Buxus In The Middle Atlantic States

Part III

By HART M. DYMOND, SR.

Parts I and II of this series were published in the April, 1965 and January, 1966 issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin*.

SOME FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON HARDY BOX

In 1958, I requested a government agency to give me a demonstration of a Swedish Increment Borer, with the purpose of noting the affect of dry weather on the outward growth of boxwood. This would be shown by the distance between rings after a known period of drought. It might be possible also to ascertain the age of boxwood by a ring count.

*(A Swedish Increment Borer is an instrument which grips the bark of a tree while a borer, operated manually, cuts out a core toward the center, less than the thickness of a lead pencil.)

Cores were taken from three 9-11 ft. dwarf boxwoods, and graphs were made by the government representative. A picture of one plant (736 A, site 284) is shown as Figure 10, the core taken from it as Figure 11, and the graph made from the core as Figure 12. The picture of the core and container is slightly larger than actual size. The cores are very fragile and the container of light cardboard, with a tube of glue, should be on hand. The bark end of the core should be marked at once. The core can be shaved to a flat surface with a razor blade and sandpapered; then the rings can easily be seen with a reading glass.

The root crown of this plant was beneath the ground. The core was taken from a small limb or stem, about two feet above the ground. There were, apparently, multiple stems. I measured one of the four plants at this site. It had been 10 feet high in 1931, and in 1958 was 11½ feet. There had been sparse new growth, some of it 1½ inches long. All four plants looked healthy and strong.

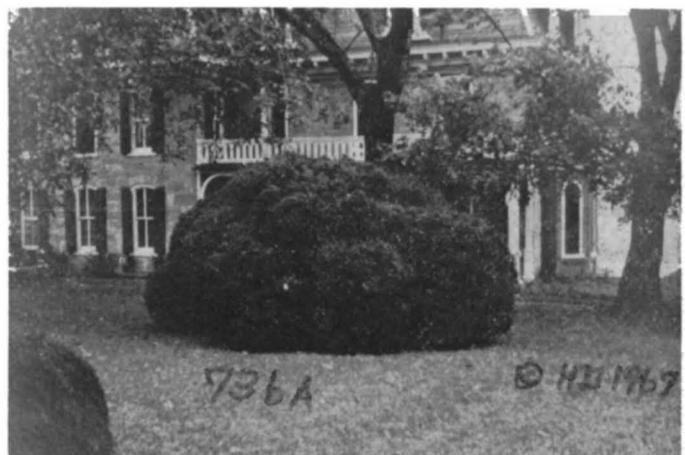
The site has an interesting history. It adjoined "Longmeadows", the property of Thomas Cresap, who was a famous Indian trader of Maryland. His main store, where he held open house for the Indians, was at the forks of the Antietam, about five miles distant (1730-1740). About 1760, the owner of this boxwood site was a doctor of medicine and a delegate to the Maryland Assembly. The Mason-Dix-

on line placed the site in Pennsylvania. An old house, now abandoned, with several additions to the original log structure, is still standing. From its cellar there is a walled tunnel to a spring, now in the cellar of the new house, for use during Indian attacks.

There has been no definite way to determine the age of boxwood. Rough estimates have been made by dividing the annual rate of growth (if known) into the total height in inches of the plant. Thus if a *suffruticosa* bush grows one inch per year and is 72 inches high, it should be 72 years old. But damage, bad years, and different growing conditions affect the growth rate and height so much, that the age may be double the 72 years. A count of growth rings does not necessarily, nor usually, show the age of a tree, but only the age at the point where the count is made. Trees do not increase their size as a unit, as animals do. A tree grows upward only from the terminal bud, and increases the diameter of the wood only by laying down new wood each year outside the old. A limb knot or a spike 4 feet from the ground remains at that distance through the life of the tree. It would be necessary for a successful grower of high-value trees to understand this fundamental fact, and it is not easy to grasp. Apparently little has been written about it. Fortunately the diagram which is Figure 13 illustrates it clearly.

Boxwood, particularly *sempervirens*, is found usually with multiple stems, and the root crowns of old plants are below the ground surface. To get a core showing the age of the plant, it would seem to

Figure 10. Plant 736A, Site 284, from which core was taken. 1958 photograph by Mr. Dymond.



* (Increment Borers can be purchased from Forestry Suppliers, Jackson 4, Miss.)

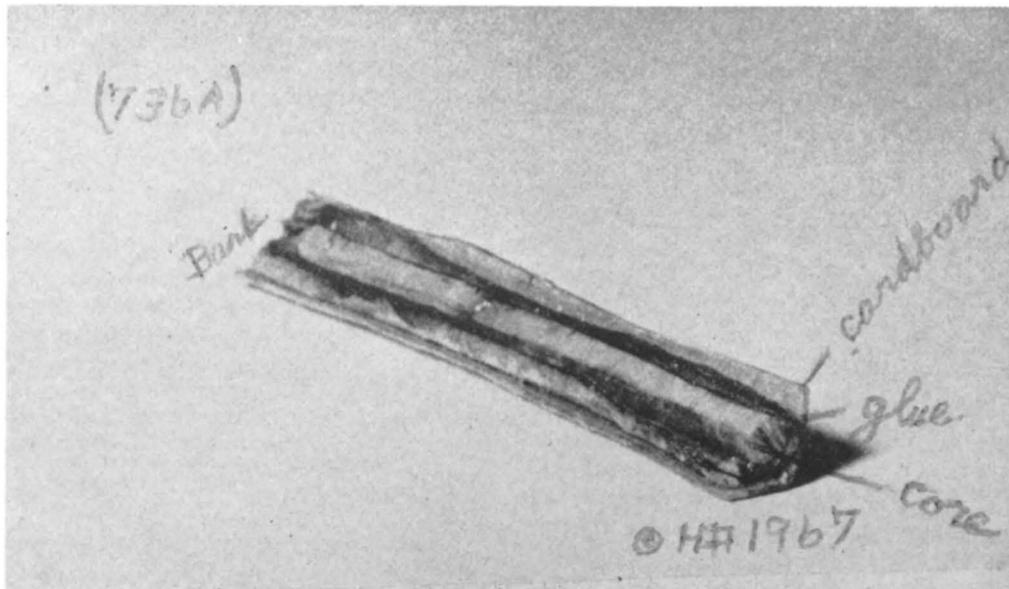


Figure 11. Core taken from 736 A, Site 284. Photograph by Mr. Dymond.

be necessary to find plants with a single stem and no limbs within 2 feet of the ground. It happened that when these notes were made, special mention of such plants, with contour drawings, were a part of the notes. A list of them has been prepared. A core from a 20-foot box tree (pictured as Fig. 7, p. 47, Vol. 5, No. 3, *The Boxwood Bulletin*) shows the age to be about 75 years.

SOME NOTES ON FROST KILL AND FREEZE SEAMS

In 1949 U. S. Department of Agriculture Handbook, "Climate and Man" shows minimum county temperatures through 40 to 70 years. It is indicated that boxwood at about half the sites summarized in Part I (*Boxwood Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 4, pp 61-63) had survived temperatures of 15, 20 and sometimes 25 degrees below zero. Many are south of the Potomac.

The freezing of box may be similar in effect and remedy to mild lightning strikes and freeze cracks in large trees. I have been in open pastures after showers, and have observed trees struck with a mild bolt a few hours previously. There were several streaks from the top of the tree and out through the sod, following the main roots. The disturbance of the bark and the sod was barely discernible. Tree surgeons advise that they do nothing the first year, except perhaps to tack down the bark. After a year, strips of loose bark and splits in the wood may sometimes be observed, and it may be, too late; for trouble has started.

I have been in forests in very cold weather, and have heard sharp reports like the cracks of a rifle. Once during an inspection of a pile of fresh-cut walnut logs, in sub-zero weather, I heard such reports and observed that the logs had split. An inspector of veneer trees is required to reject trees with excessive freeze cracks. They are evidenced, if at all, by narrow strips of new bark, or no bark at all, on the lower part of the hole. I have seen 6 or 8 such strips of new bark about 2 inches wide, on one standing tree. In a publication by The American

Walnut Manufacturers Association, it is stated that "frost seams permit entrance of insects and disease". In a year, decay may have started where the wood was split, and even though bark has healed over, insects may have left an opening. It is further stated that "both walnut trees and livestock cannot be major crops on the same area". The hooves of stock will damage exposed roots, and decay soon reaches the stump and bole of the tree. One of the first chores of an inspector of trees for face veneer is to look for exposed roots around the tree, and to sound the root spurs with a hand axe.

Fig. 7. Site 267. Group V-1. Photographed 1932. Tree Box - 20' high x 20' wide x 20' wide - OK. 1932, NG 1964 - alive but failing. Same measurements as 1932. Growth rings on increment borer core indicates age about 75 years in 1964.



It would seem to be advisable to sound the woody stems and branches of boxwood several times during the winter, and if necessary, to secure the bark and paint the stem. Water pipes freeze and burst and so may roots. A proper mulch in the late fall might keep the roots from freezing.

DRYING BOXWOOD

The British Forest Products Research Laboratory has developed a forced air circulation dry kiln formula for *Buxus sempervirens*. It is as follows:

Moisture Content Percent	Temperature		Relative Humidity Percent
	Dry Bulb ° F	Wet Bulb ° F	
Green to 40	105	101	87
40 to 30	105	99	80
30 to 25	110	102	75
25 to 20	115	105	71
20 to 15	130	115	62
15 to 10	140	118	51
10 to 4	160	118	28

Wood seems to breathe. It adjusts itself to the humidity around it, and is never completely dry. A supposedly dry board will freeze so hard that it is barely possible to cut through it with a saw. Unless properly seasoned, it will end-check, split and warp. This is particularly true with end pieces under eight feet in length. The cause is uneven evaporation of moisture, and the remedy is to retard evaporation so that fast drying parts are slowed to the rate of the slow parts. Knots fall out because the wood around them dries faster than the knot, and shrinks.

According to authorities, French woodworkers of Loudon's time kept box wood logs in a dark cellar 3 to 5 years, and then buried them until ready for

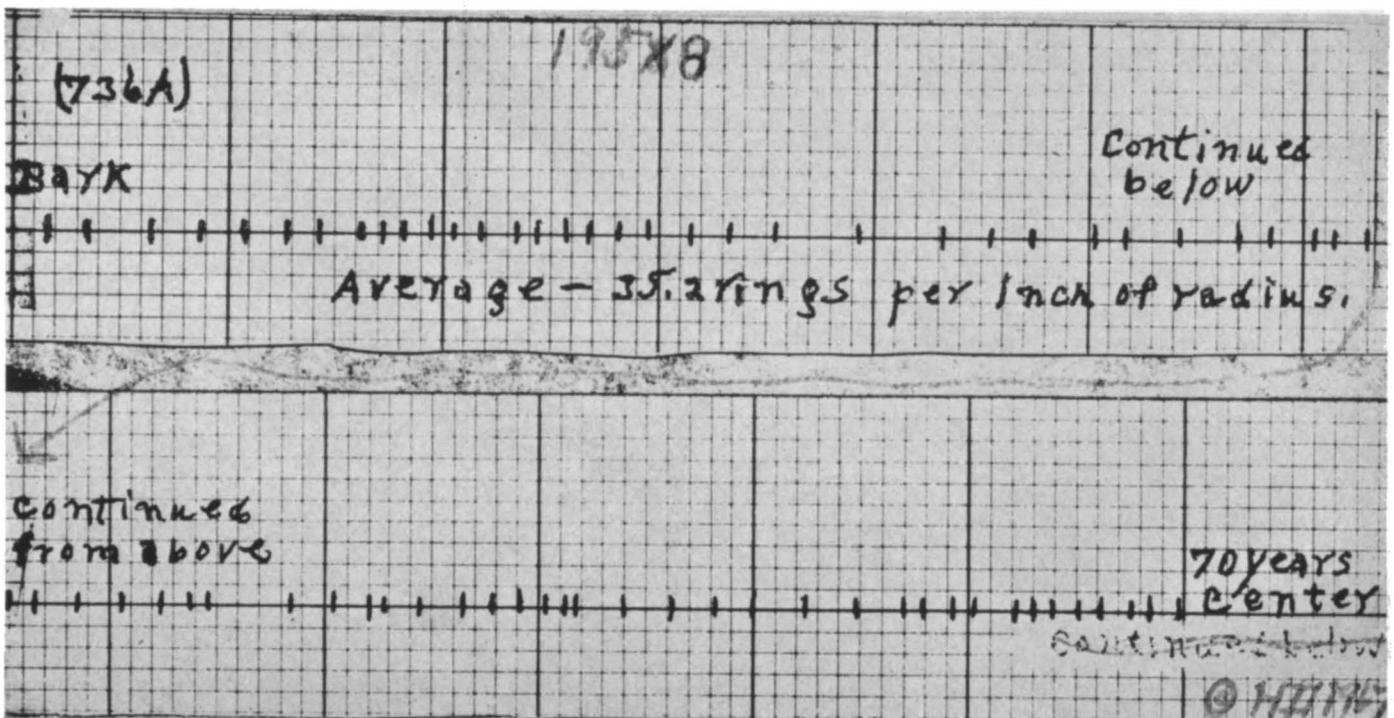
use. Wood for indoor use is dried to a content of 5-7 percent. Lacquer, varnish or paint is used on the finished product, partly to hold the moisture content about level. There are remarkably few good woods in the world, and thousands of special uses for them at high prices. The use should be determined before sawing, to insure proper dimensions.

Air drying of box wood lumber is insufficient. The fresh-cut box (or other high-value) logs should be cut into lumber and completely covered with a moisture-resistant coating, within 24 hours if that is possible. A simple and inexpensive coating is very hot paraffin, which can be applied with a brush or by dipping. Thick pieces require a heavier coating. There must be no air bubbles, brush marks, or other leakage.

Pile the pieces carefully on sticks in an unheated shed for several months to a year or more, until moisture content drops — which is determined by weighing samples — to about 20 percent; then repile in an attic or room heated to 20°F. above outdoor temperatures. During this period, samples should be weighed weekly, until moisture content has dropped to 7 or 8 percent, then the paraffin can be removed. The lumber should then keep indefinitely.

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Figure 12. Graph made from core taken from Plant 736A, Site 284. Shows an average of 35.2 rings per inch of radius.



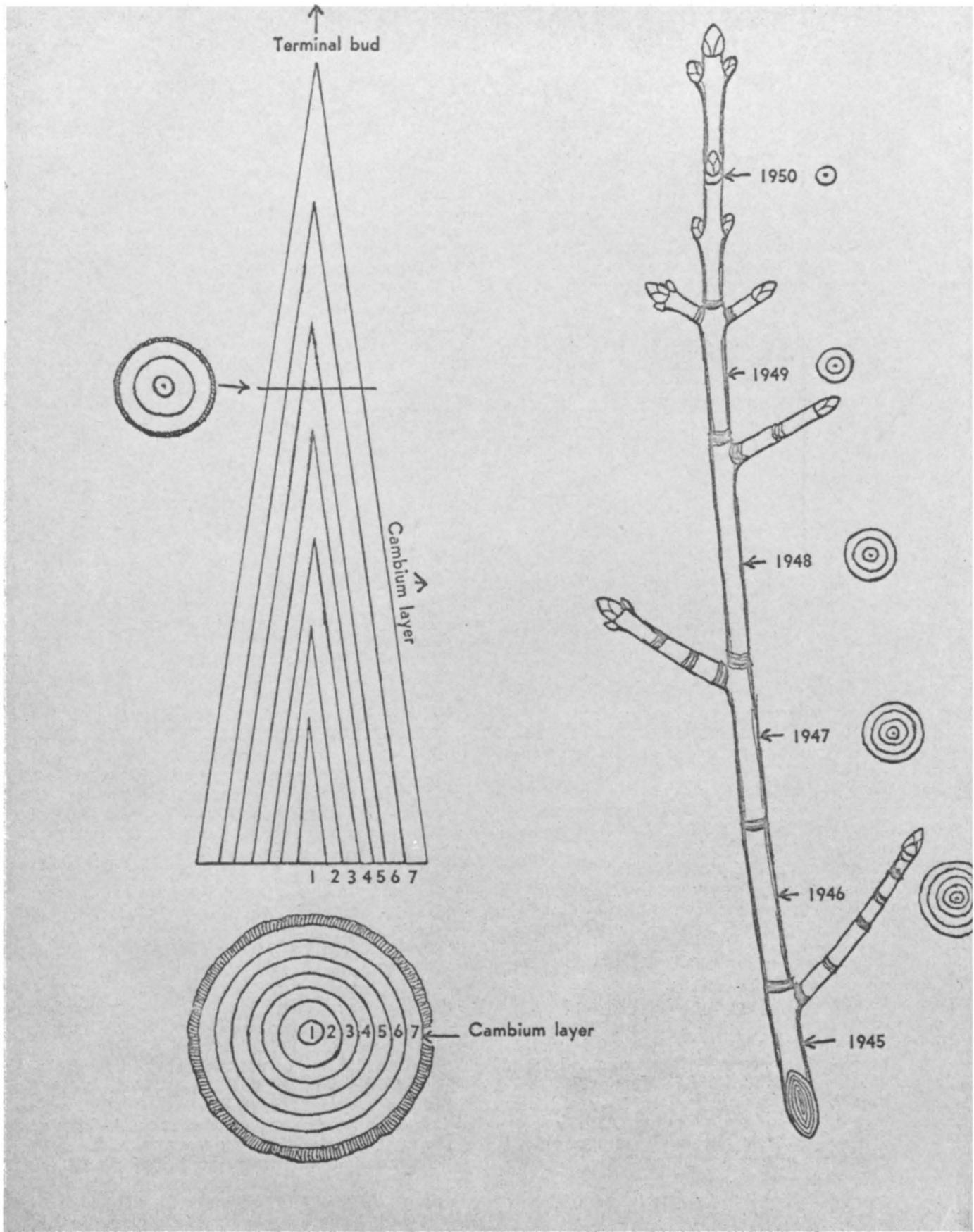


Figure 13. How A Tree Grows; used by permission from "The Book of Trees", by William Carey Grimm, published by The Stackpole Co., Harrisburg, Pa., 1962.

A "READER INTEREST" POLL OF BOXWOOD SOCIETY MEMBERS

By MRS. ANDREW C. KIRBY, *Secretary-Treasurer*

These are comments that ABS members jotted down on the 1967-68 remittance envelopes, to complete the statement "My chief interest in boxwood is"

Approximately a fifth of the membership made some comment, and these range from a single word all the way to lyrical phrases. Replies indicate interest in boxwood to be about as follows:

Growing it -----	20%
Health (protection, maintenance, preservation) -----	20%
Care -----	13%
Propagation -----	12%
Miscellaneous -----	40%

Although only 13% used the word "care" in their statements, a majority of the members implied concern for and care of boxwood by the wording of their comment.

A sampling of these comments by members:

"MY CHIEF INTEREST IN BOXWOOD IS"

- "rooting small plants from my old bushes (now destroyed)."
- "growing it in the Chicago climate."
- "appreciation, conservation, historical preservation — growth habits & health — and garden patterns."
- "dwarf English — retail-wholesale."
- "winter protection for boxwood in this area."
- "growing boxwood and giving it to my friends."
- "selfish, I am afraid! We have a beautiful stand, and wish to preserve it."
- "its hardiness in the N.E. areas. I am experimenting with over 40 varieties."
- "means and ways of keeping it healthy and vigorous."
- "We have some of the largest American & English in this area. The story is that boxwood from our garden was planted at Mt. Vernon."
- "N.C. Box. Have 26 fine over-century old box at Belgrove in Henderson County. Also here at ----- Church, but much younger ones."
- "box in my lawn around my home."
- "owner of 200 year old hedge."
- "learning to cultivate; a knowledge of their growth and history."
- "knowledge on care — water requirements, fertilization, pruning."
- "as an evergreen around my home. I have about 400 plants."
- "learning how to keep them healthy. I have about 100."
- "identification and general care and clipping."

- "Sweet Briar College's stand of Boxwood was in my care for many years; and hardiness of box varieties in Cleveland area."
- "planting more in public places — parking lots, buildings, etc."
- "boxwood forms, gardens."
- "propagating and avoiding diseases in my old boxwood at Va. farm (in Amherst Co.)."
- "growing it. Old Virginia gardens."
- "I love it above all other plants in my garden."
- "growing them around our home. I want to keep up with the best methods of care and culture so they will stay healthy and beautiful."
- "as an ornamental and to grow it in New England."
- "growing them to give away and in hopes of selling some in the future."
- "landscape design."
- "propagation of box as an ornamental."
- "beautification of landscape, propagation — pests!"
- "uses — varieties — pruning."
- "maintaining healthy growth on English boxwood."
- "my garden and historical box plantings."
- "growing good boxwood. Would like to learn about topiary work on boxwood."
- "trying to know more about all different kinds."
- "growing, disease, pest control, landscape usage."
- "growing boxwood for beautifying home."
- "rooting for my yard and to have for sale to supplement my income."
- "esthetic. I love its antiquity, its quiet determination to live beautifully even under adverse circumstances, its magnificent charm in stately gardens."
- "care and culture of our few — and admiring those the *Bulletin* describes."
- "for landscaping lovely homes and parks."
- "correcting growth 100 plants edging formal rose garden — our box is same as Williamsburg Box — about 20" high . . . near Phila."
- "growing, propagating and using in landscaping of gardens."
- "I have two small plants!"
- "I have between twenty-five and fifty boxwoods in my yard of which I am very proud."
- "commercial. We have about 5000 plants (English dwarf) in all stages of growth to about 30" plants. About 100 American."
- "for landscape use (have several varieties)."
- "that of a "buff" who is interested in more plentiful development of almost ground cover box."
- "I am a rank amateur, interested in learning whatever I can."
- "propagation of suffruticosa cultivars hardy in this area."

"Reader Interest" — continued . . .

Other comments from members:

"The *Bulletin* is without doubt the most delightful magazine we receive. I do want another friend to share these wonderful articles. Please have a gift subscription started for . . .!"

"enjoyed every issue. They are always informative."

Editorial note: In the first letter to prospective members of the future American Boxwood Society, a questionnaire was included which inquired what they would like to see in a possible magazine devoted to boxwood. A survey of the results, published in Vol. 1, No. 1, April, 1961, The Boxwood Bulletin, indicated that more persons were concerned with Care of Boxwood (20%), Diseases of Boxwood (20%), and Insects of Boxwood (10%), than in any other topics. Although a little differently expressed, these preferences are about in the same proportion as those determined by Mrs. Kirby.

The Bulletin has published many articles and notes on the care and cultivation of boxwood, and would welcome as many more as we can get. How-to-do-it tips are always useful, and can be as short or as long as you please. They need not be too strictly confined to boxwood; for an example, see Gen. Frank Camm's notes, elsewhere in this issue, on his successful germination of magnolia seeds.

It cannot be too often said: the Boxwood Bulletin is a forum for the exchange of ideas and experiences. We can all learn from each other, and we want to hear from all.

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A FITTING COMPANION
FOR NOBLE BOXWOOD

By GENERAL FRANK CAMM

Magnolia grandiflora trees enhance the beauty of most boxwood gardens. Their heavily perfumed, snow white blossoms contrast appropriately with the rich dark green of boxwood, and their redolence mingles pleasantly with that of *Buxus sempervirens*.

Some years ago I bought a small packet of magnolia seed at Mount Vernon. Disappointment followed when I planted them at my farm in Amherst County, Virginia, and they failed to germinate. Later I talked with the late Dr. Calloway, eminent horticulturist of La Grange, Georgia about this. He expressed surprise, as his method of germination of magnolia seed was similar to the one I had used. In Georgia he simply removed the hulls and planted the seed in open ground in the fall and they sprouted in the spring.

Eventually however I found a solution of the problem in Virginia which succeeded beyond any reasonable expectation. I selected plump, well-formed seeds from the earliest maturing pods in October. (The later ones seem to lack vigor.) The seeds were soaked in water for half an hour and the red skins removed by pressing between the thumb and finger. They were then placed between layers of wet building-sand in a container made of aluminum wire screen. The container was buried in a sand-filled hole in clay soil to a depth of about four inches at the bottom and one inch below ground level at the top. The area was saturated with water. The water froze in November, thawed and froze successively during the winter and in May, the seed were examined. About 85% had sprouted. They were carefully removed without damaging the sprouts and planted right side up in 6" clay pots filled with good potting soil.

The young plants flourished, were transplanted a year later and protected from the wind. When five years old the first bloom appeared.

"St. Moor", Box 138, RFD 1,
Monroe, Virginia

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Symmes, Harrison, 6908 Baylor Drive,
Alexandria, Virginia 22307

Tilson, B. H., Supt. Dept. of Bldgs & Grounds,
Mars Hill College, Box 384-T,
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Regular membership dues at \$3.00 per year, of which \$2.00 are for a subscription to The Boxwood Bulletin. Other classes of membership available are: Contributing, \$10; Sustaining, \$25; Life, \$100; and Patron, \$500. The higher classes of membership provide income which permits the publication of more plates or of additional pages in the Boxwood Bulletin, as well as the expansion of other society activities. Names of those holding Contributing, Sustaining, Life, and Patron memberships will be published each year in the January issue of The Bulletin.

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- If your letter is concerned with
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write to

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