October 1985

The Boxwood Bulletin

A QUARTERLY DEVOTED TO MAN'S OLDEST GARDEN ORNAMENTAL

Photo by Allen Studio, Middleburg, Virginia

Part of newly restored boxwood garden at Oatlands Plantation. *(See Page 33.)*

Boyce, Va.

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Editor — Scot Butler
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ILLUSTRATIONS

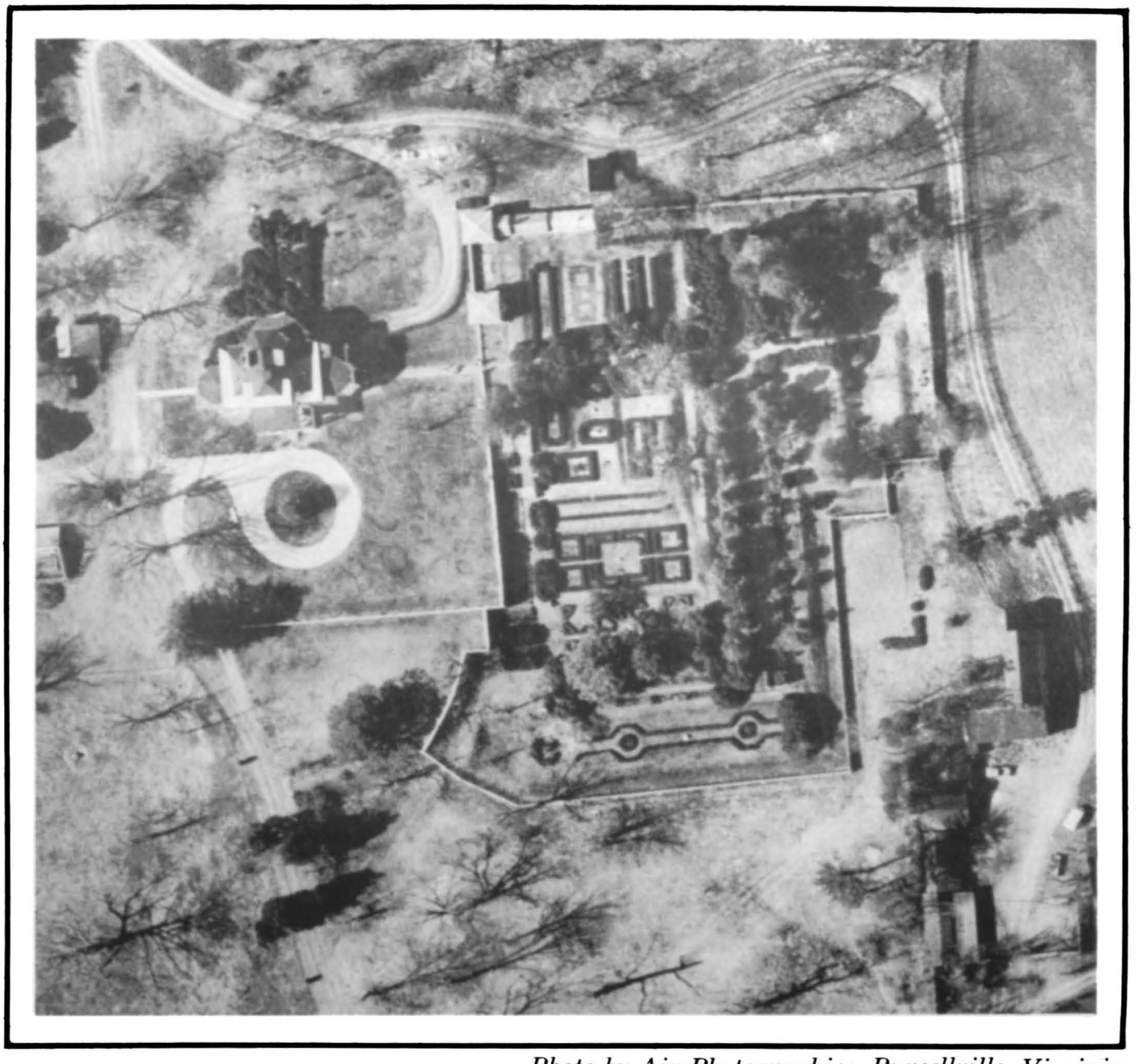


Photo by Air Photographics, Purcellville, Virginia

Aerial view of Oatlands Plantation showing mansion with circular drive at left and historic walled garden at right.

Salute to Oatlands

The American Boxwood Society has enjoyed a special relationship with Oatlands Plantation since that historic property was deeded to the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1965. Not only did some of the Society's founding members live in the environs of, or have direct ties with, Oatlands but on two occasions—in 1969 and 1970—the ABS held its Annual Meeting there. In addition, the Oatlands boxwood has been the subject of several articles in *The Boxwood Bulletin.* Except for a boxwood workshop held at Oatlands in June 1979, however, our contacts have not been as close in recent years as formerly.

Now, with the recent dedication of the restored garden it is time to review what has been happening at Oatlands during the past few years. We think that there is a lesson to be learned from the drastic measures taken to revitalize in three short years the extensive

planting of some 4,500 boxwoods, many of which were languishing. Therefore we take this occasion to salute Oatlands, and especially Chief Horticulturist Alfredo Siani who, with his assistant, Horticulturist Tish Ward, has brought new life to the historic garden without disturbing the integrity of the original design. He has kept it "true to its history and character" while replanting flower beds and banks, re-creating the rose garden, adding a new herb garden and installing a garden watering system.

In the face of current difficulties everywhere in maintaining extensive plantings of boxwood in prime condition Oatlands may serve as an example for other public and private collections to follow if faced with a task of similar proportions. With a relatively small staff and limited budget (since 1982 operating costs have been borne entirely by the local managing corporation that was created in 1979) Oatlands has succeeded in attracting a large number of volunteers who have been adeptly organized to supplement the paid staff. Horticultural students from a nearby community college, for example, join in—under Mr. Siani's supervision—to help with boxwood maintenance chores in the spring. (Although billed as a low-maintenance shrub, boxwood requires definite attention if it is to be kept neatly trimmed in a formal setting.)

Credit for the success of the programs at Oatlands—the good management of its resources (the entire garden restoration project at a cost of $57,000 was financed from gifts) and the engendering of a special community spirit—belongs to the Board of Directors under President B. Powell Harrison, Jr., and a dedicated Staff under Executive Director Nicole Sours. There is a strong sense of continuous, ongoing history that pervades this 294-acre plantation and makes it unique perhaps among the historic properties of this country that are open to the public. It holds a special place in the hearts of many people not only of Leesburg and Loudoun County but of Virginia and beyond. This was clearly demonstrated at the formal dedication of the garden this past May 6. On hand, in addition to local dignitaries, were Virginia Governor Charles S. Robb, W. Jackson Walter, President of the National Trust, and Dr. H. Marc Cathey, Director of the U. S. National Arboretum. In characterizing gardens as places "to go and relax," Dr. Cathey said: "Our nation needs not one, but many gardens. And Oatlands is one of our very best."

Photo: Allen Studio, Middleburg, Virginia
Virginia Governor Charles S. Robb (left) and Oatlands Chief Horticulturist Alfredo Siani entering the restored garden on its day of dedication, May 6, 1985.

It is a very real pleasure to recognize Oatlands in this issue for its progress over the past six years in becoming a self-supporting property of the National Trust and, during that time, in also successfully restoring its treasured garden.

The historic walled garden, which was formally laid out by George Carter around 1820, embellished early in the 1900s by Mrs. William Corcoran Eustis (who strove to introduce "mystery, variety, and the unexpected") and which has been restored with an aesthetic blending of elements at once "elegant, romantic, and precise" by Alfredo Siani, is a source of inspiration for all who appreciate uniquely beautiful gardens. We hope that you will read Mr. Siani's account of the restoration beginning on the next page, and then plan to visit the garden at your first opportunity.

The Editor

Restoring the Boxwood Gardens at Oatlands

Alfredo Siani

Editor's Note: Alfredo Siani, Chief Horticulturist at Oatlands, was born and raised in Italy. He graduated from the University of Naples with the degree of Lawyer in Jurisprudence. Coming to the United States in 1957 he worked first at the Italian Government Tourist Office in New York and then as a Regional Manager for Alitalia Air Lines. During this period he attended courses in horticulture at the New York and Chicago Botanic Gardens. Realizing that horticulture was his real field of interest he retired as a manager in 1976 to devote his full time to horticulture. He and his wife moved to Loudoun County, Virginia, and Mr. Siani continued his horticultural studies at George Washington University in Washington, D. C. and at the Northern Virginia Community College (Loudoun Campus) while furthering his practical experience by working at a greenhouse in Middleburg, Virginia. In 1982 he was invited to take charge of the restoration of the gardens at Oatlands. This endeavor was capped on May 6, 1985 by Governor Charles S. Robb's formal dediction of the gardens. Mr. Siani has kindly prepared the following article describing his experience in restoring these historic boxwood gardens.

* * * *

George Carter was a truly remarkable man: a scholar, architect, builder, a civic-minded citizen involved in water projects, a lawyer, breeder of fine horses, an experimental horticulturist, and a fine landscape gardener. It always amazes me to think how anybody, book in hand, *A Treatise on Civil Architecture* by William Chambers published in London in 1798, could build a house as handsome as Oatlands.

It all started about 1804, on an estate of 5,000 acres given to him by his father, Robert (Councilor) Carter, on the Piedmont plain. It is impossible not to be impressed by the harmony of this Georgian house with its Federal doorways, its imposing Greek Revival portico with classic Corinthian columns and, most of all, by the perfect sense of proportion between the house, the terrace, the surrounding arboretum, the walled garden, all set on a small hill from which the view wanders through hills, meadows, pastures, ancient oaks and the Blue Ridge Mountains on the horizon.

One may catch a first glimpse of the formal garden from the hand-crafted balustrade which borders the expansive front lawns. Mr. Carter built his garden from scratch, cutting into the hill and developing a series of connecting terraces facing east and south to avoid the

Photo: Scot Butler
Front entrance of the stately mansion at Oatlands. A mounting block is at foot of steps.

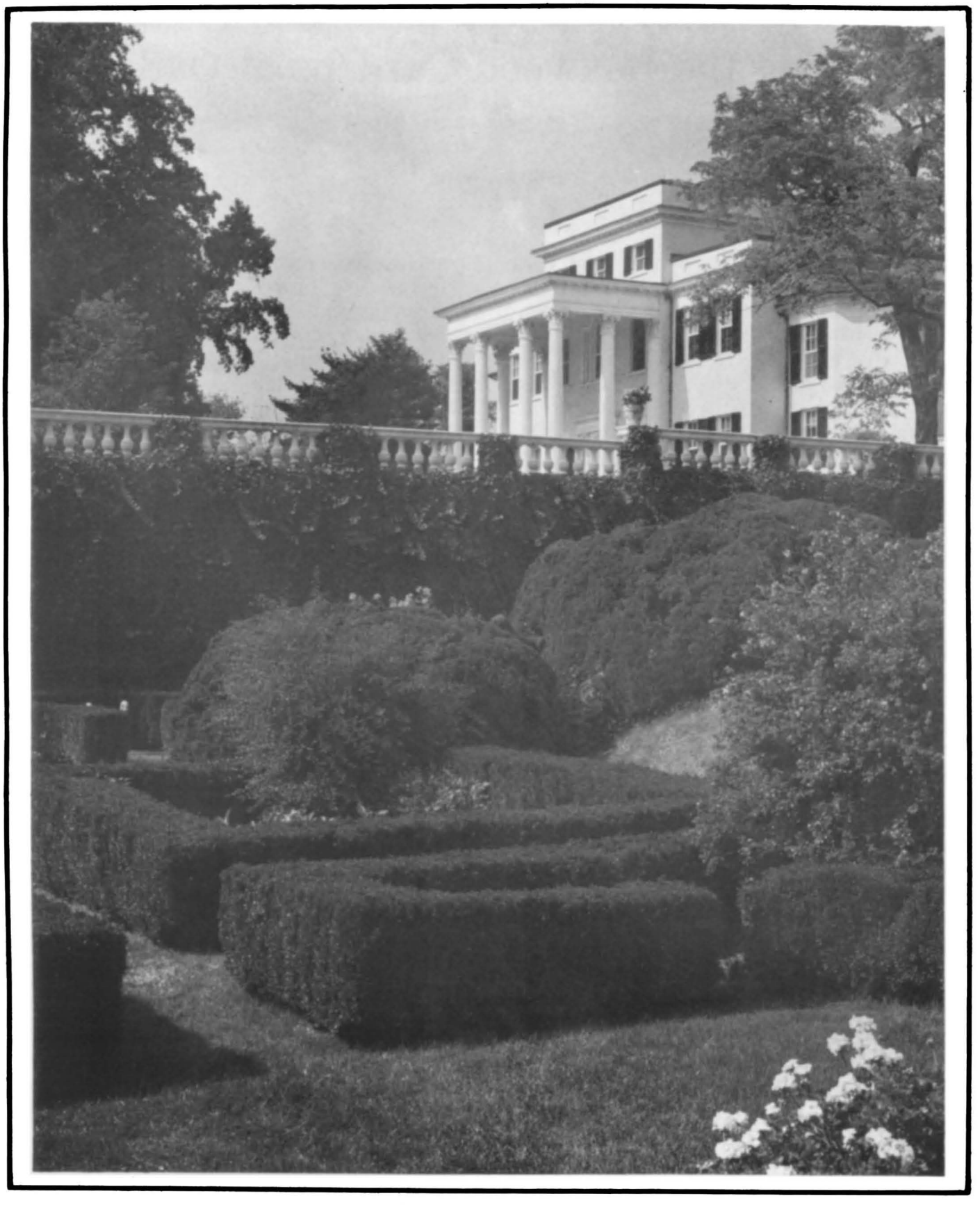


Photo by Marler, Alexandria, Virginia

The mansion at Oatlands, built c. 1804 by George Carter, as viewed from a lower terrace of the garden.

Photo: Scot Butler

View of the formal garden from balustrade above. A tea house can be glimpsed at the far corner of the garden.

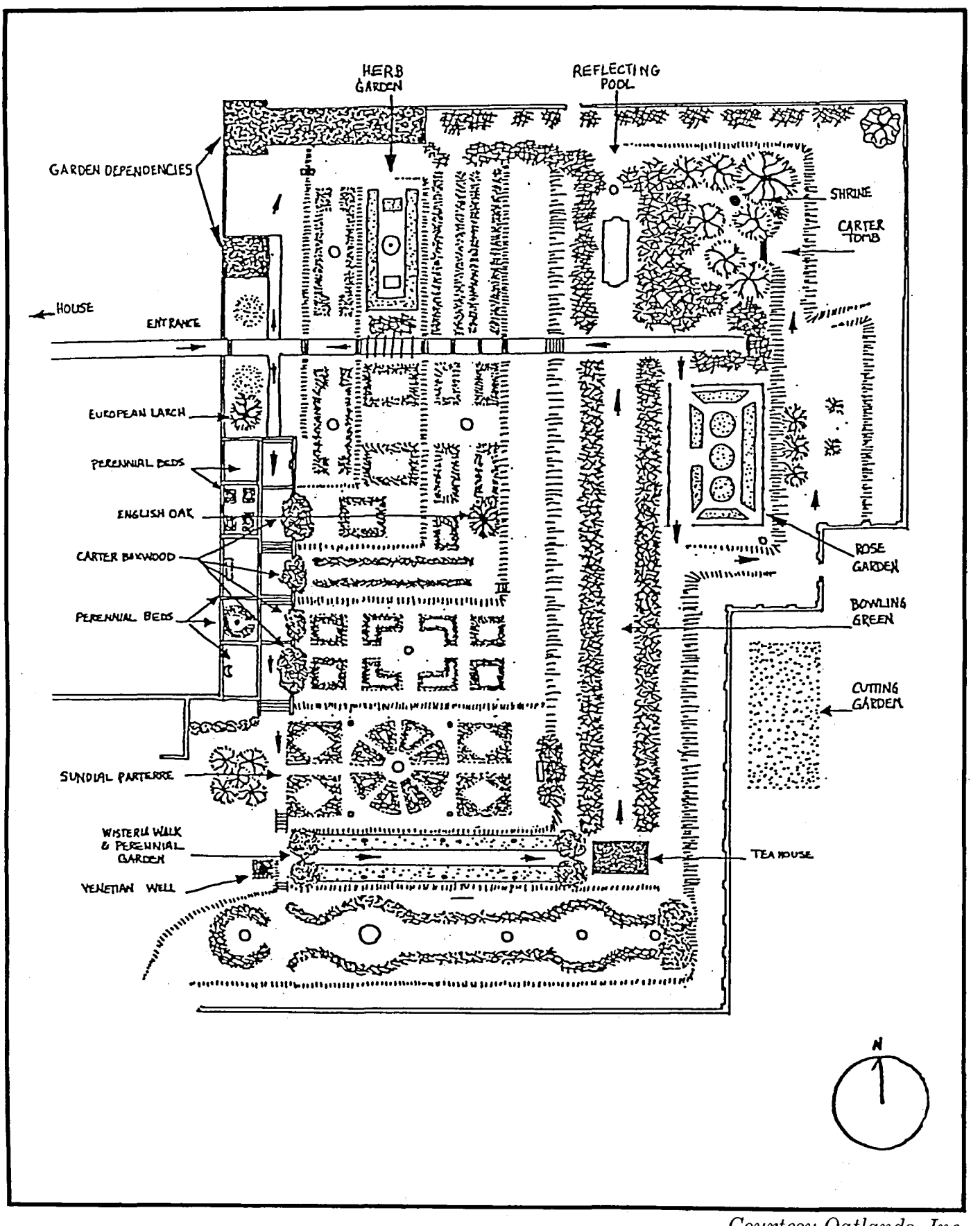
chilly prevailing northwest winds. Because of this, the lower part of the garden is often 10 degrees warmer than the top of the garden, which allowed Mrs. Carter, as noted in her diary, to grow figs and apricots and almond trees in her garden. A tall wall, made of fieldstone topped by bricks, surrounds the entire garden: a magnificent work and still intact in many places. Two beautiful staircases, now gently weathered by almost two centuries of use, lead down to the lower terraces. The steepness of the staircases is, at intervals, broken by small landings on which beautiful tall boxwoods, planted by Mr. Carter, are still thriving.

We can follow the growth of the garden through some well-documented purchases. In 1810, we find a record of purchases of some shrubs from a Mr. Jesse Timmes in Leesburg. During the same year we also find a note of payment to a Mr. William Taylor for work done at the greenhouse. Mr. Taylor labored for many years creating a structure that is one of the handsomest in the Oatlands compound. Mrs. Carter, with justified pride, wrote of being able to harvest from her greenhouse splendid asparagus well ahead of the season.

In February, 1818, we read about the purchase of rooted grape cuttings from a Mr. Graham who stocked varieties given to President Monroe by Napoleon himself. Mr. Carter requested assistance in obtaining these cuttings from his friend, Joseph Lewis, who was at the time serving in the State legislature in Richmond. Mr. Carter wrote to Mr. Lewis at Richmond in February, 1818: "Last Fall I was at Mr. Graham's in Richmond whose grapes were in the finest perfection I ever saw. He promised to give me some cuttings from each of his varieties: white chasselas, white sweet water, black or blue burgundy, and the different varieties given him by Colonel Monroe when he returned from France." We know that the delivery was made, for there is a notation of profit and loss paid on freight on grapevines on April 3, 1818.

In February, 1819, there is a documented purchase of 5,000 "English white thorn plants" from Mr. Grant Thorburn, a New York nurseryman. It seems that, following Mr. Jefferson, experimentation with this kind of "living fence" was being successfully carried out at the time. In 1820, Mr. Carter's account book again records purchases of nursery stock—trees, in particular. A large order of fruit trees was placed with a Long Island nurseryman, Mr. William Prince, perhaps the best-known nurseryman of his day.

It is easy to believe that the first cuttings of boxwood would have been purchased from the



Courtesy Oatlands, Inc.

PLAN OF THE OATLANDS GARDEN

same nursery in Long Island. The first *Buxus* in this country was cultivated on a Long Island plantation belonging to Mr. Nathaniel Sylvester in 1652. At the time, it was mostly used, because of its hard and fine-grained texture, for inlays with ivory.

In its first structure, the Oatlands garden must have been a mixture of flowers, fruit trees, ornamental trees and vegetables, with common and dwarf boxwood bordering the two staircases. Looking towards the east from the entrance gate, the garden must have looked somewhat as it looks today, only younger—much younger. The staircases are still there, altered only by the gentle rubbing of millions of feet. The *Buxus sempervirens* var. *arborescens* have become beautiful trees, creating a pleached walk going all the way down to the Carter burial vault. The terraces sloping south must have had flowers and parterres only on the two top terraces, ending where a majestic English oak still commands the greatest attention. A line of fruit trees—we have found the exact position—separated the ornamental garden from the vegetable garden.

It is important to keep in mind that the main road and access to Oatlands came from the south. I believe this is the reason that the staircase facing south is wider, less ornamental, more practical. On the west side of this staircase, on each landing and placed against the wall, Mr. Carter built some very modest structures. Facing them, across the steps, some dwarf boxwoods were planted. After almost 200 years, those boxwoods are still there, immense, round, majestic, and ....intimidating. No other feature at Oatlands fires up tempers so quickly or finds people quite so divergently opinionated as the handling of these green monuments.

Mrs. William Corcoran Eustis bought Oatlands in 1903. She wrote sensitively about the state of neglect and disrepair in which she found the garden and the feeling of beauty and peace still everywhere in the air. With great courage, a very inspired vision and a precise plan, she started to bring back what could still be salvaged, eliminating whatever was left of the vegetable patches, and proceeding to

Photo: Scot Butler
Entrance gate to walled garden looking east. Tree boxwoods form a pleached walk.

Photo: Scot Butler
The Carter burial vault is enshrouded in ancient boxwood bushes of great size.

Photos: Scot Butler

The bowling green is bordered by common box. At one end is a Victorian tea house and at the other end, a reflecting pool.

transform the entire walled garden into a formal one.

It wasn't easy. New parterres were created, some very intricate and classic in design. Out of the potato patch came the striking bowling green, an allée of common box bordered by euonymus, flowering shrubs and Oriental biota. At one end she placed a very Victorian tea house surrounded by pink rambling roses, while at the other end sits a peaceful reflecting pool overlooked by the statue of a faun bought in Rome, Italy. The grape terrace, then a mass of weeds, became a long classic parterre, with two very symmetrical arbors at either end, each nestling in its own archway a large Victorian terra cotta urn on an elaborate pedestal. One terrace was filled with a rich, geometrically-designed parterre. At the center, she placed an elegant pink marble sundial, and at the four corners, fragrant southern magnolias. A rose garden was added, situated almost as a surprise around a corner, taking advantage of the spectacular view over the gently rolling fields, a setting very reminiscent of a Capability Brown landscape.

It was the end of the Victorian era and Mrs. Eustis was a total Victorian lady. Going over the list of plants and flowers chosen for her garden, the colors seem to be always mute, delicate, with nuances of pink, blues, a lot of white: all very fragrant.

There are many beautiful gardens in this Country, but not too many that have a very distinctive personality, a well-defined character. Even on a first walk through the allées and terraces of Oatlands one feels a sense of beauty and peace that is difficult to find anywhere else.

When I first saw Oatlands, three years ago, it was like meeting a grande dame for the first time. She had all the assurance, romanticism, serenity, and elegance that come only with age. I spent many early mornings and very late afternoons wandering through the gardens all by myself. I was trying to find a reason for every stone, tree, line, color. Little by little, views started to appear, to make sense, to be framed by the right plant. To a lonely tree, I found a **no-longer** existent companion to make a pair, and sometimes a foursome. Plants and trees started to be related, to have a reason for being there. There were boxwoods everywhere. I recalled learning in school that the Romans used boxwood to make musical instruments, and that, as a child, I was fascinated by the intricate forms into which the plant could be shaped. In Italy, they were mostly used in cemeteries. Any garden with boxwood became immediately elegant and formal. The more intricate the shape the richer seemed to be the family. I remember liking the particular smell. Later in life, it has always

Photo: Scot Butler
The sundial garden is laid out in geometrically designed parterres edged with dwarf boxwood. Large southern magnolias provide contrast and shade.

Photo: Scot Butler
The boxwood border of the bowling green serves as a backdrop for the rose garden, which is laid out in circular and rectangular beds.

pleased me to observe how lovely the plant looks adorning a very modest farm or framing a very elegant mansion.

The gardens of Oatlands are primarily boxwood gardens. I was told that the first parterres started to appear in monastery cloisters and around cathedrals and churches. The use of *Buxus sempervirens* var. *suffruticosa* (dwarf box) in parterres stems from the fact that the plant grows very slowly. When I came to work at Oatlands, the garden parterres were in many cases so overgrown that it was difficult to even see the middle.

My approach to gardening is based mostly on a keen sense of observation. For me there is no such thing as a green thumb nor, as some like to say, do I talk to the plants. It is my theory that a plant is something alive and, as such, it has likes and dislikes and many ways to tell us when it is happy or unhappy, hot or cold, too crowded, hungry or thirsty, old or still too young. The yellowing of a leaf, the drooping of another one, the shade and shape of a leaf, the size and abundance of flowers are all signals, clear cries for action or help. It is the plant that is talking to us. We should only observe, listen and do as asked.

The boxwoods at Oatlands were very talkative and unhappy. I tried to read everything I could on boxwood and spent days at The Naturalist Center at the Smithsonian searching for books and hints. The United States Department of Agriculture sent me a very comprehensive booklet called *Growing Boxwood.* I devoured every issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin.* For hours I sat in the garden looking at the box from every angle, at different times of day, under different lights. I kept touching them, pushing them gently aside, picturing them shorter, thinner, greener. The year before, extensive pruning had already been done at the bowling green. It was wonderful to observe how well the plants were responding to the drastic treatment.

The most difficult problem in trying to bring back the precise line in an uncared for and overgrown parterre is the width more than the height. Striving for light and air, the plant, if not regularly trimmed, grows upward and outward. This new-grown thickness moves more and more away from the center of the plant. Forced to survive in deeper and deeper shade, and without any air circulation, the plant slowly dies in the center.

Going over some old pictures of the garden, it was clear that these parterres had been created to remain short and geometric. Each line had a purpose, a very precise effect. This

smoothness of line, separated but still connected, gave the Oatlands garden its character, its style, its assured elegance.

But nothing was in shape any longer. Lines were suddenly interrupted midway. Some ended in a mass of overgrown weeds, and the lovely views of the surrounding meadows were often completely obstructed. Something had to be done, and the sooner the better

We all have memories of old gardens in which only a few hints of a glorious past are left here and there, looking a little silly all by themselves, yet still proud, but mostly sad for the loss of all their beauty. Certainly we were not going to let the same thing happen at Oatlands. We were still in time.

It took a lot of courage, a lot of work, a lot of frustration. It also gave us a lot of hope, pride, and joy. The parterres—or what was left of them—were going to be brought back to their original shape. The height and width of each line was decided according to the condition of the plants and, even more, according to the original design and length of the parterres. Only in one case, and in an isolated position, were the boxwoods cut all the way to the ground.

The results have been very encouraging. The trimming started in February 1983, and continued uninterrupted all the way to the end of March. Two of us were at it almost every day. Now and then we were helped by two more people. It was a back-breaking job, frustrating, slow. Everybody had a different idea of a straight line. It looked terrible, naked, half dead. Then one morning in May, the first sign of life started to appear: a pretty, miniscule leaf. It was beautiful. The boxwoods were lightly fertilized with dehydrated chicken manure, and a gentle mulch was applied all around the plants to protect the shallow roots. All debris, all dead leaves were removed from inside and around every plant. We were unable to water the boxwoods regularly throughout the summer and the plants suffered. (The wonderful watering system just installed has changed all this.) The plants were also sprayed in June with Cygon 2-E against leaf insects in spite of the fact that no real infestation had been found.

The following year the plants were, loosely speaking, left untouched except for cleaning and plucking. The ones growing in mottled shade were the ones that came back fastest and strongest. A generous fertilizing of 10-6-4 was applied together with more mulch.

In this, the third, spring we continued with our preventive spraying. We withheld fertilizing for this year and started trimming the new growth back into shape. We have also started to prepare the soil in those spots where plants are missing so we will be ready to plant new boxwoods in the fall.

These three years of experience have given me the courage to start working finally on the beautiful Carter dwarf boxwoods along the south steps. They have been literally walking down the steps. Age, snow and ice knocked the longest branches to the ground. Protected by an accumulation of dead leaves, new roots started to appear at the outer edges, sometimes between stones and bricks. The center of the plant, open to air and light, started to produce new growth, and the plants grew and grew.

It is clear that, after such a long time, the plants are asking for help. Too much accumulation of dead leaves and debris has been killing some of the branches. The roots growing in stones and gravel are suffering for lack of soil and nourishment; there is decay here and there, and signs of infestation are evident in some spots. But I shall be very gentle and, certainly, will not try to alter whatever nature in these two centuries of growth has made of the plants.

Although the work of restoration has just begun, the gardens are fast becoming a focal point for visitors and special events. In 1984, we had over 35,000 visitors at Oatlands and a very large percentage of them wandered through the gardens.

All the restoration work of the gardens, the grooming and growing, the seeding and planting, the weeding and the feeding, the spraying and watering is done by myself and my assistant, Tish Ward. Two other persons help with the upkeep of the lawns, grounds, and buildings. In early spring and for two or three months after, we really need two more persons to help with the cleaning and trimming of the boxwoods.

It will take a long time and a lot of patience—that most elusive of virtues—but eventually all the parterres and the entire garden will be brought back to just the right shape.

The Boxwood Society of the Midwest Presents *Buxus sempervirens* 'Henry Shaw'

Mary A. Gamble

'Henry Shaw' is a classic boxwood of substance, charm and casual elegance. Its provenance is incomplete. But we know its geographic origin and its history for about the last quarter-century, and we have observed several plants of the clone on an almost weekly basis for the past dozen years. In short, we believe it is a boxwood worthy of being named so that it can be perpetuated and disseminated for the enjoyment of many boxwood enthusiasts in the Midwest and other regions.

First, here is what we know. 'Henry Shaw' is one of the late Edgar Anderson's Balkan boxwoods. He told us that, on a snow-swept day in January 1969 when he accompanied us ("us" being Mary Gamble, Mary Holekamp and Jane Penhale, the three original members of the Boxwood Study Group of the St. Louis Herb Society formed in that year) to the Arboretum of the Missouri Botanical Garden at Gray Summit, Missouri. The purpose of the trip was to see *Buxus sempervirens* 'Agram', which Dr. Anderson considered the most beautiful of his Balkans. We saw 'Agram', a perfect cone, through the swirling snow. Edgar Anderson also mentioned, in a casual way, that a row of boxwoods in an adjacent field, hidden by a serpentine wall, were "Balkans". The weather

Photo: Jack Horner

Twin plants of Buxus sempervirens *'Henry Shaw' grace the Herb Garden at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis. Boxwoods and herbs are traditional garden companions. 'Henry Shaw' is a particularly fine choice because its depth of color is a perfect foil for herbs, and its casual elegance suits their informality.*

didn't permit further exploration and we determined to return in the spring or summer with Dr. Anderson to be told more about the plants. That day never came, because Edgar Anderson died suddenly in June of that year.

Later, this same row of boxwoods was pointed out to us as "Balkans" by the late Mr. Martin Bagby, propagator at the Arboretum for 20 years. Mr. Bagby was then in his nineties and retired. He was physically unable to walk with us across the rough field to take a closer look. When shortly afterward we explored the field, we found a row of handsome, vigorous boxwoods. Obviously, all were not identical. We could find no labels; but one group appeared to belong to the same clone. We took cuttings from these. As we trudged back across the field—dodging clumps of poison ivy—to the gravel service road, Jane Penhale looked back and said, "Let's call these boxwoods 'Field Row'," which we did. 'Field Row' became our convenience name for the *Buxus* cultivar we carried in our records as 752075.

The cuttings we took rooted well, "almost 100%," according to the notation in my work book. I noted further that the plants "are growing in a field behind the serpentine wall. They are in full sun; the soil drainage is poor (later it would kill them). The field is weed-filled. But the plants have a vigorous, vital look. The leaves are a lustrous med. to dk. green; they range from rounded to narrowly elliptical and occasionally are slightly emarginate...They are crowded in the row, so natural form has not had opportunity to develop; but where it shows it suggests a rounded pyramidal form with rather sharp point."

In 1973 we moved several of the plants to the St. Louis Herb Society Garden which is at the south end of Tower Grove House, the Italianate country home which Henry Shaw built in 1849. There we have observed these plants for the past 12 years. Today they are almost five feet tall and about four feet across at their widest point. Otherwise, the previous description stands.

We have concluded that the plants in the Arboretum field were second generation cultivars of some of Dr. Anderson's test plants and were not part of the seed-grown K series which we knew as full-grown plants in a designated nursery in another part of the Arboretum.

Photo: Mary A. Gamble

John Brown, a founding member of the Boxwood Society of the Midwest, prepares plants of 'Henry Shaw' (then known as 'Field Row') for transplanting from the Arboretum at Gray Summit to the St. Louis Herb Society Garden at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

Mary Holekamp and I recall the conversation we had with Dr. Anderson on a sunny spring day while sitting on a bench near his office in the Museum Building at the Garden. It was a rather sad story. There had been a bad winter storm. Dr. Anderson was called from the Arboretum and told that many of his small boxwood plants were dead. His reply: "Fine! Now we'll see which ones are hardy, which ones made it." It was several days before he could go to the Arboretum to see for himself. What he found was that someone had thoughtlessly pulled up and disposed of all the dead plants. The thoughtless part was that this destroyed the planting plan which was the key to identification. We believe one of the plants which "made it" was 'Field Row'. This is the gap in the plant's provenance.

As we have watched these plants in the Herb Garden, we have determined that their rate of growth is moderate—around three inches in a favorable year for boxwood. In every way 'Field Row' has justified our first judgment that "this is a plant worthy of consideration for future development."

Why have we chosen to name it for Henry Shaw, founder of the Missouri Botanical

Garden, which most St. Louisans call "Shaw's Garden"? The answer is simple and two-fold: Because it looks so perfect where it is. The matched pair flanking the double gates of the Victorian wrought-iron fence which encloses the Herb Garden, are in the line of sight which Mr. Shaw's eye would have followed as he paused from work at his desk in the small back room of Tower Grove House, where he made his office, and looked southward at his garden as it developed according to plan.

The ambiance of the Herb Garden sets off the boxwood, and the boxwood enhances the garden. The design of the Herb Garden is formal, but many herbs resist formality. The boxwood, pruned lightly to emphasize its natural billowing grace, has elegance without formality. It has presence, but its moderate size does not overwhelm the herbs, and is appropriate to many gardens. We think further that Edgar Anderson would approve our choice. He devoted 40 years of his life to Mr. Shaw's Garden; it was his professional base. He died at his home on the garden grounds in June of 1969.

It is our intention to include *Buxus sempervirens* 'Henry Shaw' in the list of boxwood cultivars we hope to make available in 1986. We expect to publish this list in the April 1986 issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin.* Watch for it!

A Biographical Note on Henry Shaw

Henry Shaw was born in Sheffield, England in 1800. When he was 18 he came to Canada with his father, who later sent him to New Orleans on business. Young Henry Shaw did not like that city's climate and decided that he would make his future in the village of Saint Louis, some hundreds of miles up the Mississippi River. He left New Orleans on March 14, 1819 on the river steamer "Maid of New Orleans" and arrived at the St. Louis riverfront 51 days later, on May 4.

Henry Shaw wrote of his first view of St. Louis: "In passing the town has a cheerful appearance, some of the houses being elegantly built with wide verandas, in the Louisiana style. The vessels at the landing were some half dozen barges and Mackinaw boats. There were no buildings on the river, but on top of the bank were gardens with fruit trees in blossom, forming a pleasant prospect."

His ease with the French language placed Henry Shaw "on terms of intimacy" with many of the town's first citizens who were of French descent. He admired their gardens and their "fine taste for horticulture." From the start, he liked the town's atmosphere. He set up business on the river front and prospered in outfitting the fur and Indian traders, and in selling a variety of goods he imported from England. He attended strictly to business and in 1840 retired, having decided he had "more money than any man in my circumstances" needed. He made a number of trips to Europe and in 1851 attended the Crystal Palace Exposition in London and visited the great estate Chatsworth and saw its magnificient gardens. He decided that when he returned to St. Louis he would build a garden; later he determined it should be a botanical garden with greenhouses, growing plants, a library and herbarium.

He achieved his purpose. Today Mr. Shaw's garden—which he named the Missouri Botanical Garden and which he bequeathed to the people of St Louis—is open to the public 364 days of the year (it is closed on Christmas). Visitors—who numbered over 600,000 in 1984—find in the garden's 79 acres an endless source of enjoyment, learning and inspiration.

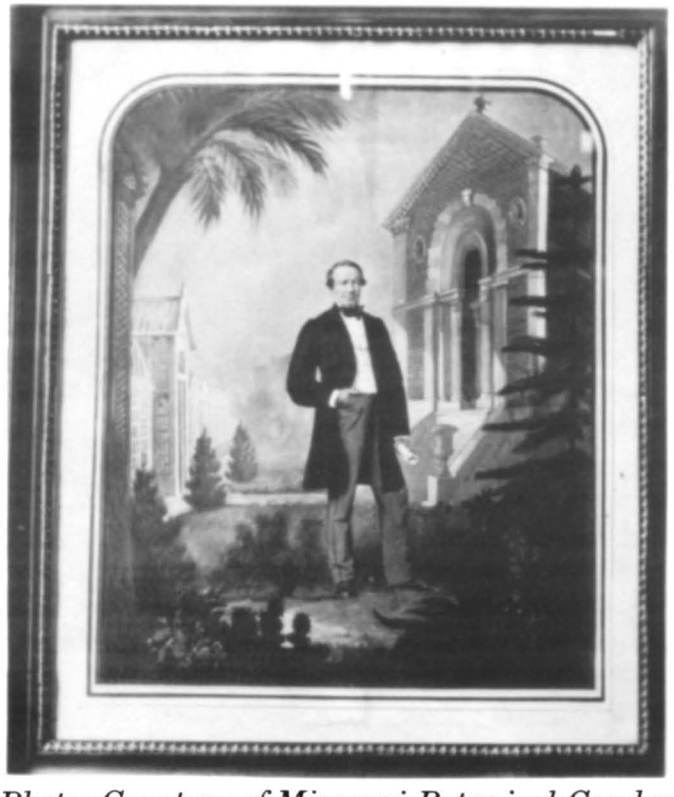


Photo: Courtesy of Missouri Botanical Garden Watercolor portrait of Henry Shaw in his garden. Painted by Emil Hertzinger about 1862. The original hangs in Tower Grove House.

Photo: Shaw Camera

Sprig of Buxus sempervirens *'Henry Shaw' shown life-size. Note density of foliage and buds which promise profuse blossoming.*

New Boxwood Cultivar Registered

Buxus sempervirens L. 'Henry Shaw'

Registered by the Boxwood Society of the Midwest.

Description: The multiple branching at the base grows to form a boxwood that is of rounded pyramidal shape. Twenty-five-year-old specimens at the Missouri Botanical Garden are approximately 5 feet in height and 4 feet in diameter at the base. Leaves are acute to retuse at the tip with a cuneate base. Width of the leaves varies from 5 mm. to 11 mm., length varies from 1.5 cm. to 2.2 cm. Color of the upper leaf surface is classified in the Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart as yellow-green group 147A, underside as yellow-green group 146A. Flower production, appearing in mid-April, is heavy, often producing fruit, 7-10 mm., in terminal clusters. Growth rate is typically two to three inches annually. This plant is from one of the variable groups of Dr. Edgar Anderson's Balkan test plants grown in Missouri.

Clonal herbarium specimens have been deposited at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis, Missouri. Iso-clonal herbarium specimens have been deposited at the U. S. National Arboretum in Washington, D. C.

NOTE: *Buxus sempervirens* 'Henry Shaw' was previously known as 'Field Row', which was not registered. *Buxus sempervirens* 'Field Row' is changed to *Buxus sempervirens* 'Henry Shaw' which has been accepted and registered as a cultivar.

Lynn R. Batdorf, Registrar

Good Cultural Practices Are Still the Best Protection Against Boxwood Decline

(Extract Reprinted from *The Garden Club of Virginia Journal,* March-April 1985)

Decca Frackelton

Ten years or so later, the boxwood "decline" still defies solution. One of the avenues of research the American Boxwood Society is sponsoring is the relationship to mycorrhizal fungi. Though there has been an occasional claim to cure, trying to prevent stress seems to be the best answer. Good drainage, adequate water, cleanliness (keeping free of webs and dead leaves), and good air circulation are keys to maintaining a healthy plant. In addition, check your soil fertility and pH.

The venerable boxwood lining the garden walk at the Mary Washington House in Fredericksburg, Virginia, responds well to its care. Besides general maintenance, these bushes are constantly brushed to remove webs and dead leaves. When inspected, they were the "cleanest" I'd seen and a lustrous dark green.

Over a period of years the Kenmore gardens, also in Fredericksburg, suffered the loss of a large section of *Buxus sempervirens* var. *suffruticosa* (dwarf box) in spite of special treatments. The Restoration Committee generously picked up the tab for replacing them with *Buxus sempervirens* (common box). (In cases where *Paecilomyces buxi* has been identified, it is recommended that *B. s.* var. *suffruticosa* not be replanted in the same location.) The common box have proven to be an acceptable substitute in this situation.

Improving the Rooting of Boxwood Cuttings

Thomas J. Banko

Virginia Truck & Ornamentals Research Station

Boxwoods are most commonly propagated by cuttings, but rooting is often slow and erratic. In a recent experiment with jojoba (*Simmondsia chinensis*) conducted at this research station we were able to improve rooting performance by wounding the base of the cuttings and then treating with auxin. Trimming the basal end to a node was also beneficial.[1] Since jojoba is in the boxwood family (*Buxaceae*) the possibility of similar response occurring for boxwood was considered, and the effects of wounding, IBA (indole butyric acid) treatment and preparation of cuttings to a basal node were investigated on boxwood.*

Four different varieties were utilized in the study, common boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*), dwarf boxwood (*B. sempervirens* var. *suffruticosa*), Japanese boxwood (*B. microphylla* var. *japonica*), and Korean boxwood (*B. microphylla* var. *koreana*). The wounding treatment consisted of a longitudinal incision along the basal 2 cm of the cutting, through the soft cortex tissue to the woody tissue but not through it. The auxin treatment was a 5 second dip of the basal 2 cm in a 0.4% solution of the potassium salt of IBA prepared with distilled water. Cuttings designated as "nodal" were trimmed so that a node was at the basal end of the cuttings. "Internodal" cuttings were trimmed to an internode at the basal end. The cuttings were rooted outdoors in a medium of 50% peat moss and 50% perlite, in flats subjected to intermittent mist, with 47% shade provided by a woven shade fabric. The Korean and Japanese boxwood cuttings were started on June 25 and 26, 1984. The dwarf and common boxwood cuttings were collected on July 9 and 10, 1984.

The rooting responses are presented in Tables 1-4. For all four boxwood varieties the IBA treatment was always beneficial, particularly in combination with wounding. Wounding alone promoted rooting for the *B. microphylla* varieties but not for the *B. sempervirens* varieties. Preparing cuttings to a node was beneficial only for the Korean boxwood. For the Japanese and common boxwoods there was no significant effect. With the dwarf boxwood trimming to a node actually had an adverse effect.

In summary, the most consistently beneficial treatment was the IBA dip. It is fortunate that this is also the easiest to apply. Wounding with a basal incision prior to the IBA treatment gave even better rooting results but required a little more time to apply the treatments.

Reference

1. Howard, B. H., T. Banko, and D. C. Milbocker, 1984. "Rooting response of jojoba cuttings to stem wounding, nodal preparation, and IBA treatment." *The Plant Propagator* 30(4):12-14.

*This research was supported in part by a grant from the American Boxwood Society.

EFFECTS OF CUTTING PREPARATION, WOUNDING, AND IBA ON ROOTING OF BOXWOOD CUTTINGS

TABLE 1 - *Korean*

Cutting Preparation	Wound	IBA	Rooting Percent [z]	No. of Roots	Root Length
Nodal	no	no	23.4a	2.6a	1.4a
Nodal	yes	no	52.4b	3.8a	1.6a
Nodal	no	yes	65.2bc	7.4b	5.6b
Nodal	yes	yes	80.4c	10.6c	9.8c
Internodal	no	no	13.7a	2.4a	1.4a
Internodal	yes	no	17.4a	2.6a	1.2a
Internodal	no	yes	54.4b	8.6bc	5.0b
Internodal	yes	yes	52.4b	7.0b	3.8ab

TABLE 2 - *Japanese*

Nodal	no	no	4.8a	1.2a	0.8a
Nodal	yes	no	27.9b	2.0a	1.0a
Nodal	no	yes	59.2cd	4.4b	2.4b
Nodal	yes	yes	78.5d	6.4c	2.4b
Internodal	no	no	6.9a	1.6a	0.8a
Internodal	yes	no	29.5b	2.0a	1.0a
Internodal	no	yes	42.8bc	5.2bc	2.4b
Internodal	yes	yes	72.8d	6.8c	2.6b

TABLE 3 - *Dwarf*

Nodal	no	no	11.5a	1.6a	0.6a
Nodal	yes	no	12.8a	2.2a	0.8a
Nodal	no	yes	26.8ab	3.4abc	1.8ab
Nodal	yes	yes	41.3b	3.8abc	1.6ab
Internodal	no	no	41.9b	4.4bcd	2.4bc
Internodal	yes	no	56.0b	4.8bcd	2.0abc
Internodal	no	yes	46.0b	5.2cd	2.4bc
Internodal	yes	yes	51.3b	6.8d	3.4c

TABLE 4 - *Common*

Nodal	no	no	61.2a	6.8abc	3.2ab
Nodal	yes	no	45.9a	4.6a	3.0a
Nodal	no	yes	87.2bc	8.2bcd	4.6abc
Nodal	yes	yes	88.2bc	9.4cd	3.2ab
Internodal	no	no	54.3a	5.4a	3.4ab
Internodal	yes	no	48.0a	4.6a	2.4a
Internodal	no	yes	70.5ab	8.2bcd	5.4bc
Internodal	yes	yes	92.5c	11.4d	5.6c

[z] Mean separation within columns followed by the same letter are not significantly different at the 5% level using Duncans's Multiple Range Test.

Boxwoods in Georgia Severely Damaged by Winter Freeze

John G. Kemp

The winter of 1984-85 was one of the coldest, if not the coldest, on record in Georgia. The result was the killing or damaging of all but the hardiest shrubs and plants. The temperature in the Atlanta area dropped to 10 to 12 degrees below zero Fahrenheit in January 1985.

I have been growing boxwoods, mostly the English (dwarf) variety, for about 25 years. I grew them in Maryland and also here in Georgia. I have propagated approximately 1,000 and have them around buildings, in open fields, and in a pine thicket. These boxwoods range from 3 feet high down to about 8 inches.

The following weather events added up to cause one of the most damaging winters ever to plants in Georgia. First, the summer of 1984 was very dry and little rain fell until late September. Fertilizer that was put around plants in the spring lay there until early fall before being leached into the ground by fall rains. The fertilizer began to take effect too late in the year. The fall was relatively warm, December was wet and we had above-average temperatures. Plants had not become fully dormant by January 1985.

About the 20th of January 1985 the artic express roared down into the Southeast. The intense cold lasted several days. Then the sun came out. Foliage of boxwoods of both main varieties seemed to take on a dry, crisp feel to

Photo: John G. Kemp

Dwarf boxwood, about 2 feet high, on south side of building. About half the plant died; the dead growth has been removed.

Photo: John G. Kemp

These dwarf boxwoods, all about 2 feet high, are in an open field. The nearest two plants were killed, but the third plant survived with little damage.

Photo: John G. Kemp

These dwarf boxwoods, about 30 inches high, are planted in an area that receives little sunlight. They came through the winter with very little damage.

the touch. This condition continued on through January and February with the full damage not yet evident. In March evidence of plant kill and damage began to become visible, leaves started turning a bronze color and began falling off. This continued on through April, the time when most people fertilize their plants and shrubbery. May 1985 was one of the driest on record here with only about ¼ inch of rain. Fertilizer scattered around plants lay undisturbed on the ground until mid June when some rain came to begin soaking the fertilizer into the ground. As of June there was a 6-inch deficit of rainfall in the Atlanta area. As of July 4th, the deficit was almost 7 inches.

In June the full damage became evident—many boxwoods of all sizes died while others were damaged to varying degrees. Most of those that lived showed damage that ranged from small areas of leaf kill to bare survival of only a few stems.

The pictures show that those on the south side of buildings and others sheltered from northwest winds and exposed to the winter sun suffered the most. I have cut out the dead limbs of badly damaged plants, and inside dead leaves choke the base and are so thick that from a large plant, at least half a gallon of dead leaves can be extracted. These dead leaves stay moist and choke off ventilation of the inside of the plants. Some plants have a musty odor. Those plants where I cut back the dead limbs early are beginning to show signs of leaf and limb growth. Even those with little damage do not look healthy—there is not the "boxwoodsy" smell of plants this year as in years gone by. It appears that even those with very little damage will require several years to fully recover. Many that are still living are so badly damaged that they may never recover.

The only boxwoods that seemed to escape kill or damage were the older ones (over 20 years of age) and those that had little exposure to the sun.

There is probably no way to protect boxwoods from such extremes in weather that extend over long periods of time. One could probably water plants in long periods of drought; but I do not know of any protection from extremely cold weather when plants have not become dormant.

However, let us not despair, but continue to propagate and grow these beautiful and noble plants. Someone once said that having a boxwood garden was a sign of culture.

Damage to Boxwood in Charlottesville Area Deemed Minimal During Past Winter

William A. Gray

In the Charlottesville area we had less than normal precipitation in the late fall, winter and early spring. I recorded 8.2 inches for the fourth quarter of 1984, 7.8 inches for the first quarter of 1985 and only 1.1 inches in April 1985. We had a cold spell from January 12 to 16, followed by a mere 2 inches of snow on January 17. Then we were hit with the famous deep freeze from January 19 to 26. My minimum temperature reached -4 degrees F. on the 20th and -9 degrees on the 21st, but with 30-knot winds the estimated wind-chill temperature was -45 degrees or so. Then we had a killing frost on April 10, when the mercury dropped to 19 degrees.

I did not experience any undue winter damage from the January cold spells. A few twigs needed to be removed, but winter dessication and bronzing were perhaps less than usual. Many of my more vigorous plants were in the flush of new growth, so I did have a great deal of frosted new growth after the killing frost of April 10. This, of course, was temporary. Now, as of August 26, all plants look fine.

Our Extension Office Horticulturist reported that gardeners' complaints over boxwood winter damage were not out of the ordinary. From my own casual observations around the area, I'd say that boxwood winter damage was minimal. Peach orchards and ornamentals like ligustrum and some azaleas, however, suffered greatly. I would judge that this area of the Piedmont escaped the boxwood winter damage that occurred in Blacksburg and in eastern and central Tennessee. Our temperatures never went below -10 degrees, whereas -20 degrees and lower were experienced elsewhere.

Nevertheless, the need to hose out *suffruticosa* (dwarf or English boxwood) was more important than ever this summer in order to remove an excess volume of dead foliage.

Boxwood and the Winter of 1984-85 in St. Louis

(Reprinted from the July 1985 *Bulletin* of the Boxwood Society of the Midwest)

How did our boxwood come through the winter? The answer to that question is a slightly qualified FINE. On the night of January 19, the wind-chill reached 65 degrees below zero, while the next day the thermometer read -18 degrees F, coldest in 55 years. It is the wind-chill that is deadliest to broad-leaved evergreens such as boxwood, for which St. Louis offers a marginal climate at best. The wind robs leaves of moisture and there is no way for the roots to replace it. It's a sure bet many of us thought our boxwoods had had it!

But it could have been worse. January stayed cold. We had none of the "false springs" which are so deadly because they stimulate growth too early. When at last we were able to inspect our nursery with some assurance that the worst was over, we were pleasantly surprised at how little serious damage was evident in the more mature plants. It was a different story with the small, 1-year plants we had set out last summer. There our losses were heavy, but not unexpected. Experience has taught us that to have a reasonable chance of survival, a plant should spend a winter in a cold frame; but last year we had no choice. And it was a different story with some plants in our personal gardens. There we noted damage which appeared cumulative, carried over from previous bad seasons or years.

The Commercial Availability of *Buxus* Ornamentals

William A. Gray

Professor Albert Beecher, with much toil and patience, has compiled a listing of boxwood suppliers in the United States and Canada. This listing constitutes the data base for *The Buyer's Guide for Boxwood.* Nearly 260 commercial suppliers of boxwood, retail and wholesale, are listed and they offer 40 cultivars of 3 *Buxus* species. An analysis of the geographical distribution and cultivar availability may interest *Bulletin* readers. As more complete information becomes available some changes in detail may occur, but the general pattern probably will not be modified greatly.

As might be expected, the heaviest concentration of boxwood suppliers occurs in the upper south-east, with 108 nurseries reported in Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia. Farther north, the central states from Ohio to Illinois are well represented, with a total of 29 boxwood sources. The third region with numerous boxwood nurseries is the West Coast, with 18 listings, 10 of which are in Oregon.

The northern range for boxwood growers is hardiness zone 4 on the Rehder-Wyman map, extending from Maine to Montana, with 13 suppliers—3 in Ontario, Canada. At the southern limit (zones 8 and 9) 14 boxwood suppliers are scattered from Georgia to Mississippi, with only one in Florida.

In the windy country west of the Mississippi, only 10 nurseries offer boxwood—5 in Iowa and 3 in Missouri. The southwest, from Arkansas to Arizona, is a virtual commercial desert for boxwood suppliers.

About 60 percent of all suppliers are located in seven states, in the following order: North Carolina (51), Virginia (46), Ohio (21), Maryland (11), Tennessee (11), New York (10) and Oregon (10).

The reported commercial availability of boxwood from North American suppliers indicates, somewhat surprisingly, that 18 *B. microphylla* cultivars are offered for sale as compared with 20 of *B. sempervirens.* Two forms of the less commonly used *B. harlandii* are listed.

The most popular forms of *microphylla* are *koreana, japonica, compacta* and 'Wintergreen'. For *sempervirens* the leaders are the common box, *suffruticosa* and 'Vardar Valley'.

Most of the sources for *B. harlandii* lie in the upper or lower south. Both *B. sempervirens* and *B. microphylla* are offered rather generally in all regions. For the most northerly nurseries, however, *B. microphylla* cultivars are much more widely available than those of *B. sempervirens.*

This compilation could not include any information on numbers of plants; hence, the above analysis does not provide any indication of the size of the boxwood market, overall or by cultivar. Nevertheless the information at hand does suggest a growing popularity for boxwood in the nursery trade. Commercially, boxwood remains a specialty item; the listed suppliers are but a tiny fraction of all nurseries. However there is a surprisingly wide geographical distribution of boxwood suppliers. Only the windy prairie states and the arid southwest appear to be poor boxwood markets.

List of New Labels Ordered for Plants in the Boxwood Memorial Garden, Blandy Experimental Farm

Buxus sempervirens 'Elegantissima'
B. s. 'Graham Blandy'
B. s. 'Ipek'
B. s. 'Joy'
B. s. 'Latifolia Japonica Aurea'
B. s. 'Myeri Columnaris'
B. s. 'Newport Blue'
B. s. 'Yorktown'

Buxus microphylla 'Asiatic Winter Gem'
B. m. 'Brouwer's Seedling'
B. m. 'Kingsville'
B. m. 'Miss Jones'
B. m. 'Sunnyside'
B. m. var. *japonica* 'Green Beauty'
B. m. var. *jap.* 'National'
B. m. var. *koreana* 'Tide Hill'

Photo: Courtesy of Missouri Botanical Garden

The taikobashi ***(drum bridge)*** *in the 14-acre Japanese Garden at the Missouri Botanical Garden leads to teahouse island, the culmination of the path through the Garden. Boxwood greets the visitor as he steps on the island.*

A Japanese Garden with Boxwood

Mary Holekamp

Editor's Note: Mary (Mrs. Malcolm L.) Holekamp, our Second Vice President, delighted an audience of early-comers at the ABS Annual Meeting with her presentation on Tuesday evening, May 7, of a slide lecture entitled "An Invitation to Shaw's Garden with a Walk in the Japanese Garden." Even without the beautiful color slides her lecture, here condensed, conveys the essential qualities of Japanese gardens and makes clear why boxwood is at home in the world-famous Japanese garden dedicated in 1977 at Shaw's Garden (the Missouri Botanical Garden) in St. Louis. An earlier article on this Japanese garden was prepared by Mary A. Gamble and can be found in the October 1979 issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin* on Page 23.

The first public Japanese garden on this continent was built in St. Louis in 1904 at the St. Louis World's Fair. However it was dismantled at the end of this event and for many years there was no Japanese garden.

Members of the Japanese American Citizens League raised what they felt was an adequate sum and presented it to Dr. Peter Raven, Director of the MBG, who was captivated by the idea of a new Japanese garden. He carefully researched the plan and in 1972 selected Koichi Kawana, Professor of Art and Environmental Design at UCLA as the artist who could bring the Far East to the Midwest.

Professor Kawana determined that the best location would be a small lake in the southwest corner of the 40-acre Missouri Botanical Garden. The lake was enlarged to three times its original size. The beauty and scope of the now 14-acre Japanese garden continue to grow until today it is the largest outside of Japan. Boxwood is used extensively. Koichi named the garden *Seiwa-en* (pronounced say-wa-en). *Sei* is Japanese for clear and pure; *wa* means peace and harmony; and *en* means garden—garden of clear pure peace and harmony.

An incredible amount of background work and research went into achieving this peace and harmony. Koichi travelled far and wide to find just the right rocks for each spot in our garden. There are rocks from as far away as California, Mexico, Colorado, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire.

He was equally selective and wide ranging in choosing his plant material. The boxwood that he used was all raised at Shaw's Garden—some from cuttings we received from members of the American Boxwood Society such as the late Dr. John T. Baldwin. There are, of course, many plants of *Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica,* the Japanese box. But Koichi also elected to use *Buxus sempervirens* in special locations. He told us that its mounding quality was particularly effective where the plants were meant to represent mountains.

Seiwa-en was designed to combine four distinct types of Japanese gardens. It is a water garden built as it is on a lake. It contains dry gardens. It is a promenade garden—designed to lead you through a series of beautiful and auspicious experiences. And at the culmination of the walk it is a teahouse garden.

Before proceeding with the walk through our garden let me share some background on Japanese gardens in general.

A people with a long history of being close to nature, the Japanese have evolved a style of garden which is unequalled anywhere in the world. The garden artist conveys the stillness and tranquility of nature with an art that appears so simple as to be totally unapparent. The artist leaves the viewer wondering which materials nature has weathered and which materials the artist has manipulated. Koichi Kawana believes there have traditionally been four attributes or characteristics of the Japanese people which they have valued in their history. First is the people's closeness to nature. Second, the Japanese people have a distinct preference for asymmetry in design. That is, they prefer the imperfect over the perfect form and shape and prefer odd rather than even numbers. This preference is manifested in the placement of rocks in their gardens, their path designs, their bonsai specimen, flower arrangements, etc. Third, the Japanese prefer to suggest a mood or an image

rather than describe it. Fourth, the Japanese prefer simplicity in art rather than complex design.

These four values seem to stem from the strong religious beliefs of Buddhism formed in Japan. The earlier Buddhist influence came from Tang China along with many of the first ideas about gardening. During these early times, hillocks and large stones symbolizing Mount Sumeru, center of the Buddhist Cosmos, were widely used.

Taoist beliefs have also affected the evolution of Japanese gardens. The practice of building islands in the garden, not accessible by boat or bridge, stems from Taoism. Islands were sacred places, remote from ordinary human society. They symbolized the Isles of the Blest, of immortal spirits and of everlasting happiness. In our own garden, we have three sacred islands, Tortoise Island, Crane Island and Paradise Island. Taoists also attribute spirits, both good and evil, to all plants, rocks, waterfalls and streams.

Whereas the early Buddhist influence in Japan came along from Tang China, Zen Buddhism came from Sung China. Dry gardens arose as a discipline of Zen. Nowhere in the world do we find stones used so fervently for religious icons, or to represent waterfalls, mountains, streams, volcanoes, islands. The placement of rocks to represent a natural scene or a religious icon is very disciplined. They are not just piled or randomly placed, rather, their carefully considered placement forms the backbone of the Japanese garden.

Japanese gardens are really artistic and emotional expressions of a long relationship between heaven, man and earth. The very old tradition of gardening is one of the values which has been handed down through the ages. Each generation took great pleasure in creating gardens as quiet places of repose and meditation. Gardens were constructed as early as the first century of the Christian era.

The arrangement of rocks in our Japanese Garden is not symmetrically balanced, because all of the rocks are not the same size, or in a geometric ratio for size. Furthermore, they are not evenly spaced. However, the placement of the rocks does not look awkward or unbalanced, in fact, it looks very natural.

The Chinese not only influenced the religious aspects of a Japanese garden but the architectural composition as well. But it wasn't long before the Japanese incorporated the ideas into a uniquely Japanese style. A bridge painted red in China would be without paint in Japan because it is more natural looking. There is a bridge in our garden called *taikobashi: taiko* meaning drum, and *bashi* meaning bridge; drum bridge. It is not complicated in its design nor is it changed by the use of paint. The natural color of the wood is the desired effect. The simplicity of design found in the Japanese garden does not distract the observer from viewing nature. Instead of seeing a red bridge here, the gardener designs a bridge that looks peaceful in "its" setting and inviting to cross.

There is a long history of using rocks in Japanese gardens. The rocks are not simply placed anywhere but first very carefully examined, then combined with others. Certain aspects of each stone are analyzed. Rocks are categorized according to their history. For example, if the stone is smooth it may have been worn smooth by water and used with other water-worn rocks. Jagged or rough rocks are kept together in another category. Rocks of the same color may be still another category. The placement of rocks is no simple task. Each rock is carefully maneuvered for its best artistic possibility and then rooted at least 1/3 of its height. The depth of the rock is important. It must be placed in the soil very carefully so that it has the appearance of having been there a long time. The Japanese revere old objects. Something which is old has weathered many storms and experienced the history of the land. The object itself, if carefully observed, will reveal the history of the land.

The rocks in our garden have been carefully placed in the ground to look very old and very natural. There is a very pretty stream which turns into a waterfall in one corner of the Japanese Garden. In designing this stream the architect worked very carefully, choosing and placing the rocks so as to make it look as if they had been there even before the stream. After the rocks are in place, the designer may turn his mind to plants. Koichi was delighted to be given *Buxus* plants from our boxwood nursery.

When Koichi conducts a tour he reminds the visitor that a trip through a Japanese garden is intended to be like a walk through life. One never sees the whole picture. One never knows what is around the corner. It is full of surprises.

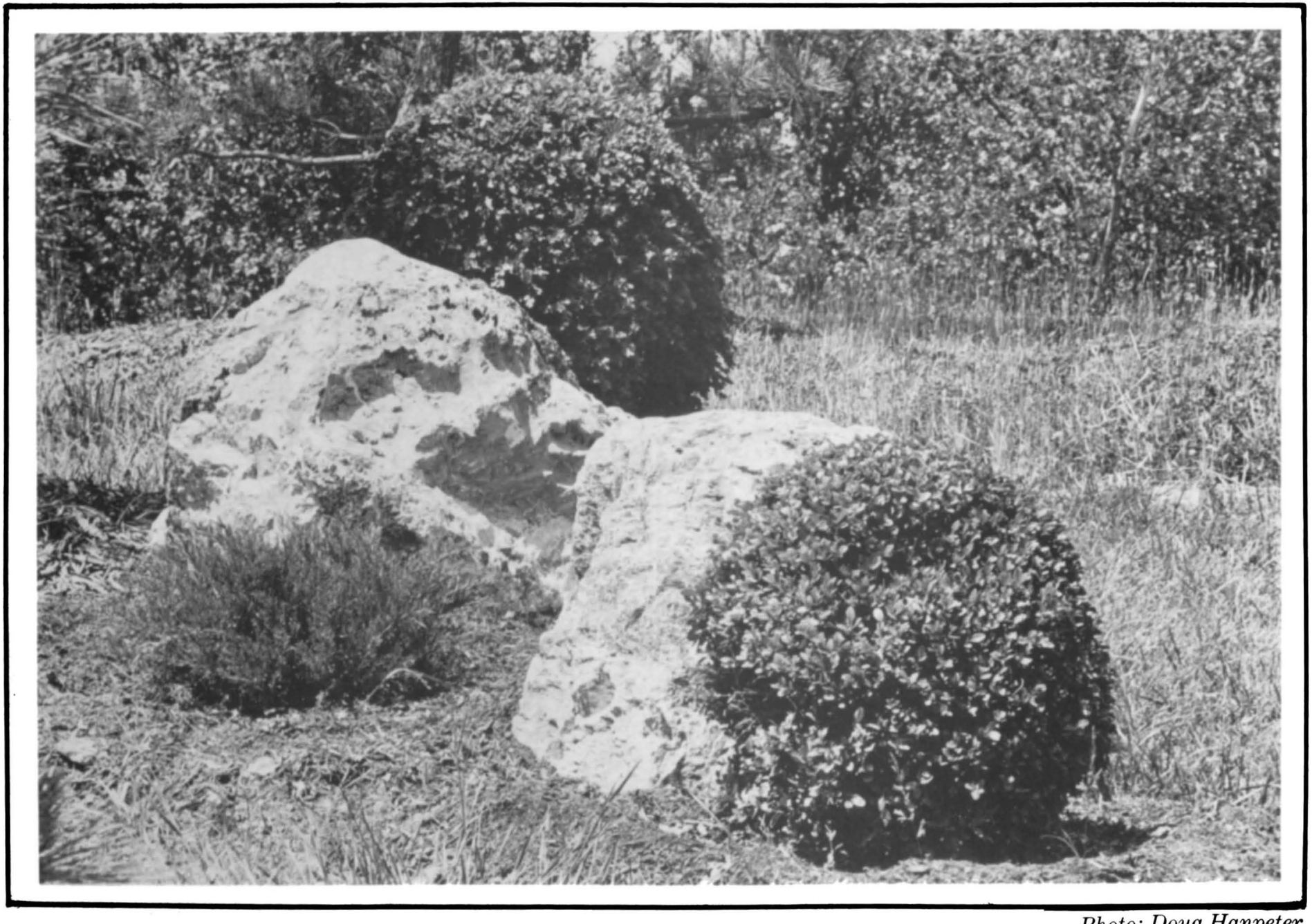


Photo: Doug Hanpeter

Boxwoods used in the stone arrangements of the Japanese Garden are planted and trimmed to complement the feeling of the stones.

The first surprise is a "snow-viewing" lantern—this lantern has an unbrella-shaped shade roof designed to catch snow ("the flower of winter") and be viewed while its light reflects on nearby water. This lantern style may sit on a three or four-legged stand. There are two such lanterns; the one in the Entrance Garden, which was used in the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair; the other one, placed at the south end of Teahouse Island, is a lantern from Suwa, Japan, St. Louis' sister city.

Next we come to the lotus garden. In India the lotus flower has long been associated with the birth of the day. It was a religious symbol long before the Buddhists interpreted it to mean the rising of souls out of muddy waters to the sunlight of a better existence. Our lotus are planted in the lake and bloom in mid to late summer. They are confined to a certain area of the lake by a large wall just beneath the surface of the water. Here also is a small shelter called the plum viewing arbor. It was built specifically to view plum trees. The plum tree is another plant which tells a story to the visitor of a Japanese garden. This small tree has come to symbolize loyalty, vigor and patience since it is a faithful bloomer each spring after the severe winter. The appearance of the plum flower, being one of the first to bloom, is marked by festivity and meditation.

There is a Japanese concept, *monono-aware,* an enjoyment of sad stories, and acceptance and appreciation of things melancholy, of pathos, which is evident in the garden in fall and in winter. A few dead lotus leaves persisting above the water in winter are an expression of *monono-aware,* of beauty in the pathos of dead leaves.

Around the bend from the lotus garden one comes upon the "dry garden" — *Karensansui.* In traditional Zen gardens one could find *only* stones. These gardens were evolved from the four main teachings of the Zen Buddhists: there is sadness in life; sadness is caused by material possessions (or lack of them) and superfluous clutter in life; to divest oneself of "excesses" is to achieve harmony; truth involves achieving nirvana.

In our dry gardens gravel represents the ocean, the rocks (and sometimes the plants) represent islands. The patterns raked in the gravel have specific symbols, for example, waves may be raked around an "island." There are many mysterious qualities found in Japanese gardens. This dry garden reminds one of a rocky island surrounded by white foaming water. The ripples of water have been raked into the sand to represent waves. The rocks are arranged so that it looks like a very rugged coastline. The bend of the tree looks as if the wind has been blowing hard from one direction for many years. The Japanese might meditate on the endurance of the tree to withstand the wind or of the stones to withstand the pounding surf. There are three stones arranged in a very definite, asymmetrical pattern. The tall rock in the center symbolizes Buddha; the two smaller rocks, lesser Buddhist priests. So here is a miniature island with religious significance.

Around the south end of our garden one approaches the plum arbor. There are about 15 of these purplish-leaved trees surrounding the arbor. Each one tells its own story about loyalty as it endures the winter and blooms each spring. Here also is a planting of boxwood.

The idea of building islands within a garden lake or pond came from China. From this Chinese tradition the Japanese built sacred islands representing everlasting happiness in their gardens. Such sacred islands cannot be walked on by human beings and therefore no bridges have been built to the three sacred islands in our garden, one of which is Tortoise Island. In Chinese mythology the tortoise lives ten thousand years and because of this was chosen to represent an island of long life/happiness and immortal beings. One rock to the left of the island is the head of the tortoise and two rocks on the front of the island represent the tortoise's legs. Two small rocks near the tortoise's head represent two smaller baby turtles. Another sacred island in the garden is called Crane Island. The crane supposedly lives a long life of a thousand years and so, too, is used as a symbol of eternal happiness.

Koichi tells us his Japanese garden is best viewed in the mist. A truly hospitable Japanese will spray his walk with water before his guests arrive. If he can't make mist, he can make his rocks sparkle.

Next we approach the lovely zigzag bridge, called *Yatsuhashi.* Don't ever omit the *Yatsuhashi* from your tour. Remember that evil spirits can travel only in straight lines; the zigzag will leave them behind.

Next is a boggy area where the cypress trees thrive, but the *Buxus* suffer from wet feet.

Then along our path is a basin to help us cleanse ourselves on the way to the tea house.

One must cross *taikobashi* (the drum bridge) to reach teahouse island where you will find *Buxus sempervirens* planted. With its reflection in the water the *taikobashi* forms a circle — symbol of man's journey.

Let me point out a lantern, which was named for an ancient (Shinto) deity to whom an old temple was dedicated. The *"Kasuga Shape"* Lantern sits on a cylindrical standard with a small annulet (ring) in the center. The fire box is hexagonal in section and hollowed out to hold an oil lamp. It is surmounted by a hexagonal-shaped roof with a double curve and topped by a ball, drawn to a point. One also sees the other "snow-viewing" lantern as he approaches teahouse island. Across from teahouse island is a valley or boat landing lantern—*rankei-gata.* This style is seldom used in gardens. The shade roof and fire box are of ordinary *Kasuga* form but are carried on a slender, arching stone standard which is inserted in a large boulder. This lantern is placed so that it will arch out over the water.

The most ornate lantern in our garden is the pagoda lantern, but perhaps the most interesting is the Oribe lantern, named after the 16th century teamaster Oribe. This lantern was designed by him to be used in tea gardens as a secret symbol of Christianity, during the years when all contact with the western world was prohibited in Japan. The base represents a cross and the figure, Christ or the Madonna. The lantern marks the entrance to the *taikobashi* bridge.

The use of lanterns in Japanese gardens is of Japanese origin. One story tells of a young Japanese prince who first used a lantern at the edge of a lake to ward off robbers who were active in his territory. Later on, the use of lanterns took on a religious significance. Stone lanterns are valued chiefly by their age and are used for effect in combination with rocks, trees and shrubs, fences and water basins.

The idea of having formal tea gardens was created by Zen Buddhist teamasters. Tea was introduced to Japan when Eisai, a Zen monk, returned from China about 1200 A.D. Later, during the 15th and 16th centuries, the art of the tea ceremony was developed and another way of expressing Zen Buddhism evolved. Unique teahouses and tea gardens were developed for this purpose.

Our teahouse is formal and traditional in appearance. It was constructed in Japan by Japanese carpenters, taken apart, shipped to the United States and then rebuilt here by the same craftsmen. The tea ceremony links together the Japanese peoples' desire to be close to nature and their beliefs in the Zen tradition. It is a way in which they can meditate on the way of nature and on the way of Zen and for this reason the tea ceremony has come to be called the "way of tea" or "way of Zen."

In order to provide the proper atmosphere for meditation, those participating in the ceremony must first walk through two gardens before they arrive at the inner garden where the teahouse is located. Before arriving at the ceremony the participant should be in the proper mood of tranquility and peace so as to truly appreciate the meaning of the tea ceremony. For this reason, the outer, middle and inner tea gardens are designed with great care. Asymmetry, naturalness and simplicity are all used to promote a quiet mood.

In the middle garden, for example, there is an asymmetrical pattern to the path. As you step into this garden on the pebbled path you can only walk three or four steps, then you must step aside to continue onto the next pebbled path. By stepping aside onto the second path, the Japanese believe that you symbolically step aside from the evil spirits following you, and you leave them behind as you go into the tea ceremony. In the inner garden there is a water basin used for symbolic cleansing of oneself before participating in the tea ceremony.

The interior of the teahouse is very simple because the Zen Buddhists believe that all unnecessary elements must be eliminated for the purpose of meditation, and proper understanding of our lives. The tea ceremony itself takes about an hour and is an intimate ceremony, meant to be shared among friends. It is very formal and there are many traditional rules that both the host and guest must follow.

The tea ceremony is the culmination of our walk through *Seiwa-en.* This garden with its many boxwood plants, including both *Buxus sempervirens* and *Buxus microphylla,* indeed helps us all to shed the stress of our everyday world. The boxwood, as always, enhances the serene beauty of this special Japanese garden.

Mail Box

The Blandy Experimental Farm
The Orland E. White Arboretum
University of Virginia
P. O. Box 175
Boyce, Virginia 22620

July 12, 1985

Dr. George S. Switzer
P. O. Box 562
Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Dear Dr. Switzer,

On behalf of Blandy and the American Boxwood Society, I want to thank you for your generosity in giving us the beautiful specimen of *Buxus microphylla* 'Tide Hill'. It has been planted in the American Boxwood Society's Memorial Garden here at Blandy.

We are very proud of the Memorial Garden and we recognize that its existence is only possible through the support of individuals such as yourself. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Ewert
Director

In Memory

Mr. Donald Martin
Henderson, Kentucky

Mrs. Charles Wainwright
(Charter Member)
Cockeysville, Maryland

Editor
The Boxwood Bulletin

Dear Sir:

I was saddened at a garden club meeting in the summer of 1984 when a member stated that "English box is now non-existent." I hope this statement is not true. however, some nurserymen say that dwarf box grows too slowly.

Since that statement was made I have tried to revive an interest in boxwoods in general, giving special attention to the dwarf variety. When initiating officers of a garden club, for example, I used boxwood as a symbol of the duties of officers. Garden club members were interested and asked for a program on boxwood. I did a slide presentation, taking cuttings and rooted *Buxus* for a "hands-on experience." This presentation will be repeated to another garden club in a neighboring town. I hope that after a few more programs of this type I will not again have to answer the question, "What are those bushes?"

The dwarf box is unique. It is hardy if planted in good soil with some protection from the wind and hot sun, especially during the first few years while it is becoming established. The green color of the dwarf box is different from the common box. More yellow is evident and the leaves are shorter and round at the tip instead of being pointed as with the common box. The natural shape of the dwarf box makes it ideal as an edging plant for borders. The slow growth has merit for the busy gardener. One person has said,"The compactness and close placement of leaves of the dwarf box make it look like a fluffy pillow."

A formal garden was developed in the 1850's using both dwarf and common box at Wolf Creek, Tennessee. At the same time a small bald cypress seedling was planted in one of the circles. The dwarf box over 100 years later are healthy and about six feet tall. Fire destroyed the old inn in May of 1975 but did very little damage to the garden. The cypress seems to provide the ideal mulch and conditions for the dwarf box.

Sincerely,

Mrs. James Ward (Betty M.) Walker
Del Rio, Tennessee

THE AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY

INFORMATION

Address: Box 85, Boyce, Virginia 22620

DUES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Regular (individual) membership dues of The American Boxwood Society are now $10.00. This includes $8.00 for a subscription to *The Boxwood Bulletin.*

The Boxwood Society membership year runs from May of one year through April of the following year. Dues are payable in advance of each membership year. New members who join the Society at intervening times of the year are sent all four issues of *The Bulletin* for that membership year and then, like other members, pay dues in advance of the next membership year.

Non-member subscriptions are for groups and institutions such as botanic gardens, libraries, etc. Subscriptions are $10.00 per year, and run by the calendar year.

At the present time all back issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin* are available except Vol. 22, No. 1, July 1982 (photocopy can be supplied, however). Price per single copy of any and all issues is $2.50.

The present classes of membership are:

Category	Annual Dues
Individual	$ 10
Family	15
Contributing	25
Sustaining	50
Life	250
Patron	500 or more
Institutional Subscriber	10

Gift memberships are announced to the recipients by boxwood-decorated cards which state that four issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin* are included in membership.

Contributions are welcome for the Research Fund, the Boxwood Memorial Garden and the Boxwood Handbook.

Members of the American Boxwood Society are reminded of the 1968 IRS decision that contributions to and for the use of the Society are deductible by donors as provided in Section 170 of the Code.

FOR YOUR ADDRESS BOOK

If your letter is concerned with:

- Change of address
- Membership: new, renewal or gift
- Dues
- Donations to research programs or memorial gifts
- Ordering back issues of *The Bulletin*
- Ordering List of Registered Boxwoods

Write to:

Treasurer
American Boxwood Society
Box 85
Boyce, VA 22620

If your letter is concerned with:

- General information about the Society
- Advice concerning boxwood problems or cultural information
- Boxwood cultivar selection

Write to:

American Boxwood Society
Box 85
Boyce, VA 22620

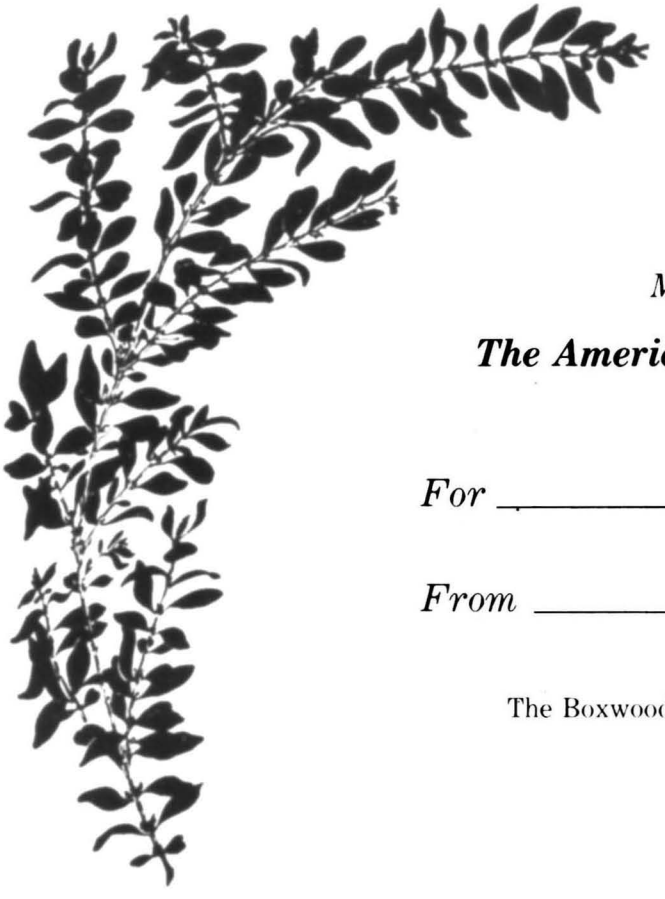
Your request will be forwarded to a member of the Board or another appropriate member who can provide the help you have requested.

You are also welcome to write directly to the President of the American Boxwood Society:

Mr. Richard D. Mahone
P. O. Box 751
Williamsburg, VA 23185

If you have contributions for *The Boxwood Bulletin* — articles, news, notes, photographs, suggestions or anything of probable interest to boxwood people — it saves time to direct them to the Editor:

Mr. Scot Butler, Editor
The Boxwood Bulletin
P.O. Box 190
Bluemont, VA 22012



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American Boxwood Society

If you are looking for a Christmas gift for a friend, why not give a membership in the American Boxwood Society?

Above you see a reproduction of a gift card just as it would go to one of your friends announcing your gift membership. The cost is $10 per year, including four issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin*. Send your gift request to the Treasurer, American Boxwood Society, P. O. Box 85, Boyce, Virginia 22620.