

The

January 1963

Boxwood Bulletin

A QUARTERLY DEVOTED TO MAN'S OLDEST GARDEN ORNAMENTAL



Boxwood growing on chalk hills of North Downs, Surrey, England, with original plantings probably tracing from the time when the Romans were here, 45-450 A.D. (See pages 16, 17 and 32.)

Edited Under The Direction Of

THE AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY

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The Boxwood Bulletin

January 1963

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FRONT COVER

This picture of box growing on a chalk hill, North Downs, Surrey, England, was photographed by Dudley Styles, A.R.P.G., of Dorking, England, and secured by Captain Vickers for use with his article. It also appears on page 32 of this issue. Another picture of box growing in Surrey appears with Captain Vickers' article on page 17, of the October 1962 issue. On pages 16 and 17, of the same issue, there is informtaion concerning the origin of these plantings.

IN THIS ISSUE

Dr. Edgar S. Anderson, one of our Honorary Life Members, writes an interesting account of his boxwood collections in the Balkans — and of the purpose of this work. It is probable that the hardier box types constantly being requested will be found among these Balkan selections. It is intended that pictures and descriptions of some of these types will appear in subsequent issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin*. We are fortunate to have this account from the pen of one of the world's best known plant scientists. Dr. Anderson is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, a former director of "Shaw's Garden," a past president of the Botanical Society of America, the author of several well-known books, and has been the recipient of many honors both in America and abroad.

An interesting and needed account of the performance of boxwood at one point in the deep south has come from Mrs. Charles O. Dean, Sr. Readers from other southern locations with differing soils, temperatures, annual rainfall amounts, and other varying climatic conditions should have other stories to write of their experiences. We need these to add to Mrs. Dean's lucid account in order to broaden our knowledge of the performance of this plant in other southern states.

William Dallimore's three chapters on "The Box," from his book "Holly, Yew and Box" are reprinted in this issue. We again express appreciation to Mr. H. J. Hohman of Kingsville, Maryland, for his generous gift of this book. It seemed that we could most easily place Dallimore's knowledge of box in the hands of all Society members by reprinting his account, in full, in the pages of "The Boxwood Bulletin."

The additional chapters of Captain R. J. Vickers' account of "The Culture of Boxwood in An Old Virginia Garden" also appear in this number. The first chapters, appearing in the October 1962 Bulletin, have brought many letters expressing praise of, and interest in, this boxwood story. These final chapters will be equally appreciated.

PROPAGATION ARTICLE

An article dealing with propagation of boxwood, and describing the method used at the White Research Arboretum, has been requested. It had been intended to have this article in the present issue. Plans included having the several steps illustrated. Accordingly, all preparations were made and the various stages were set up and carefully "shot." Imagine the consternation when it was found that the camera — though plainly marked "loaded with Plus-X film" — actually turned out to be an unloaded, and (alas') an all too ineffective, instrument. The propagation article missed the deadline for the January issue! It is expected that a loaded camera will be found in time to permit the pictures to be made and the article to be prepared for the next issue of *The Bulletin*.

NO YEARBOOK ISSUE

When *The Boxwood Bulletin* was started it was the intended, and stated, policy to issue the publication as a quarterly, as is being done. It was originally thought that the April issues, however, would be much larger than the January, July and October ones — and would contain contributions and experiences with and concerning boxwood from many members. In other words, it seemed logical to make a rather large yearbook out of one issue, and to hold the other three numbers of each volume to a few pages containing announcements, lists of new members, very short articles and comments, etc.

As the months have passed it has seemed advisable to publish the material as it becomes available, regardless of the time of year. This increases the pages in all issues but the April one, and consequently decreases the material available for that one particular issue. As a result there will be no yearbook issue in April—at least at this time. The April issue will be approximately the same size as all other issues.

The Boxwood Bulletin would like to publish articles concerning the boxwood experiences of many members, but for the present these will be published as soon after receipt as possible and will not be held for a particular issue. If at any time the membership should prefer to place emphasis on one issue and make a yearbook out of that number, our plans can again be shifted to take care of that desire.

Remember the Bulletin is the property of the membership! If possible, please write for it, send questions for "The Boxwood Question Box," or let us know what you like, or don't like, about the publication as it is now being issued.

THE 1963 ANNUAL MEETING

It is not too early to think of the next annual meeting of *The American Boxwood Society*. Each of the first two meetings (1961 and 1962) were held during the first week of May. No definite date has been set for the 1963 meeting, but it will be held in very late April or early May, 1963. Being held at *The Blandy Experimental Farm* in the Northern Shenandoah Valley we have to avoid dates which will conflict with "Historic Garden Week" and with "The Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival," and perhaps with other events as well.

Tuesday, May 7, 1963, will probably be the date of the third annual meeting; in any event the date will be within a week or so of that date. The exact date, as well as the program and specific plans concerning the meeting will appear in the April number of *The Boxwood Bulletin*. Watch for the final announcements. In the meantime, why not make plans to attend this annual event?

COLLECTING BOXWOOD IN THE BALKANS

by EDGAR ANDERSON

Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis

My Arnold Arboretum trip to the Balkans in the late summer and early autumn of 1934 was an attempt to get strains of holly, ivy, yew, and box-wood which would fit the difficult climate of the eastern United States, hot and dry in the summer, cold in winter with drying winds, late frosts following deceptive warm spells in the spring, bright winter sunshine sometimes in extremely cold weather so that leaves are apt to be damaged.

For these reasons I went to the Balkans since they have somewhat the position in Europe that the Ozarks do in the United States. Just as our Great Plains are a vast bowl of cold air in winter and of hot air in summer so the Russian steppes (which extend eastward to the very outskirts of Bucharest) are a similar bowl which slopes over now and then towards the Balkans and makes a difficult, chancy climate there, much like our own. It is not quite so difficult for plant life as ours since the presence of high mountains brings dews at night and cooler night air even in very hot weather.

Boxwoods are not evenly distributed all over Europe; there is a northern area where they are found and then another separate area at the south. At the Royal Botanic Garden at Kew and at the Botanical Garden in Belgrade by consultation and study in the herbarium I found that the northernmost extension of this southern strain was just outside of Skopelie in the valley of the Vardar river, in the Macedonian edge of Yugoslavia. The government gave me a courier to travel with me and help in buying tickets, reporting to the police, carrying luggage and generally serving as a companion. He was a White Russian and spoke almost no English but he spoke fluent German and we communicated in that language.

Our directions had been to go to a monastery in the outskirts of Skopelie and that there we would find boxwood in quantity. My memory is that we took some sort of conveyance out to the bridge over either the Vardar or one of its tributaries and then proceeded afoot along the pathway which lead to the unpretentious little whitewashed monastery. The river bed, broad and gravelly, was at one side and the mountains from which the stream rose loomed ahead, dry and rocky with some shrubs on the lower slopes and here and there an occasional battered tree. The records of the monastery showed that up to a few hundred years ago the mountain was largely covered with a beechwood forest, from which the monastery had drawn a substantial part of its revenue. Over-cutting and over-grazing had destroyed the forest. Heavy erosion had done the rest and much of the mountain was down to the bare

rock. Goats, which were still everywhere, were the worst offenders and when we came to the acres and acres of boxwood they too were nibbled, sometimes almost down to the ground; seldom or never were they over shoulder high. While the boxwoods grew in great abundance there were other characteristic evergreen shrubs in with them; big bushy thymes and rosemarys I remember in particular.

At the time of our visit the seeds were already ripe and had been scattered by the browsing goats. We got down on our hands and knees and picked up the shiny black seeds (a little smaller than apple seeds) from underneath the bushes. It was slow work but we eventually got a hundred or so. We also took cuttings to send back airmail to my collaborators in England and made herbarium specimens of the boxwoods and other shrubs. The bushes had been so heavily grazed it was difficult to tell anything about their growth habit but from the stubs that were left it was easy to see that there was much more variation from bush to bush than in the boxwoods which grew wild (or apparently so) at Box Hill in the south of England. They varied conspicuously in leaf size and in leaf shape and in the amount of bluish bloom on the leaves.

The first Balkan boxwoods to be distributed in the United States were raised from these seeds collected in among the bushes of the goat pasture near the monastery. A year after I returned to Harvard University and the Arnold Arboretum where my seeds and cuttings were coming on safely, I went back to the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis and it was from St. Louis that the largest number of boxwoods were introduced. I got in touch by mail with the acquaintances I had made in the Yugoslav forest service and we imported a pound or so of boxwood seed which was raised at the Gray Summit Arboretum of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Eventually a fairly complete set of more than a hundred different bushes was sent as cuttings under number to Henry Hohman of Kingsville, Maryland, for distribution to the Orland E. White Research Arboretum at Blandy Farm and to the box collection at the College of William and Mary. They are extremely variable like the population from which they came and among them are certainly going to be found the hardest in existence. They are doubly hardy because of the area they came from, being drought resistant as well as cold resistant. They vary a great deal in branching habit as well as in leaf shape and color. One dwarfish lowgrowing form has been found among them and one gracefully columnar form. As a group they are rampant and a little coarse but they have great ability to do well under exacting conditions.

The Culture of Boxwood in An Old Virginia Garden

by CAPT. REGINALD J. VICKERS, M.C.

(Continued from October 1962 issue)

CHAPTER IX TREE SURGERY

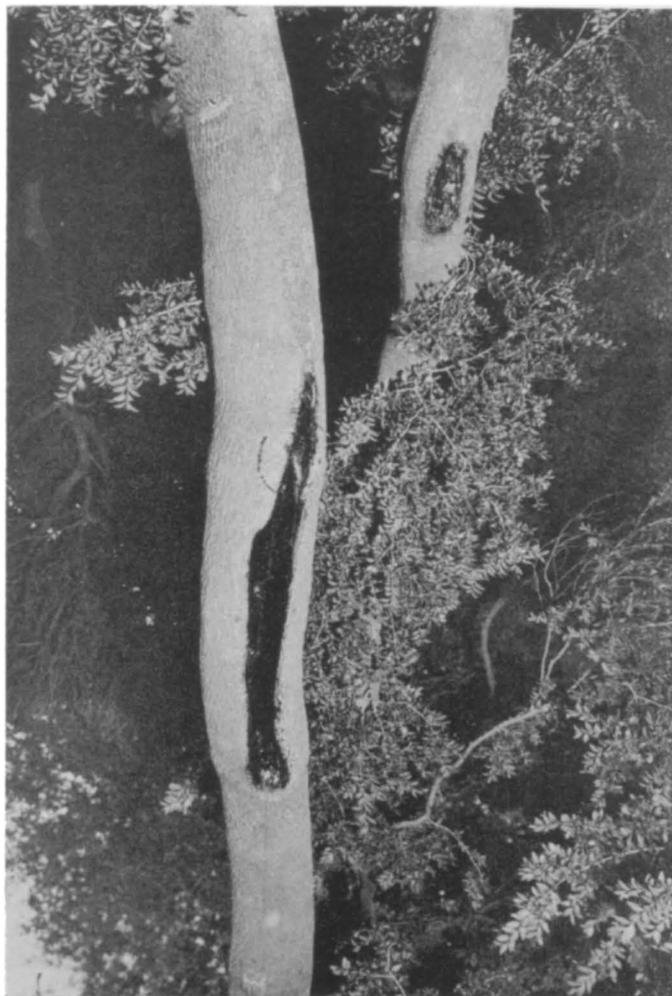
For those gardeners who are able and who gain pleasure by doing their own work, tree surgery offers an interesting pastime. Let us deflate some of the mystery that surrounds tree surgery.

Box surgery is never very extensive and presents only a comparatively small operation, well within the capacity of any interested amateur arborist. One of the basic rules in animal surgery is to create ample drainage from the wound; it is precisely the same in tree surgery. Most of the required surgery in box is due to injuries and age, causing wounds in various stages of decay. If neglected, these injuries soon fill up with dead tissue and moisture, which is unable to drain from the wound. To correct this, stop progressive decay and thereby lengthen the life of the box, we curette, water proof and drain the wound.

Some cavities are insignificantly small but even here, the treatment suggested will pay a dividend. A high percentage of our injuries involve the trunks. Let us treat a fairly extensive, but moderately superficial wound, involving an area one third of the circumference of the branch or trunk, and six inches to a foot long. The bark covering has died back, and the underlying wood is gradually decaying deep into the branch or trunk. We curette all decayed tissue back to sound, hard wood, and apply a good coat of paint to the surface. A second or third coat of paint applied at drying intervals will help to really waterproof the injury.

Here is a cavity near the base of a trunk, which if left untreated, would rapidly reach the point of complete decay — one sees this in old, neglected box. Where such exists, glance down a box walk and here and there one sees groups of foliage discoloration; follow down the trunk and you will locate the cause and, if decay has progressed far enough, often one may grasp the limb and easily disconnect it from the parent bush. Let us treat such a cavity in its earlier stage of decay.

We shall find a cavity of varying extent, incapable of draining itself, and filled with 'soggy' decayed debris. This is a typical injury where surgery will pay a large dividend, by prolonging the life of



EXAMPLE OF TREE SURGERY

the box involved. The first step is to clean out all loose debris. We have to improvise tools, such as the common culinary potato ball scoop — a teaspoon or heavy wire flattened at one end, and shaped to extract — a blacksmith can also implement your ideas.

Now give the cavity a good curetting — scrape out every bit of decay down to the sound wood and leave the cavity clean. Drainage, if a reasonable amount of cutting will drain the cavity, without weakening the limb, cut the necessary wood away to accomplish it. You are now ready to give our cavity a good coat of paint and repeat until you feel you have waterproofed it thoroughly.

You will run into cavities — that may be too deep to effect drainage as above. For these cases, theoretically one drills through the side of the cavity base and obtains drainage. We have found box wood too hard for hand drilling and tried to avoid the work of connecting up a power drill; in such cases we proceed as follows: After cleaning out, curetting and painting the cavity wall, a mixture of roofing asphalt and sawdust worked to the consistency of dough is packed and rammed down into the cavity, until it reaches a level when drainage is obtained. We find this filler bonds well with the cavity wall and is therefore effective.



FOUNDATION PLANTINGS NEED PROTECTION FROM ROOF RELEASED SNOW



ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF TREE SURGERY

Needless to add, this is not scientific, tree surgeon advice. We can only guarantee that it is interesting work, and gives one a sense of satisfaction when completed; it saves your pocketbook at the rate of about \$4.00 per hour per man. Quite obviously you promote yourself to the wage earning fraternity — with no union restrictions or dues to pay.

DROUGHT CONDITIONS

Since we collected these notes together, we have experienced a severe drought in Northern Virginia. It is now the middle of August 1957, and we have practically had no rain since June — the temperature hovering between near 90 degrees up to 100 degrees. The weather forecasters tell us that no rain is yet in sight. If we told you the unvarnished truth, some of us have reached the stage where we now actually hope a hurricane will incubate down south — on the premise that it is an ill wind that does no one any good! Our last severe drought (2 years) occurred around 1930. The pastures are burning up completely, and the corn is stunted, grainless and "fired up."

We have been fighting to save the garden. The natural water courses have stopped running, but so far we have been blessed with a fine well supply; I will be truthful as to how we have fared to date.

We failed to recognize quickly enough, during the early stage of the drought — just how bad conditions were. We started watering too late to save eight or ten three foot bushes which had been transplanted three years ago; we have had no further

losses since then. So far the old hedges have held their own, which is not to say they do not show any bad effects. We just pray for rain soon — because we see no possibility of watering these old plantings.

It is the younger box which is vulnerable to drought, and for the past six weeks we have kept the water going day and night with a canvas soaker. Unfortunately, our canvas soaker played out, and as we were unable to replace it, we had to fall back on a plastic contrivance — it is a very poor substitute.

We have mulched all the young plantings (up to say thirty years old) with leaf compost, but we are unable to get around as quickly as we would like with the water — we wish it would rain!

Adjacent to our enclosed wall garden, we have a small box planting in which we grow our replacement box. Since we shall need a few this fall, I took a man out there this morning to give it a clean up. Unexpectedly, we found a dead one. A closer look disclosed the fact that ground hogs had burrowed under it and several others. Well, any suggestions? We've run dry!

The date is September 1957. The good rains finally arrived — we feel a little ashamed of ourselves for being so impatient. The Box has regained its color and bloom, which artificial watering cannot stimulate — it merely keeps shrubbery alive.

We are now busy replacing the *suffruticosa* which died at the beginning of the drought, because we failed to realize the urgency of their need.

1959 — Well, we are experiencing another summer of heat — 90-100 degrees, and drought. It is near the end of September and we have had no rain

for some six weeks. The ability of mature Box to withstand a dry period is amazing. However, if mature box has been recently planted, its capillary root system will have been broken and will require help by artificial watering.

You must under such weather conditions, watch the young and immature plantings — up to say twenty-five years old — if these show signs of suffering from lack of moisture, yellow discoloring of foliage, shrivelling of leaves, separating of sprays, get busy with the hose or watering can. When these signs appear, remember this is their last request!

You will perhaps wonder, under the above conditions, why individual bushes in a hedge, show the need for water, whereas their neighbors apparently are able to hold their own. The reason for this may be one of several. Sometimes you will find their roots sitting on rocks, which cannot hold moisture; injury to root system when transplanted; exposure to the full day sun; or, sometimes we attribute it to the possibility that they were the "Runts of the litter" — such occur in most families!

This year, to date, we hope to come through the drought without the loss of any of our friends.

CHAPTER X

DISEASE AND TREATMENT

A good percentage of conditions found in box, evidenced by foliage deterioration, are due to injuries and age — not to disease. When you see a discolored patch of growth here and there, follow the trunk down and you will usually find decay and, therefore, inability to absorb moisture and nourishment. The removal of such dead branches permits air and light to penetrate and stimulate new growth.

Fungus growth may develop due to dampness, when pruning out of dead wood and debris is neglected.

Orange colored cancerous growths may appear on injured wood — but not on sound trunks. The remedy here is to curette as conditions indicate.

Box Leaf Miner. This is the most devastating infection box is subjected to. It is possible to eradicate it, but only those owners who understand fully the serious infection they have to cope with, should attempt to do so. Such treatment calls for several annual sprayings for two or three years. Losses will depend on the initial amount of infection and thoroughness with which treatment is carried out. If your box is losing its normal amount of foliage and the leaves develop a yellow, rusty color — it is prudent to make a close inspection. Examine the underside of the leaves; if you find a small, visible, green egg — your box is infected with box leaf miner.

Box Leaf Psyllid. This infection is commonly known as leaf curl; unlike miner, it is not serious. But since it kills annually a percentage of the new leaves, effort should be made to eliminate it. When a heavy infection is present, it devitalizes the bush and mars the general appearance of box — by all means try to get rid of it.

The common name used to identify psyllid — 'leaf curl,' indicates the symptoms found. The new growth leaves curl up (cup) and die and enables one to positively differentiate this trouble from the dangerous box leaf miner, when the dead leaves do not curl up. No blisters will be found on the under-

side of the leaves — since the microscopic eggs are deposited on the surface in the area of the annual new growth.

Depending upon the arrival of warm spring days, the eggs hatch sometimes between the last week in April and early part of May — here in Northern Virginia. Any observant gardener will have no difficulty in noting when this takes place. As soon as the eggs hatch, a small, visible, green louse like bug emerges from the egg, punctures a new tender leaf for sustenance and exudes a cotton like filament. The bug may be seen with the naked eye — it is slightly motile.

Probably about a week later, the 'bug' acquires wings and becomes the airborne psyllid. This is the period which proves fatal to the box foliage — the bug punctured leaves curl up and die.

The life cycle of the psyllid is completed by the mature fly depositing its microscopic eggs on the area of the new growth. Exactly when this phase takes place seems open to debate. Sources of our information are a little vague — some even suggest during the following winter; this does not seem probable to us.

This life cycle detail needs more accurate information, to enable us to attack the psyllid during this vulnerable stage.

Treatment — Spray formulae for Box. Research is continually taking place in the battle against garden pests. Formulae advocated one year are discarded the next in favour of better ones. We, therefore, feel incompetent to recommend treatment — which might soon become obsolete!

Half the battle is to diagnose correctly what your trouble is; once you have established this — apply for up to date treatment recommendations from the State and Federal scientists.

Inhibited Growth of Individual Bushes: A common cause of slow development of individual bushes is due to failure, when planting a comparatively small bush, to explore the planting location *deep enough* to be sure no rock exists there. If such is the case, your bush will do well enough for a year or two, but as it grows and needs more depth for development, it will become increasingly stunted by comparison with its neighbors.

However, we have had cases of this nature that completely baffled not only us, but trained nurserymen also. We sometimes attribute it to lack of individual thriftiness. One sees this evidence in human families — everyday. We suggest you try fertilizer and new soil. One cannot of course, eliminate possible injury to the root system — drying out when lifting, or moles creating air pockets, as predisposing causes.

Spiders: When late summer arrives, spiders move in on the *suffruticosa* hedges. We give them a daily harassing, catching them and destroying their webs. We do not enjoy this killing performance, and only do so because if they are left unmolested they literally create a waterproof covering over the hedge and deprive it — at a time when it needs it badly — of dew-fall and rain. Unexpected strangers seeing us so performing, probably think we need more care than the box hedge did! It's just a little detail that we find returns a dividend.

CHAPTER XI PROPAGATION OF BOX

The commercial propagation of box is carried on by nurserymen. As the amateurs who engaged in slipping box discovered that there were many essentials — over and above merely growing the bushes — which had to be met, in order to make it a financial success, only a scattered few have maintained their interest in slipping box.

The stimulus for slipping box was created some twenty-five years ago from the high prices received for mature box, and the scarcity which followed ever increasing sales.

Slipping box is a simple procedure. We did this work during July. The bed in which it is intended to plant box slips should contain mostly sand or woods soil; it should be light — not heavy clay soil. Locate your bed in a well shaded cool spot — preferably close to available water. Prune off some box sprays and subdivide them into single slips about five inches long. Snip the foliage from the upper third of each slip and plant. Do not permit them to dry out — keep them well watered and provide shade, if it does not exist naturally. *Growth*: The growth of box is comparatively slow, particularly *suffruticosa*. When Helen Vickers purchased Gordon's Dale, she took over several hundred box bushes about six inches tall and five or six years old — some thirty-seven years ago. Today, we have a double hedge of *suffruticosa*; grown from the above, each of which now averages about $4\frac{1}{2}' \times 4\frac{1}{2}'$. Individual *sempervirens* bushes average about eight feet tall by $6' \times 6'$.

Back during our more enthusiastic gardening days — we too thought that box propagation might prove profitable, but we discovered that unless one branched out as an equipped professional nurseryman — it was a financial failure. Raising the box offers no difficulties, but one has to meet the labor costs of cultivating, watering, transplanting and selling.

Box bushes have a very low selling value until they reach the 2' stage (about twenty years old), and unless you are prepared to lift, replant, and in some cases guarantee viability, you will make very few sales; in our case none were profitable.

To those amateur gardeners who may decide that there are financial possibilities in box propagation, we offer one piece of advice only — never guarantee viability. Presuming the bushes have been properly planted, their future welfare is — in our opinion — the responsibility of the buyer.

We found our expenses increasing — largely due to forced transplanting of unsold bushes, while our output was limited to sales to nurserymen. The price nurserymen will offer for your box bears little relation to retail figures! But in fairness to the professional one must realize that he has his selling expenses, expensive labor and equipment. Nurserymen have pulled us out of a hole we should not have fallen into.

Mature *suffruticosa* does have a high selling value, and, if you are prepared to visualize a growing period of say twenty-five to thirty years, it might well be a profitable business.

Our advice to the amateur gardeners is to confine their enthusiasm to the needs of their own garden requirements. In this case they will find that their interest grows with the box, and will not be

dampened later on by the development of uneconomical and unwanted responsibilities.

CHAPTER XII

S U M M A R Y : USE AND CARE OF BOX

Any knowledge we may possess in the care of box is the result of reading and application. However, in writing these notes, we would like you to believe that they are strictly what we have personally found to be trustworthy, after living in a fairly extensive box garden for some thirty-five years.

Here then is a summary of the use and care of box by these amateur arborists.

Use and Varieties of Box: One should always use the variety of box to suit the location, keeping in mind the vast difference in growth of *sempervirens* and *suffruticosa*. If size and future development are desired — use *sempervirens*. If a double hedge walk is the objective, use *suffruticosa*. In laying out a walk, be sure to allow enough width to permit mature growth and still retain the walk. Much as we dislike clipping box, we have to clip the inside of our walk — in order to keep it open, but we never touch the outside. A new double hedge planting along a path, even with sizeable bushes, if given enough path space and sufficient individual spacing in the hedges, tends to look a bit "spotty"; a very few years corrects this, if you have given your bushes room to develop. If you desire some foundation or garden border planting, use *suffruticosa*; but here again visualize the future developing ability of your planting and either allow room for this or be prepared to clip it annually to control its development.

Sempervirens lends itself for screening off undesirable views and for wind breaks. It is unsuitable in the central area of a garden unless one desires a natural wall effect or some specific design. One does frequently see a *suffruticosa* hedge terminate at each end with a single *sempervirens* bush — this is not an unpleasing accent. Unless *sempervirens* is pruned back annually — which strengthens the wood development and prevents the tendency to spread out of control — it opens up and becomes somewhat unmanageable.

Size and quality rarely go together — that is the case with box. *Suffruticosa* has no peer from a graceful, aristocratic point of view. We might add other superlatives but none of them, in our opinion, would quite measure up to the deserts of *suffruticosa* box. It is essential that all purchasers of box realize the wide difference in value of *suffruticosa* and *sempervirens* — which is not intended to belittle the qualities of the latter for suitable locations and priced fairly. All too often, we see plantings of *sempervirens* which obviously should not have been used in the locations, and we have little doubt that a stiff price was charged on a sale to someone who lacked the experience to differentiate the two types of box.

Care of Box: In summing up the care of box, we should like to emphasize that new plantings of box need constant watching for several years, for any signs of failing health — and we do not wish to imply that box is a weakling, which it certainly is not. One must realize that a newly transplanted plant or shrub has been subjected to shock and, temporarily, has had its self-nourishing ability disrupted. This will be greatly lessened when a good job of trans-

planting has been done. During the winter months, that which has been exposed to winter sun will become sun scalded — the foliage loses its bloom and color and acquires a brown tinge. Old established box will do the same to a lesser degree, because it is more acclimated and resistant. One should not be alarmed by this — it is a normal condition one must expect and one which corrects itself with the arrival of spring rains. With small plantings one can protect with artificial shade, in which case, do not smother the bush — leave plenty of air space between bush and shade cover. With extensive plantings, we feel it is neither essential nor practical.

Put your new plantings into winter with a good soaking of water — if fall rains have been deficient. Remove heavy coverings of snow, before it freezes, to prevent injuries from excessive weight. This will take care of the winter season with a final prayer — and we mean it, that your box may escape a bad sleet storm, which is usually more severe on *sempervirens* than *suffruticosa*.

Let us presume we have planted out a *suffruticosa* hedge and spring has arrived.

Cultivating: Hand pull any weed growth whenever rains make it ideal to do this work. We must keep tools out beyond the root system which almost reaches ground surface, but if the surrounding ground has become packed — it will not take up moisture. A light mulch — say two or three inches of compost — will be of great help to retain moisture. Through the summer, keep a constant watch for loss of foliage color, mustard-yellow, etc., when rains fail or excessive heat prevails, and start to water in early morning or late evening. When you water, soak the ground and then discontinue for a few days. Neglect this, and your bushes will surely die — watering then is useless.

Fertilize in the fall and be guided by the thriftiness, color and growth your bushes are making. If they are in good ground, other than the initial application, none may be needed for a year or two. When we use fertilizer, we mix 50% bone meal and 50% cottonseed meal and, if available, a little tankage.



BOX-ENCLOSED FLOWER BEDS

Learn to Know Box Leaf Miner: The leaves on infected bushes lose their bloom and tend to brown and die. The leaves do not curl as in the case of box

psyllid. Close inspection will reveal if infected — on the under side of the leaves — little blisters. If such exists, take a pin and raise the leaf covering over the blister and you will see a little egg. Just as a suggestion, do not be too curious about box leaf miner when you are in another person's garden — owners are 'touchy' on this subject. It is safer to permit them to discover it through another source. *Box Psyllid:* We view this as a distinct disfigurement rather than a serious infection; and it can, and should be controlled.

Box Wood: Much has been said about the uses of box wood in the past, but the truth is little is used commercially today. Engraving blocks probably accounts for most of this. Its use is an episode of long ago and we can all be thankful that such is the case. *Wind Storm Damage:* There are two large maple trees overhanging our old *suffruticosa* walk; this box is seven to nine feet high. For many years we have wondered why the hedge under one of these trees was thin and less compact than the rest. A year ago, we learned the reason. Following a wind and rain storm one night, on going into the garden the next day there was a normal amount of wind-pruned, light, dead branches lying on the lawn. Finally we walked over to where the second large maple tree overhangs the box walk, and saw a huge limb had broken off and lay across both hedges. The amount of damage it had caused to the box was unforgivable.

We still believe we were to blame for not having anticipated such a possibility. The fact is, we have always shied away from what appears to be unnecessary, drastic pruning. We naturally liked the two old shady maples, and had failed to look them over close enough to realize they needed some heavy pruning — they both got this treatment AFTER this incident.

We record this experience with the hope that some readers may be prompted to give a wider consideration to 'everyone' in their garden; and if they see the possibility of a similar injury — to take the necessary steps to avoid it. In the case of decay, one has no alternative but heavy pruning of the branch involved. Where heavy, sound, overhanging limbs exist, the use of cable to carry such limbs away from endangered box in the event of storm damage, is well worth considering.

We have tried to tell you about the 'standard of excellence' which we strive for in the care of our box. Perhaps, however, we should add, "do not do as we do, but do as we say." Frequently we have given instructions in regard to work in the garden, which appeared to be attentively received, only to learn later that the recipient had not the vaguest idea what we had discussed with him!

One must set up a goal, and if circumstances check one's programme on the way, cling to that true old adage "it is better to be late — than never."

If a reader of these notes should ask us "what is the outstanding merit of box?" we should unhesitatingly reply — "it's friendliness towards every season of the year, it is ever green."

These amateur box caretakers hope you may get as much solid enjoyment and contentment from your surroundings, as they have with their dear old box hedges at Gordon's Dale, much of it planted over a hundred and fifty years ago.



PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING INDIGENOUS BOX GROWING ON "BOX HILL" (NORTH DOWNS), SURREY, ENGLAND. Photo by DUDLEY STYLES, A.R.P.G., Dorking England.

CHAPTER XIII

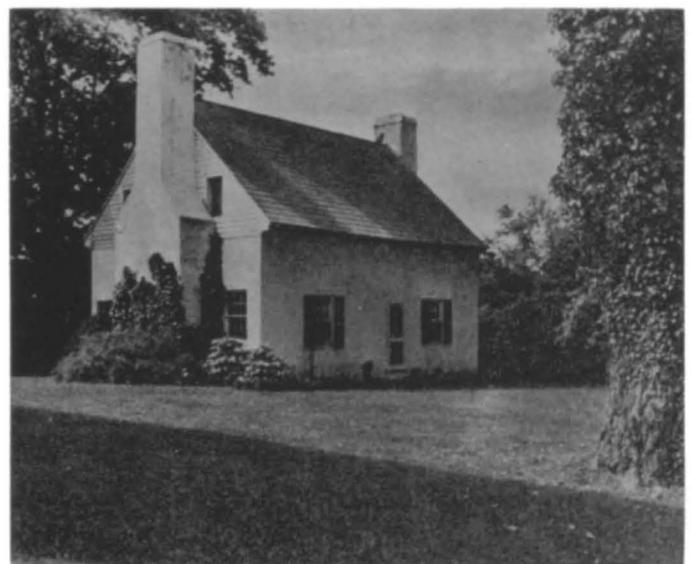
— : R E S U R R E C T I O N : —

WE SHALL LONG REMEMBER AN
EARLY MORNING
WALK
THROUGH THE BOX GARDENS
AT
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

Sleep did not settle on me last night. It could have been the bedroom dormer windows and low ceiling, or just unconscious anticipation of today.

Lodging, unreserved, simply did not exist, and the only reason a World War I Scotch friend and myself found a roof over our heads — must have been AGE. The kind lady at the desk, after telling us there was absolutely nothing vacant, relented, and gave us a room in a little restored house on the main street, which we shared.

Tired of tossing around, I tip-toed into the bathroom, shaved, dressed and eased myself down the creaky stairs — hoping I had not disturbed my companion. Dawn was just beginning to break, with a light fog enveloping my surroundings. For some two



THE ORIGINAL GORDON'S DALE CABIN

This is the original Reverend John Scott's log cabin (1735), Scott District, Fauquier County, Virginia.

hours I outrageously trespassed into one garden after another — not knowing how I got into some or how I got out of others. I literally owned the town. Not a human soul stirred and the few canine friends I met on porch or back yard — thank goodness were friendly; they all accepted my password.

First, I peeked into a very silent house, alongside a lovely drive — the erstwhile home of a real native I had known since 1912. Only the atmosphere she had bequeathed to her home remained; she had passed along!

I then walked across the dew laden common and found myself looking over a low, white picket gate, enclosing it said, the oldest box planting in the town. We, too, have a box garden and something seem'd to tell me that this was all the entree I needed. I promptly opened the gate and passed in. The

brick path'd, double hedge of ancient *Suffruticosa* box, talked of ladies, men and events of long ago. From there I simply kept passing through one garden into another — unable to reach the public road, viewing many lovely little gardens — alfresco rooms — bordered by controlled box plantings, all giving up their dew laden fragrance. Finally I entered the back yard of a house — whose occupants were still dreaming about "The Common Glory," circled around to its front and regained the road.

As I wandered back, I passed the old wall enclosed church, tavern, and as yet — unopened little shops. They reminded me of similar scenes I had known, in the land where I was born. Arriving at our temporary lodging I realized that I had not only seen it — but had felt the full impact of — resurrected Williamsburg! (Virginia)

Boxwood In The Mississippi Delta

By GERALDINE DEAN, *Mississippi*

Boxwood is truly the aristocrat of all shrubs. In this Delta section of our country, however, there are certain limitations to growing it. Even though we have a rich low country that is conducive to luxuriant growth, boxwood does not flourish here as in Virginia and in other eastern sections.

There are two secrets to the successful growing of boxwood here — it must have perfect drainage, which is not always easy; and it must have partial shade. Our healthiest boxwood is usually found on the north and east side of a house, or on some shaded slope that insures drainage. With our extremely hot summers, and at times long periods of drouth often followed by too much rainfall, we are handicapped in growing boxwood, and other plants with similar requirements.

In spite of the difficulties we do have success with certain varieties of boxwood under special cultural conditions. Boxwood is best used as a specimen plant here. It does not like crowding with us. Then, too, with the sinking of the soil, it is best not to plant boxwood too low in the ground. I have found that the best time for planting or transplanting boxwood is from October to May. I use plenty of humus such as leaf mold or compost, and some sand and peat moss. A mulch is necessary during the summer months; for this I use pine straw. Of course, boxwood needs very shallow or no cultivation due to having its roots so near the surface of the ground. Water is a must in our delta. I never wet the foliage or apply any spray while the sun is on the plant.

My calendar is marked for feeding boxwood during the month of March. It requires little food. One feeding per year is enough. My favorite fertilizer for boxwood is cotton seed meal mixed with bone meal. I have used well rotted cow manure, but it must be quite well rotted. I like 'cotton seed meal better; it never burns.

The principal enemy of boxwood in this area is the spider mite or red spider. Its period of greatest infestation is during August or September. This insect is too small to be easily seen with the unaided eye but when speckled leaves or whitish foliage appear I take a white sheet of paper, hold it under a spray of boxwood foliage, shake it well, and then —

if the shrub is infested, you can see the small mites crawling on the white paper. An insecticidal spray is then used, when the sun is not shining on the plants. I use Malathion, applying it as directed on the box. One application may be sufficient, but sometimes it takes several treatments — perhaps one every week for three weeks in succession for control.

The Boxwood Japonica with the larger leaf and light green foliage seems to be the hardiest of all boxwood here in this section. It is easily grown. Sometimes it will be damaged by spring freezes because it puts out new growth sooner than other varieties, but this damaged growth can be clipped off easily. This variety is a rapid grower.

The *Sempervirens* Boxwood is also a strong grower here. It is pruned easily.

The slowest growing and yet the true aristocrat of the boxes does not do as well here as one would expect. Due to our sudden changes of temperature during winter months such boxwood, as well as some other plants, may be severely injured. This is particularly true when a long warm spell which causes sap of many shrubs "to rise", is followed by an overnight drop to freezing temperatures, again followed by brilliant sunshine. Often during our summer months, we will have a long hot, dry and humid spell causing our plants to require water, water, water. This dark green lovely boxwood shrub does not thrive under such weather conditions. So, the climate in this low delta country is not favorable to the boxwood. The hill sections of Mississippi offers better climatic conditions.

The *Harlandii* boxwood with its long narrow leaves, does grow very well here. It stands the heat of our summers; the freeze — last winter, killed lots of this variety, however.

Somehow I am a gambler with gardening. I would never be without the aristocrat of all shrubs — the Boxwood. My next letter to you on Boxwood may cite other, and I hope better, experiences. I keep trying and today have boxwood all around my home. Many plants have been lost, but the ones I have succeeded in growing are now dark green and luxuriant as though satisfied here in the heart of this rich Mississippi Delta soil.

DALLIMORE: THE BOX

Reprinted below are the three chapters dealing with Box which appear in W. Dallimore's "Holly Yew and Box." These chapters occur from pages 209 through 231, of the book published by John Lane Company of London and New York in 1908.

Chapter XXII The Box

The evergreen shrubs and small trees, popularly known as Boxes, are represented in gardens by not more than a half dozen species; these are, however, augmented by a large number of varieties, the majority of which are of decorative value. Scientifically they are known by the generic name of *Buxus*, a genus belonging to the Spurge family, Euphorbiaceae. The Boxes are recognised by their simple, leathery, opposite leaves which are destitute of stipules and have usually a clefted apex; by their tiny, axillary, unisexual flowers, which are borne in small clusters in March, each cluster containing several male and one or two female flowers; and by their three-celled fruits and black, nut-like seeds. The flowers are inconspicuous, and would almost escape notice were it not for the yellow anthers. The wood is very fine-grained and extremely hard. All the species here mentioned are found in the Northern Hemisphere, and belong to the Old World. Other species are known, but they are not in general cultivation. The hardy species are distributed as follows:—

Europe, N. Africa and W. Asia —

B. sempervirens, Linnaeus.

Balearic Islands, etc. —

B. balerica, Lambert.

Himalaya —

B. Wallichiana, Bailey.

China —

B. Harlandi, Hance.

Japan —

B. japonica, Mueller.

B. sempervirens — Description

This is the best known of the various hardy species and is widely distributed through Europe, N. Africa, and W. Asia. It is found wild in Britain on Box Hill, near Dorking, Surrey, but it is not certain that it is a native tree. The trees in that particular position have been there for a very long period, and references are made to them in some of the oldest gardening books. In *Trees of Commerce*, by W. Stevenson, reference is made to a lease of Box Hill, drawn up in August 1602, one of the clauses of which was, that "the tenant is commanded to use his best endeavours to preserve Box, and all other trees growing thereupon, as also to deliver half-yearly an account of what hath been sold, to whom, and at what prices." In 1608 a number of trees were cut down upon the sheep walks on Box Hill, and the wood realized £50. The tree grows to a height of 15 or 20 feet, with a trunk diameter of 6 or 8 inches under ordinary conditions, but, in very favourable situations, these dimensions are exceeded. As a rule, a spreading head is formed, and the branches are thickly covered with small, oblong, or oval leaves. Like the Holly and Yew it thrives in a variety of soils and situations, and forms an excellent subject for undergrowth, as it succeeds in partial shade as

well as in full sun. Although under normal conditions it attains the dimensions of a small tree, varieties are in cultivation which never grow more than a few feet in height, whilst one or two varieties hardly attain a height of 12 inches. Other varieties are recognised by means of variegated foliage.

Associations

As a hardy evergreen the Box has long occupied an important position in gardens, and in point of usefulness it closely approaches the Holly and the Yew. These three plants have in fact been associated for a very long period, and we find that in a cut state they have all been used for decorative purposes on the anniversaries of religious festivals. Although it is now the practice to use various popular evergreens indiscriminately for house and church decorations at various seasons, each one appears to have had its own particular period for use in the in the past, thus, whilst the Holly was undeniably the correct subject to use at Christmas time, and the Yew for Palm Sunday and Easter, the proper time to decorate with branches of Box was from Candlemas to Palm Sunday or Easter Eve.

Herrick refers to many of these old customs, and with reference to the Box says: "It was once a time-honoured custom on Candlemas-day to replace the Christmas evergreens with sprays of Box, which were kept up till Easter Eve, when they gave place to the Yew. This custom evidently gave rise to the following lines:—

"Down with the Rosemary and Bays,

Down with the Mistletoe;

Instead of Holly now upraise

The greener Box for show."

It appears, however, to have been used in some places for Easter decorations, and has been assigned, with various other plants, the name of Palm, through Palm Sunday associations. Writers state that a custom prevails in some parts of France of decorating graves with Box on Palm Sunday. This custom may have arisen on account of the symbolic meaning attributed to the plant by some old writers, i.e. "perpetual life in the other world." According to *Plant Lore* sprays of Box were used in conjunction with Woodruff, Lavender and Roses at one period, to decorate churches on the days dedicated to St. Barnabas and St. Paul.

In biblical history the Box figures on several occasions. The prophet Isaiah, Chap. XLI., verse 19, says, "I will set in the desert the Fir tree, and the Pine and the Box tree together." Again, in the LX. Chap., the words occur in verse 13, "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the Fir tree, the Pine tree and the Box together, to beautify the place of my Sanctuary." Box wood, with many other woods, is credited with being the wood of which the cross for the Saviour's crucifixion was made (see *Plant Lore*).

As in the case of most of our common trees a number of curious legends and superstitions are attached to the Box. A custom at one time prevailed, and may do so now, in some county districts, of using sprigs of Box in connection with funerals. A basin of Box sprays was placed at the door from which the coffin was carried, and each mourner was

expected to take a piece, carry it with him to the churchyard, and throw it into the grave after the coffin had been lowered.

Wordsworth alludes to this custom in the following lines: —

“The basin of Box-wood, just six months before,
Had stood on the table at Timothy’s door.
A coffin through Timothy’s threshold had passed,
One child did it bear, and that child was his last.”

In *Plant Lore* we learn that it is a practice in Turkey with widows, who go weekly to pray at their husbands’ graves, to plant a sprig of Box at the head of the grave. Among interesting items in the same work the following occur: “The evergreen Box, *Buxus sempervirens*, was specially consecrated by the Greeks to Pluto, the protector of all evergreen trees, as being symbolic of the life which continues through the winter in the infernal regions, and in the other world.” In connection with honey gathered from the flowers of the Box the following is related: “The ancients believed that the Box produced honey, and that in Trebizonde the honey issuing from this tree was so noxious that it drove men mad. Corsican honey was supposed to owe its ill-repute to the fact that the bees fed upon Box.”

A pretty legend is recorded in relation to the monastery of St. Christine in the Pyrenees. The arms of the monastery are those of the Knights of Christine, viz., a white pigeon with a cross in its beak, and the origin of its adoption is as follows: “The workmen who were employed to build the monastery had the greatest difficulty in finding a suitable foundation. After several ineffectual attempts, they one morning perceived a white pigeon flying with a cross in its beak. They pursued the bird, which perched on a Box-tree, but, though it flew away on their approach, they found in the branches the cross which it had left; this they took to be a good omen, and proceeded successfully to lay the foundation on the spot where the Box-tree had stood, and completed the edifice.”

To believers in dreams it may be of interest to learn that to dream of Box is considered to be a fortunate occurrence, as it denotes long life and prosperity, also a happy marriage.

From the *Treasury of Botany* we learn that the “Common Box-tree” is the badge of the clan M’Intosh, and its variegated variety that of the M’Phersons.

CHAPTER XXIII.

B. *Sempervirens* — continued

Uses

Although in the British Isles the “Common Box” is used almost exclusively for decorative purposes, its timber forms in some countries a valuable article of commerce. The wood is very hard, smooth grained, and durable, and it has been used largely from the time of the ancients to the present date. In ancient times it was used for ornamental boxes and inlaid with ivory. It has been thought to be the Ashur wood of scripture, and as such was used with inlaying of ivory in the decorative splendour of Tyre (see *Plant Lore*). In more modern times its greatest use has been for blocks for wood engravings, whilst it has also been used for cabinet-making, mathematical instruments, handles of tools, combs, rules, walking-sticks, and many other things.

Evelyn refers to the use of the wood as follows: “The turner, engraver, carver, mathematical instrument, comb and pipe makers, give great prices for it by weight as well as measure, and by the seasoning and divers manners of cutting vigorous insulations, politure and grinding, the roots of this tree (as even our common and neglected Thorn) do furnish the inlayers and cabinet-makers with pieces rarely undulated, and full of variety. Also of Box are made wheels or shivers (as our ship carpenters call them) and pins for blocks and pulleys, pegs for musical instruments, nutcrackers, weavers’ shuttles, hollar-sticks, bump-sticks, and dressers for the shoe-makers, rulers, rolling-pins, pestles, mall-balls, beetles, tops, tables, chess-men, screws male and female, bobbins for bonelace, spoons, nay the stoutest axle-tree above all.”

With reference to the making of combs from the wood for ladies’ use Evelyn gives the following lines: —

“Box-combs bear no small part
In the *Militia* of the *Female Art*;
They tye the *links* which hold our *Gallants* fast
And spread the *Nets* to which fond *Lovers* Hast.”

Although other woods are now used in wood engraving, the Box is still employed for the best class work, and the principal source of production is the neighbourhood of the Black Sea. The supply is, however, becoming short, and is not likely to be increased rapidly, as the growth of the Box is very slow. *The Diplomatic and Consular Report*, No. 1371, published in 1894, dealing with the trade of Batoum, reports on Box-wood on page 29 as follows: “In the accessible private forests the Box-wood has been mostly cut down, the Government wisely does not desire that their forest shall in a few years be cleared of wood that takes hundreds of years to mature, and place but little on the market. But substitutes from other parts of the world are taking the place of Box-wood.” In report No. 1717, published in 1895, further mention is made of this wood as follows: “The export of timber has been far from satisfactory, and the only trade of importance has been done in Box-wood and Walnut.” Reference is made to the condition of the Box-wood forests in the following words: “Although all the private forests of Box-wood have been exhausted the Government up to the present still refuse to sell or allow Box-wood to be cut in their extensive forests throughout Abkhassia, consequently the total exports from the Caucasus have not exceeded 1200 tons; and further, this wood is fast losing its importance to the English manufacturers, owing to the fact that in recent years other hard woods have been discovered which are equally suitable for making many articles for which Box-wood was formerly used. Besides this, Box-wood from other countries also finds its way to the English Market in increasing quantities.”

According to these reports, the Box-wood exported from the Port of Poti was: —

In 1890,	600 tons,	valued at	£5000
” 1891,	60	”	” 400
” 1894,	424	”	” 4240
” 1895,	54	”	” 540

Most of the Box-wood that finds its way into the London markets is said to come via Turkey or Odesa, even if procured from distant countries. Herbert Stone, F.L.S., in his book on *Timbers of Commerce and their Identification*, says that Russian Box-wood

is rapidly being replaced by West Indian Box-wood, except for the very best articles, on account of its increasing cost.

The *Diplomatic and Consular Report*, No. 3864, states that in 1906, 3,500,000 lbs. of Box-wood was exported from the Mazanderan (Persia) forests, to Russia.

Loudon gives a lot of interesting information about Box-wood in *Arb. Frutic.* In speaking of the growth and use of the wood in France, he says: "The wood of trunks in France is rarely found of sufficient size for blocks, and where it is, it is so dear that trees are not cut down at once, but pieces are taken from living trees as required." In his time the French turners were wont to place the wood in dark cellars for a period of from three to five years, to keep it from splitting. It was then taken out, the bark removed, and buried in the ground to keep it from the light until required for use. He also states that in 1815 trees on Box-hill to the cost of £10,000 were cut down. The earliest specimen of wood engraving in England now extant is said to be in the collection of Earl Spencer, and represents St. Christopher carrying the infant Saviour; it dates back to 1423. In addition to Box-trees being found in quantity about the neighborhood of the Black Sea, they are said to be plentiful in the forests in Franche Compté, Dauphiné, Haute Provence, and the chain of mountains stretching across Languedoc and the Pyrenees.

Dryden makes one or two references to the use of Box-wood as follows: —

"The Beech, the swimming Alder and the Plane,
Hard Box and Linden of a softer grain."

And also: —

"Nor Box nor Limes without their use;
Smooth-grain'd and proper for the turner's trade,
Which curious hands may carve, and steel with
ease invade."

Decorative Uses

In the British Isles the Boxes are planted solely for decorative purposes, and, though they attain their greatest size on rich loamy soil, they thrive well on heavy soil and in that of a poor sandy character. The adaptability of the "Common Box" for poor soils seems to have been known to Pope, for he writes: —

"Waste sandy valleys once perplex'd with Thorn,
The spiny fir and shapely Box adorn,"

For groups in the wilder parts of the garden the tall growing forms are well fitted, whilst varieties with pendulous branches form handsome lawn specimens. The dwarfer varieties are of value for beds or groups in shrubberies, whilst the same may be said of the varieties with variegated leaves. For planting beneath the shade of trees and in dark corners they are excellent, whilst for a position facing north, where no sunshine is obtainable, few plants thrive better. A dwarf form known as *suffruticosa* is used extensively for planting as an edging to paths, and no shrub is neater if kept well clipped. When the severe style of geometrical gardening existed, this Box was of great service for marking out the beds.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when topiary work was so much in vogue, the compact growing varieties were eagerly sought after for clipping into fantastic shapes, their small leaves and dense habit peculiarly fitting them for the purpose.

Even in the present day a few people try to revive topiary work, and varieties of Box are largely used for the purpose. Pliny is said to have described his Tusculan villa as having "a lawn adorned with figures of animals cut out in Box trees, answering alternately to one another. This lawn was again surrounded by a walk enclosed with evergreen shrubs, sheared into a variety of forms. Beyond this was a place of exercise, of a circular form, ornamented in middle with Box trees, sheared, as before, into numerous different figures; and the whole fenced in by a sloping bank covered with Box, rising in steps to the top." In another part of the grounds attached to the villa the Box is mentioned as being cut into a variety of shapes and letters, some expressing the name of the master, and others that of the artificer, etc.

With reference to a Topiary Garden, Loudon quotes the following lines by G. West: —

"There likewise mote be seen on every side
The shapely Box, of all its branching pride
Ungently shorn, and with preposterous skill,
To various beasts, and birds of sundry quill
Transform'd, and human shapes of monstrous size.

Also other wonders of the sportive shears,
Fair Nature misadorning, there are found;
Globes, spiral columns, pyramids and piers
With spouting urns and budding statues crown'd;
And horizontal dials on the ground,
In living Box, by cunning artists traced;
And galleys trim, on no long voyage bound,
But by their roots there ever anchor'd fast."

The upright growing sorts are sometimes used for hedges, but they are not employed to any great extent. A Box hedge is neither so strong or so ornamental as either the Yew or the Holly, and is not to be recommended except in cases where it is required simply as a dividing line or low wind-break.

Propagation

Propagation is usually effected by means of cuttings of young shoots 3 or 4 inches long placed in sandy soil under a handlight in summer. These root in a few weeks' time, and may then be transferred to the nursery border. Growth for the first three or four years is slow, but in the case of the stronger-growing varieties it becomes more rapid afterwards.

CHAPTER XXIV.

B. *Sempervirens* — continued

Varieties

B. s. arborescens. — This name is applied to the largest growing form of the "Common Box," which is really typical of the species as found growing under the most suitable conditions. The leaves are of normal size, but vary somewhat on different plants. They usually range from 3/4 of an inch to 1 inch in length, and from 1/4 to 1/2 an inch in width. Specimens may produce several trunks from near the ground line, or they may form single trunks only. Mature specimens, if not crowded by other plants, develop large heads, and are equally ornamental, whether clothed to the ground with branches or with a portion of the trunk exposed to view.

B. s. argentea-argenteo-marginata. — A dense, but not stiff, growing variety, with normal sized leaves. It is distinguished by its leaves being margined with silver. The variegation is not equally developed, sometimes being confined to a narrow bor-

der, or again taking up the greater portion of the leaf. As a rule the variegation is more noticeable about the apex than the base.

B. s. aureo-maculata. — This variety is recognised by its loose and graceful habit, and by its leaves being blotched and striated with gold. As the leaves advance in age much of the colour is lost, but in the case of those up to one year old it occupies about half the space. It belongs to the large-growing section.

B. s. aurea pendula — “Golden Weeping Box”. — A very ornamental sort, distinguished from the last-named by the pendulous habit of the secondary branches. The leaves are about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch long and barely $\frac{1}{3}$ of an inch wide. The golden colouring in some instances is confined to narrow margins, whilst at others it occupies the greater part of the surface. It grows into a good-sized bush.

B. s. aureo-marginata. — This is a strong variety of rather stiff, upright habit, with broadly-oval leaves which sometimes have a curious way of narrowing rapidly near the apex, at other times being quite rounded, or again undulated and malformed. The disk is deep green, and the variegation is in the form of an irregular golden band. It is not one of the most desirable sorts.

B. s. elegantissima. — Where a neat-growing, silver-variegated evergreen is required, this might well be tried. It is a slow-growing sort of upright habit, with rather small and narrow leaves, many of which are deformed. The variegation is conspicuously developed; sometimes on the youngest growths, occupying the greater part of the leaf surface, and usually forming a wide marginal band. Shapely specimens are formed without pruning, whilst it is possible by cutting it back once a year to keep it in a very dwarf state without making it look bare.

B. s. Handsworthii. — A strong-growing variety of dense, upright habit, with bold, broadly-oval leaves of a dark green colour. It is inclined to form a wide bush rather than assume a tree-like habit. Its vigorous growth fits it well for hedge work, and serviceable hedges 4 feet high can be obtained by using it for the purpose.

B. s. latifolia. — This is a stiff-growing sort of rather fastigate habit, with very large, broadly-oval leaves. The largest leaves exceed 1 inch in length and are $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch wide. They are very deep green in colour. Its stiff habit fits it for hedge work, whilst it is sometimes grown as formal pyramids in tubs for various kinds of decorative work where tender plants would be inappropriate. For ornamental gardening it is less useful than the free-habited sorts.

B. s. latifolia bullata. — A form of the last-named with a somewhat dwarfer habit and shorter leaves. Like the former plant, it has deep green foliage.

B. s. latifolia macrophylla. — In point of size of leaf there is little to be seen between this and typical *latifolia*. The habit is, however, somewhat looser, and the leaves rather lighter coloured.

B. s. latifolia maculata. — The habit of the plant and the size of the leaves are similar to *B. latifolia*, but the leaves are blotched and striped with gold. The variegation is not, however, very conspicuous.

B. s. longifolia. — A dense growing variety of upright habit with deep green leaves. It is chiefly remarkable for its long and comparatively narrow foliage. The largest leaves are nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and barely half an inch in width. It is a bushy varie-

ty, and does not look as if it will grow to any great size; possibly 6 or 8 feet high only.

B. s. myosotifolia — “Forget-me-not-leaved Box.” — This is a very distinct and pretty dwarf growing sort with green leaves. It is of dense habit, forming a compact mass, and increasing very slowly in height. Plants 10 or 12 years of age rarely exceed a foot in height. The larger leaves are $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch long and $\frac{1}{8}$ inch wide, whilst some are considerably smaller.

B. s. myrtifolia - *B. myrtifolia*, *B. s. leptophylla* and “Myrtle-leaved Box.” — An excellent variety of dwarf habit, with small green leaves. It is of slow growth, but rises to a height of 4 or 5 feet under favourable conditions; the habit, though upright, being relieved from stiffness. The leaves are similar in shape to those of the last-mentioned variety, but a trifle larger.

B. s. pendula. — This is without doubt one of the very best evergreens we possess. It attains tree-like proportions, forming a distinct trunk with an upright leading shoot. The secondary branches are pendulous, and the whole tree is of very graceful outline. Fine specimens of it may be seen in the neighbourhood of the ruinous arch of Kew. Another pendulous variety is known with rather large leaves and stronger branches, it also is very ornamental. Both are green-leaved varieties.

B. s. prostrata. — The principal peculiarity of this green-leaved variety lies in the horizontal growth of the branches. It never attains a height of more than a few feet, but covers a considerable area of ground.

B. s. pyramidalis. — This variety is distinguished by its stiff, pyramidal habit and formal outline. It is a green-leaved variety, and is used to some extent for topiary work; for ordinary decorative gardening it is not commendable.

B. s. rosmarinifolia - *B. rosmarinifolius*, *B. thymifolia*, and “Rosemary-leaved Box.” — An elegant habited variety, with small, dark green leaves. It forms a shapely bush several feet high of graceful outline, and does not quickly outgrow its position. For topiary work, it was at one time used extensively.

B. s. salicifolia elata - “Willow-leaved Box.” — In this variety the leaves are about 1 inch or $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, barely $\frac{1}{3}$ of an inch wide, and green in colour. The plant is of upright growth, but is not at all stiff. Where variety is required it is a good sort to plant.

B. s. suffruticosa - *B. suffruticosa* and “Edging Box.” — This is a well-known dwarf variety, being used in almost every garden of any size in the country for edging purposes. For this purpose it has been used for a very long period, and when the severe geometrical style of gardening was in vogue a couple of centuries ago, it was used to work out elaborate designs for parterres, the interspaces being filled in with different coloured sand, gravel, stones, or what not.

B. s. undulifolia. — A strong-growing sort, differing little from the type except by the undulating margins of the leaves.

Other Species

B. balearica, Lambert - *sempervirens gigantea*. — This is a large-growing species of tree-like habit found in Minorca, Sardinia, Corsica, and European and Asiatic Turkey. It was first introduced into

France in 1770, and from thence was received in England ten years later. On its introduction it was treated as a greenhouse plant, but there is no necessity to question its hardiness for examples are to be found which have withstood the severest winters experienced in England during the last fifty years. The tree, under favourable conditions, attains a height of 70 or 80 feet, with a trunk 2 feet in diameter; in England, however, it forms but a small tree or large bush. The leaves are larger than those of other Boxes, being from 1 1/2 to 2 inches long and 3/4 to nearly an inch in width. They are of a rich green colour, and thick and coriaceous in texture. The bark of the young wood is green, whilst that of the trunk and older branches is grey and deeply marked. The wood is used for purposes similar to those for which the wood of the "Common Box" is of value, but it is said to be coarser and less valuable. Large quantities are stated to be exported from Constantinople. An illustration is given of a specimen of this species growing at Kew. Over sixty years ago Loudon mentions this specimen as being 13 feet high and the largest within ten miles of London; it is now 22 1/2 feet in height, with a girth near the ground of 3 feet 3 inches, and at 3 feet above the ground 2 feet 5 1/2 inches. A fine example, 12 feet high and as far through, may be seen in the ground at Ashton Court, Bristol.

B. Harlandi, Hance. — A species sometimes met

with in gardens under the name of *B. chinensis*. The latter name is, however, a synonym of *Simmondsia californica*. *B. Harlandi* is a native of China, and under cultivation forms a small, upright habited bush, with rather bright green leaves 1 1/4 to 1 1/2 inches long and barely a quarter of an inch wide. It is of service where a small, neat growing evergreen is desired, but should not be placed in a position where a plant is required at least 2 feet high, for it takes many years to attain that height.

B. japonica, Mueller. — This plant differs from the other Boxes by its light green obovate or almost round leaves. It is of rather loose habit, and the leafage is not so dense as in most sorts. The angled nature of the branches, conspicuous in all Boxes, is very pronounced in this species, the angles being almost winged. Although a free-growing plant, it does not grow more than a few feet in height. It is a native of Japan.

B. j. microphylla - *B. microphylla*. — A small-leaved form of the above plant.

B. Wallichiana, Bailey. — A very rare, strong growing species, conspicuous for its long, narrow leaves. These are from 1 3/4 to 2 1/2 inches in length, and barely 1/2 an inch in width. As in the case of *B. balearica* it forms a very ornamental plant, but it is less frequently met with, probably on account of its being a difficult species to propagate. It is a native of the Himalaya.

BOXWOOD GARDENS

Old and New

by Albert Addison Lewis

(Excerpts from Mr. Lewis' book, by the same title, published by The William Byrd Press, Inc., of Richmond, Virginia in 1924.)

MOUNT VERNON

GEORGE WASHINGTON! One thinks of a stern, tremendous man proudly erect on a restive, white stallion, commanding and superior. But George Washington's garden at Mount Vernon makes us know that like all of the early Americans this aristocrat had a gentler side, a beauty-loving soul that found content and rest in planting the hedge rows of his garden after directing the destinies of the nation.

George Washington was in truth a superman. Whatever he did, was done exceedingly well. And that garden at Mount Vernon which he designed and supervised still stands supreme in landscaping after a hundred and fifty years. It has become a shrine to which thousands of Americans travel every year. Yet all these trampling tourists cannot disturb its dignity and serenity, so magnificently was it planned.

George Washington was only twenty when he laid out that garden, a sun-burned, alert young man with brown hair. He had been a surveyor and his first step was to make careful maps and drawings for his servants, white and colored, to follow. They exist today, painstaking and detailed and absolutely accurate. The plan was an elaborate one, for Washington was an aristocrat who wanted the best of everything. Much of the luxuriant Boxwood for

which the garden is famous was brought from England, as were hangings, silver, glass, and furniture for the mansion.

Buying was no simple matter then, for everything was done by barter. Washington considered tobacco an injurious crop, but as it was most convenient for trade he devoted a section of his huge plantation to its cultivation. His mail orders, some of which are still in existence, were most meticulous and definite and often contained as many as two hundred articles, ranging from tools to statuary or gowns for Martha Washington. Here is one precise direction:

"1 fine bed coverlid to match the curtains.

4 chair bottoms of the same; that is, as much covering suited to the above furniture as will go over the seats of 4 chairs (which I have by me) in order to make the whole furniture of this room uniformly handsome and genteel."

Old chintzes where Washington's love of gardens shows in the faded floral designs are still hanging in the beautiful home. There are some hand-blocked wallpapers, too, quaint and dainty which Washington ordered from London and which tradition says he and Martha and General Lafayette hung one day in preparation for a ball. The ideal gentleman of the early days was a versatile man who could do all things well. Thomas Jefferson, Washington's good friend, was of the same diverse capability, and like Washington, he too loved Nature, indoors in decorations, and outdoors in the garden. They exchanged gifts of trees, Boxwood slips, and bulbs, so that now

Monticello and Mount Vernon bloom with sister loveliness.

Washington describes his home-site at Mount Vernon as:

"A high healthy country, in a latitude between the extreme of heat and cold, on one of the finest rivers in the world, a river well-stocked with various kinds of fish, at all seasons of the year, and in the spring the shad, herring, bass, carp, sturgeon, etc., in abundance. The borders of the estate are washed for more than ten miles by tidewater, several valuable fisheries appertaining to it, the whole shore, in fact, one entire fishery."

Lila L. Williams writes of Mount Vernon in "Historic Gardens of Virginia":

"The estate of Hunting Creek, situated on the Potomac River between Dogue Creek and Little Hunting Creek, was an original grant by Lord Culpeper in 1674, to John Washington, and was left in 1743 to Lawrence Washington by his father, Augustine Washington, son of John.

"On the brow of the gentle slope, which ended at a thickly wooded precipitous river bank, Lawrence built his mansion. This is the nucleus of the present group of buildings. Before it swept the Potomac in a magnificent curve, its broad bosom thronged with graceful gull, wild duck, and other water fowl, while beyond the river lay the green fields and shadowy forests of Maryland. This house he called Mount Vernon, in honor of Admiral Vernon, under whom Lawrence Washington had served in the expedition against Cartagena in South America.

"Lawrence died in 1752, and left Mount Vernon to his little daughter, Sarah, with the proviso in case of her death that it should go to his half-brother, George, to whom he was tenderly attached. Sarah soon passed on—and so George Washington came into possession of this beautiful tract of 2,500 acres. James McIntosh said of his visit to Mount Vernon:

"The Combination of what is grandest in nature with whatever is pure and sublime in human conduct affects me more powerfully than any scene I have ever seen!"

The landscaping was divided by Washington into two parts. First was the undulating lawn, broad in sloping, that rolled away from the flagstones of the verandah down to the winding Potomac. The lawn was broken and sweeping, but there were summer houses along the river where one might rest and meditate. One of the coolest of these, well-shaded, had beneath it a well where the practical owner kept meat, butter and vegetables. Cattle grazed on the outskirts of the lawn, but were kept away from it by an old wall, cleverly hidden. Then there was the deer paddock and a wooded path that led to the family burial ground. The trees which Washington planted were of all varieties, for he believed in experimenting with many types. On the lawn too was a sundial on a simple standard placed correctly to give infallible time, you may be sure, by Washington, the surveyor.

But the garden, the second part of the landscaping, lay at the back of the house, where it might be enjoyed in more intimate moments. It lay in two perfectly balanced plots, between which circled a tree-shaded drive around the old bowling green and "pleasure ground." There were the usual outbuildings, kitchen, barns, office, gardener's house, carpenter shop, school house, spinning room and so on. There was even a seed house where Washington ex-

perimented with the latest developments of English horticulturists.

The vegetable gardens was in terraces with fig trees and grapearbors and great rich Bush Box at the entrance.

But it is in the wonderful flower garden that the Box is at its best, great billowy masses of it, long, undulating, fragrant sweeps of that deep, green verdure that the Colonists loved so well. It is in all shapes, for the flower beds were laid out in intricate patterns like the parterres of English gardens — "squares, circles, hearts, moons, lozenges, double circles."

The head gardener responsible for the care of this magnificent Box was in 1787 a man named Baxter. He was a very good gardener, but legend says he drank too freely in the little white house where he lived by the garden. Washington, however, made an agreement with him, a bond formally drawn up to the effect that he would "give certain money and clothes to Baxter in the course of the next year" if Baxter would do certain daily work, and permitting him to be drunk just four days and four nights at Christmas, two at Easter, and two at Whitsuntide. And so truly had Washington judged his man that this contract was effective, and it is to the care of old Baxter during his sober days that we owe much of the glory of the Mount Vernon garden as it is.

It is these lovely paths, pungent with their Box-borders and sweet-smelling flowers that help us to reconstruct the Father of our country, and to see him strolling placidly with Martha Washington in the peace of that garden, with their dogs, "True Love," "Sweet Lips," "Mopsy," "Music," and "Rover" romping behind them.

MARY WASHINGTON'S GARDEN

THERE is standing in Fredericksburg a long low cottage where Mary Washington lived through the anxious days of the War of Independence. It has a pleasant little garden, where such variety of old perennials are blooming that we know that Mary Washington loved this place and devoted tender care to it. There is a brick path of warm red leading down an aisle of rugged Boxwood, which Mary Washington brought with her from the farm on the Rappahannock River where George Washington was a lad, and where, one time, he cut down a certain cherry tree.

The family had lived there until Washington, about to set out for Bunker Hill, persuaded his mother to move into Fredericksburg where couriers would gallop through with news of victory or defeat. Through those trying years the staunch-hearted mother of the Commander-in-Chief drew comfort and repose from that tiny garden, working there early and late, listening always for the sound of the hoof-beats which meant news of her son.

When the war was over, George Washington came to Fredericksburg and his mother met him lovingly on the worn brick path by the old Box bushes. She made nothing of his laurels and renown. She wanted no reflected glory. He was simply her son and he had done his duty well. It was on this visit that Washington set out thirteen horse-chestnut trees along the walk, one for each of the new states. He had his mother's love of growing things.

In 1784 LaFayette went to Fredericksburg for the sole purpose of paying his respects to Madame Wash-

ington. He found her in a short linsey dress and a broad hat raking leaves in her beloved garden. He said later: "I have seen the only Roman mother living at this day."

It is fitting that the Boxwood, which Mary Washington loved too much to leave behind her, still grows, a living memorial to the woman whose son we call the Father of his Country. It is interesting to know that many years afterwards when a grateful nation came to rear a memorial to another honored son, Abraham Lincoln, they planted old Boxwood before the marble columns of his shrine.

THE BOX AT THE BIRTHPLACE

OF R. E. LEE

STRATFORD HOUSE was built in 1640 on a high bluff overlooking the Potomac. Richard Lee, of England, founder of that family of brilliant Americans, patented the land and built the original house which was destroyed by fire. About 1725 the present mansion was built as the gift of Queen Caroline, "a bountiful present out of her own Privy Purse." In it, years later, Robert E. Lee was born.

Stratford House was built of glazed brick and massive roughhewn timbers, solid and strong. It reared its noble walls amidst a beautifully symmetrical garden, cut from the mystery of surrounding forests. That sun-drenched garden with its harmonious oval plots and graceful paths leading to a slender sundial must have been a very oasis of peace, a beloved bit of England, for its first owners in the harassed days of Indian fighting, when the woods about were unexplored and trackless. The Lees were evidently prepared for trouble, for Stratford House was fitted with a secret room, which must have been used, since candle grease and traces of ink have been found on the floor.

Perhaps it was in very contrast to the wilderness and lurking danger about, that Richard Lee laid out his garden with such refinement of regularity and design. The patterns of the shapely beds and drives were marked by Box, best-beloved of the colonists, brought from the home gardens in the mother country. There was a Box maze, intricate and fascinating, and high enough so that later Robert E. Lee and his young friends played many a game of hide-and-seek about it.

Here in the perfumed privacy of beautiful Box-edged winding paths, the handsome little boy walked daily with his invalid mother, talking solemnly with her of the Lee ideals of right and duty and chivalry. Here his daily association was the atmosphere of quality, of culture, of nobility which that beautiful garden expressed and typified and breathed into his life.

WESTOVER THE BEAUTIFUL

IN the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah which describes the wonderful heritage destined to the children of the Lord there is a verse which says: "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and Box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary, and I will make the place of my feet glorious."

The colonists were almost invariably devout. Those hardy pioneers needed all the fortitude of religion to steel them into leaving the gentle hedgerows of England, tossing for weeks on the wind-

swept Atlantic, to face at last the forces of the forest and the treacherous Indians. I wonder if they did not cling to that comforting promise of the old prophet, who more than six thousand years ago assured them that all beauty should shelter them. Truly they must have cherished the venerable Box as did Isaiah, for it was planted in every Virginia garden, an almost sacred border, whose green and pleasant solidness stood, a barrier of blessing, between their lives and the lowering woods without.

Westover, one of the earliest plantations in America, and one of the loveliest, was cleared from the wilderness and set about with Box somewhere between 1688 and 1735 by William Byrd and his son. These were the first of that aristocratic and brilliant family, to which belonged the Virginian Samuel Pepys, William Byrd, who chronicled his travels and visits throughout the State. His quaint reminiscences help more than almost any contemporary book to reconstruct the cordial life of that day.

Everything about Westover was bountiful, and its prevailing color scheme, the mellow rose of faded bricks and the gleaming shimmer of the Boxwood, is unutterably lovely. The house, a spacious Georgian masterpiece, was built of bricks in homemade kilns, which had a glowing warmth of color no modern brick can rival. This same soft tone was carried out in the long wall which shut in the gardenside from the house to the James River. Then there were brick entrance posts supporting iron gates of magnificent grill work with the monograms of the Byrds, topped by two proud eagles, symbols so expressive of the spirit of America that they were used even long before the days of Independence.

Against the mild ruddiness of the house and walls stood the dark verdure of the abundant Box, in long clipped lines or in great clumps. Curved and perfectly proportioned hedges of dwarf Box followed the winding paths, laid of the same old brick, which led about the estate.

It must have been truly a sanctuary, this Box-fragrant enclosure in the midst of the woods. Even when swarthy Indians, stealthy and mysterious, came up those paths to barter, guttural and stern, the garden with its orderly, firm-set hedges and borders must have seemed secure and established. And when hardy frontiersmen on their way into the fastnesses lingered in the hospitable friendliness of Westover, they must have dreaded to leave that repose and protection for the unknown chance ahead.

Then came easier ways for Westover, when the frontier was more settled. Those were the hey-days, when many a coach and six with servants and outriders clattered through the noble entrance ways and up the Box-hedged drive to the wide door of the mansion. The pinnacle of a neighbor would carry a group of guests up the James to the landing at the foot of the garden. Each sloop that plied the river would bring some new arrivals from a distant plantation.

It was a brave scene, with the gentle folk streaming up the brick path of the garden between the green Box rows in their silks and satins, their plumes and fluttering fans, their gay waistcoats and powdered wigs. That Boxwood, brought perchance from some formal English garden, was the fitting frame for the stately courtesy of low bows and graceful offers of jewelled snuff-boxes. Boxwood grows in every picture of that unforgettable past, and so, like the fragrance of lavender and the scent of sandalwood, its warm redolence must ever be

about the memories of those precious days.

William Byrd, the third, was an officer in the Colonial troops which fought the French and Indian wars. He rode forth from the Box-planted gateway of Westover in his scarlet regimentals, broided in gold lace, a gold hilted sabre at his side. How gallant a figure, but what easy prey for the poisoned arrow of some ambushed Redskin!

At the time of the next war, the Revolution, there were many daughters at Westover. For the sake of a stroll along the Box-fragrant paths with those charming girls, many an officer in buff and blue and shining pack boots rode all night along the rutted roads of the undeveloped countryside. The fortunate among them would wear away a sprig of Box plucked for a promise. It would rest unwithering over their hearts through months of separation, while they were happy in the realization that another sprig of Box was knotted in a lace kerchief that graced a soft throat many miles away.

In 1781 Cornwallis and his redcoats crossed the James and landed at Westover on their way to Yorktown. A little later they were followed by French officers who took part in the siege. Westover was most hospitable to these young adventurers who had cast in their lot with the Colonists, and the Marquis de Chastellux wrote in his memoirs a tribute to the cordiality of its mistress and to the beauty of its garden.

The third war came to Westover tragically. Its sons were gone fighting; its women and children remained at home in a tremble of anxiety and dread. Then on the hurried retreat from Richmond General McClellan occupied the house as his headquarters. The flower beds were trampled by the troops and the window frames were scarred with holes for telegraph wires. The brick paths clattered metallicly with spurs and muskets. The Box borders, so orderly and poised, seemed foreign to the hub-bub and alarm.

But the visitation was short and soon the wave of war passed over. There remained the garden, as quiet and serene as ever, with the Box eternally calm in its place against the warmth of the brick wells. The flowers sprang up again, dainty heliotropes and clove pinks and fleur-de-lis, and the dark shadow of war was forgotten in their sweet brightness.

Now the garden at Westover is as beautiful as an old painting, full of soft tones and mellow shadows. The green Boxwood sends still its fragrance up as it did two centuries ago when the garden was young.

If William Byrd could visit it again surely he would feel that "all his ways were pleasantness, and his paths peace"; and that the promise had been fulfilled unto him, for the place of his sanctuary is beautiful and the place of his feet glorious.

(Accounts of other "Boxwood Gardens — Old and New" will be reprinted from Mr. Lewis' book, from time to time.)