

FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS

FINDING AID FOR
PLANT REFERENCE MATERIALS OF
OLMSTED BROTHERS AND
OLMSTED ASSOCIATES
1909-1966

CATALOG #: FRLA-47433 TO FRLA-47436; FRLA-47489; FRLA-48500
COLLECTION #: 2001.002/03.01

PREPARED BY

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Cover illustration:

| *Plant Reference Materials of Olmsted Brothers and Olmsted Associates, 1909-1966, Catalog Clippings Series,*
| *"Iris," Carl Salbach, Berkeley, CA (1931) and "Iris," C.S. Milliken Southern California Iris Gardens, Pasadena, CA*
| *(1932), "Iris, 1928-1933", Box 1, Folder 1* *Plant Reference Materials of Olmsted Brothers and Olmsted Associates,*
| *1909-1966*. Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site Brookline, MA.

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PREFACE

Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. is widely recognized as America's premier landscape architect. His accomplishments in the fields of park design, conservation, town planning, and landscape architecture have national and international significance. Olmsted's legacy includes city and state parks, school and college campuses, institutional grounds, private estates, suburban communities, zoos, and arboretums. Olmsted was also a passionate advocate for the preservation of America's natural resources and the creation of state and national parks.

After work on such landmarks as Central Park and Prospect Park in New York, Olmsted returned to his native New England to plan the Boston Park System. In 1883 at his home in Brookline, Massachusetts, he established the first full-scale professional office dedicated to landscape architecture in the United States. Following his retirement in 1895, the firm assumed the name Olmsted Brothers. John Charles Olmsted became the senior partner of the firm, and after his death in 1920, was succeeded by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. The firm rapidly expanded under the leadership of the brothers. Over the years, to accommodate this growth, a rambling complex of offices was added to the family residence. Olmsted Jr. was the last member of the family to be associated with the business. He retired in 1950, but the firm retained the name Olmsted Brothers until 1961 when it became Olmsted Associates. By the late 1970s, the business activity of the firm had declined appreciably. In 1980, the National Park Service acquired the site and began restoring the buildings and grounds to their appearance in the early 1930s, the period of the firm's greatest success.

This document, the *Finding Aid for Plant Reference Materials of Olmsted Brothers and Olmsted Associates, 1909-1966*, describes the collection of facts and images that the firm compiled in order to aid those employees engaged in the work of designing a landscape. The collection includes photographs, magazine and catalog clippings, observations of plant hardiness and blooming dates, a guide to common names of trees and shrubs, an index to commercial suppliers, and a catalogue to the horticulture literature stored in the firm's library and pamphlet files.

This document represents many hours of work recording details about the items herein described. The reader, however, should expect a degree of human error and, consequently, should rely on personal observation of the actual items to determine file contents.

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A correct citation of manuscript material should contain the following information, in this order: name of the collection and series; name and date of the item; box and folder number; and name of the site. For example:

Plant Reference Materials of Olmsted Brothers and Olmsted Associates, 1909-1966, Plant Images Series, "Abelia – Abies," Box 1, Folder 1. Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, Massachusetts.

INTRODUCTION

Plant Reference Materials of Olmsted Brothers and Olmsted Associates, 1909-1966 is a sub-series of the *Planting Department, 1864-1975* series within the *Reference Collection* sub-collection of the *Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., Olmsted Brothers, and Olmsted Associates Records* collection.

Plant Reference Materials of Olmsted Brothers and Olmsted Associates, 1909-1966 is comprised of eight sub-sub-series that provide information on subjects such as plant nomenclature, appearance, growing habits, means of propagation, and regional suitability. The collection includes photographs, magazine articles, catalog clippings, an index to commercial suppliers, and a card catalogue to the horticulture literature stored in the firm's library and pamphlet files. Perhaps most interesting, are the first-hand observations that were recorded by two of Olmsted Brothers' landscape architects: Robert B. Coe systematically documented the blooming dates of a wide variety of flowering plants, and Hans J. Koehler created an index to the hardiness of plants in the Northeast.

Throughout the history of the firm and the subsequent acquisition of the site by the National Park Service, the series were stored separately in various locations around the office. However, during the spring and summer of 2002, the series were processed as one collection based on their intellectual and physical proximity. Most of the series collections were found in (or on top of) oak filing cabinets placed along one wall of the planting department office. See Figure 1 (Appendix) for a visual description of the locations of the collections in their respective drawers. The staff of the archives has assigned each of the drawers a letter and number according to its vertical placement in a cabinet. For example, the bottom drawer in filing cabinet "A" is designated drawer "A1" and the top drawer, "A5." The historic locations of the series that were stored elsewhere are noted in the "Collection Description" portion of this document.

The series were processed in the Spring and Summer of 2002, at which time all staples and metal fasteners were removed, and the materials were housed in acid-free file folders and archival document boxes. Related items were kept together in acid-free folder inserts.

The finding aid is divided into four sections:

- Part 1: Collection Description:
 - a scope and content note (or brief synopsis of the collection)
 - an outline showing the organization of the collection
 - descriptions of the various series into which the collection is organized
- Part 2: Historical Note
- Part 3: Collection Listing (box and folder list)
- Bibliography

PART 1:

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Finding Aid for Plant Reference Materials of Olmsted Brothers and Olmsted Associates, 1909-1966

Accession number: FRLA-1

Catalog number: FRLA-47433 to FRLA-47436; FRLA-47489; FRLA-48500

Collection number: 2001.002/03.01

Quantity: 14,650 items, 9.5 linear feet

Storage: 4 document boxes and 15 index-card boxes

Location: Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, 99 Warren Street, Brookline, Massachusetts 02445-5998, (617)566-1689.

Description: *Plant Reference Materials of Olmsted Brothers and Olmsted Associates, 1909-1966* is comprised of eight series collections that provide information on subjects such as plant nomenclature, appearance, growing habits, means of propagation, and regional suitability. The materials include photographs, magazine articles, catalog clippings, an index to commercial suppliers, and a card catalogue to the horticulture literature stored in the firm's library and pamphlet files.

Cross-references: Related material may be found throughout the various collections held at the Olmsted National Historic Site.

Organization: *Plant Reference Materials of Olmsted Brothers and Olmsted Associates, 1909-1966*

- I. Plant Images, n.d.
- II. Robert B. Coe Materials, 1927-1941
 - a. Catalog Clippings, 1927-1940
 - b. Blooming Dates Card File, 1938-1941
- III. Plant Order Cards, 1920-1940
- IV. Arnold Arboretum Bulletins Index and Duke University Plant Card File, 1930-1933
- V. Plant Hardiness Index, 1909-1926
- VI. Common Names of Trees and Shrubs, c. 1915
- VII. Regional Planting Information, 1959-1966
- VIII. Pamphlets in File Cabinets, c. 1914-1953

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

I. Plant Images, n.d.

This collection, which was stored in two black clamshell boxes (Catalog# FRLA-48014 and FRLA-48015), consists of photographs and magazine and catalog clippings that illustrate various types of trees, shrubs, and flowers. The images are mounted on paper as well as on the back of old financial ledger cards. Each loose sheet is labeled with the Latin name of the plant represented. Based on the different mounting supports and writing styles, it appears that two sets of sheets were created independently. These sets were interfiled alphabetically by plant name in the first clamshell box, which contained images mounted on both paper and ledger cards. The other clamshell box contained images mounted only on paper, also organized alphabetically by plant name.

II. Robert B. Coe Materials, 1927-1941

a. Catalog Clippings, 1927-1940

These files were stored in a black metal file box (Catalog# FRLA-48049) with a handwritten tag that reads “Clippings Showing Colors of Flowers, Fruits, etc./ Clippings from Catalogs/ Left on Loan by R. W. [sic] Coe L.A./ July 1941.” The collection primarily consists of loose catalog clippings that illustrate various types of flowers, trees and shrubs. A few of the files contain entire catalogs, and others contain handwritten notes regarding blooming periods and plant heights.

b. Blooming Dates Card File, 1938-1941

This collection was stored in one drawer (see Fig. 1, Drawer B4) of an oak filing cabinet in the planting department. The drawer was divided into two parallel compartments. The first index-card from the left compartment reads “This cabinet of four drawers – and contents were left at O.B. office by R. W. [sic] Coe L.A., on loan, July 1941. They are his property. They are a ‘Record of flower blooming dates’ – as collected by Coe.”

Each card has the Latin botanical name of a plant handwritten along the top, and a timeline sketched below. The timeline begins with the date of first bloom (when “the plant is $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1% in flower”) and stops with the date when less than 1% of the plant was left in flower. The period of “full bloom” is blocked-out in the center of the timeline, and the day when the plant first achieved its “peak of bloom” is marked with a triangle. The dates above the timeline indicate the “duration of Peak Volume.”¹ Observations for each year are separated into different categories based on plant type or subject. For example, some of the categories for the year 1938 are the following: bulbs, azaleas, trees, shrubs, evergreens, vines, and color combinations. Plants are generally arranged

¹ “Note on the Use of the Bloom Date Graphic Chart,” 1941, *Robert B. Coe Materials*, Archives of the Arnold Arboretum Library.

alphabetically within each section. A large portion of the card file (between the years 1938 and 1939) is devoted to general information about plants and information gleaned from “literary sources.” The “Miscellaneous” category for 1938 includes a definition of “full bloom,” a description of the weather, the dates of autumn foliage color, and a “To do in 1939” list. Coe recorded the locations of many of the plants that he studied. In addition to various private gardens, the sites he noted include the following places: “O. B. Hollow,” Boston Public Garden, “Fenway herbaceous border,” and Franklin Park. However, according to Coe, he conducted the bulk of his research at the Arnold Arboretum in Jamaica Plain, not far from the Olmsted office in Brookline.²

III. Plant Order Cards, 1920-1940

The planting department used this series of index cards to track suppliers of specific plants. The top line of each card lists the botanical name and the common name of a plant. Below the names is a table with spaces for recording which nurseries sold the plant alongside information about plant quality and price. The “remarks” section of the table often contains notes directing the reader to see the nursery catalog for other plant varieties or to see a letter with price quotations from the nursery; in a few cases, a brief description of the plant is offered.

These forms were stored in two card-file drawers on top of an historic oak cabinet in the planting department office. The cards that were stored in the left drawer (Box 1 of 2) are in reverse alphabetical order by botanical name, with the exception of a few cards at the beginning of the box that were taken out of sequence. The date range for these cards is 1920 to 1922. A block of blank forms follows the alphabetical series.

The cards that were stored in the right-hand drawer (Box 2 of 2) are arranged in alphabetical order by botanical name; they range in date from 1922 to 1940. The majority of these cards have a cursory note written in the top left corner, which reads either “S.P.N.,” “Not in S.P.N.,” or “Not listed in S.P.N.” “S.P.N.” most likely refers to the 1923 edition of *Standardized Plant Names*.³

² Letter from Coe to Dr. Merrill, July 11, 1941. *Robert B. Coe Materials*, Archives of the Arnold Arboretum Library.

³ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. was one of the editors of the 1923 edition. Olmsted, Frederick Law, Frederick V. Coville, and Harlan P. Kelsey, eds., *Standardized Plant Names*. Salem, MA: American Joint Committee on Horticultural Nomenclature, 1923. The library at the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site contains a 1942 leather-bound edition of this title. “S.P.N” and “Frederick Law Olmsted” are stamped in gold on the cover.

IV. *Arnold Arboretum Bulletins Index and Duke University Plant Card File, 1930-1933*

Although the two collections do not appear to be related, the Arnold Arboretum bulletins index and the Duke University planting card file were evidently found together at the time the National Park Service acquired the Olmsted site. The tag associated with both sets of cards specifies that their original location was the mezzanine level of the upper vault.⁴

Arnold Arboretum Bulletin Index, 1933

This card index was used to locate references to specific plants in issues of the Arnold Arboretum's *Bulletin of Popular Information*.⁵ The first card reads "Arnold Arboretum Bulletins/ -Index-/ 1911-1914;" the date "2/9/33" is written in the lower right corner. On succeeding cards, the botanical name of a plant is written on the top line, and volume numbers are written below. The index is in alphabetical order by plant name. All information is recorded on the backs of cards that were previously part of a client index file.

In an introduction to issue number one, Charles Sprague Sargent, the first director of the arboretum, states that the bulletins were designed to inform plant lovers of the blooming times of flowers and shrubs within the arboretum, as well as provide "popular information" about the plants. In 1918, Olmsted Brothers had all of the bulletins that were published between 1911 and 1914 (issues 1 through 63) bound together in one volume.⁶ Some of the bulletins are annotated in pencil; issue number 36 is extensively annotated. The following note is written on the title page of the first issue: "The year 1911 is indexed. See cards, compiled by L.P.L 1/31/33."⁷

Duke University Plant Card File, 1930

For each design project, the Olmsted firm compiled a list of plants to be used on site. Each plant variety was assigned a unique number, which was then used on the landscape plans to indicate the plant's intended location. A note attached to a Duke University planting list from 1930 reads: "This list is not complete. See Mr. Mannings card catalog file."⁸ A copy of the "Alphabetical Arrangement of the Plants Used in the General

⁴ See also National Park Service, *1983 Vault Inventory*, Archives of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, Massachusetts (Olmsted NHS).

⁵ In 1877, Frederick Law Olmsted was hired by Harvard University to design a landscape that would serve both as a research facility for botanists and a park for the public. The Arnold Arboretum, which is still operated by Harvard, is located in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts.

⁶ The date of binding is written on the inside front cover. *Arnold Arboretum Bulletin – 1911-1914*. Call number NAB.1875.a6, Olmsted NHS.

⁷ "L.P.L." is most likely L. Palmer Lavalley, who was employed as a planting assistant at Olmsted Brothers during this time.

⁸ *Planting Lists*, "Job #7411 Duke University, Durham, NC," Box 20, Folder 7411-7. Olmsted NHS.

Planting List” bears the following note: “Original on cards on CM’s desk.”⁹ “Mr. Manning” and “CM” most likely refer to A. Charles Manning, who was employed by the firm from 1910 to 1934. Manning is listed as the draftsman on several planting plans for the Duke University project.

The planting list cards are divided into two groups. The first group is organized numerically by the assigned plant number; the second, alphabetically by botanical name. The divider at the beginning of the numerical series reads “Duke University General Planting List/ General Planting List to accompany all Planting Plans, made and to be made for both mens and womens College/ File 7411. July 21 1930.” Each card lists the botanical name, common name, and family of a particular plant.

The cards organized alphabetically by botanical name contain more information than do those in the numerically ordered series. In addition to the planting list number and the common name, the nursery that supplies the plant is written at the top of each card. Price, size, quantity, and certain planting specifications are included. Also noted are the Duke University landscape design plans that feature the particular plant.

V. *Plant Hardiness Indexes, 1909-1926*

The collection was found in a two-compartment drawer (A5) of an oak filing cabinet in the lower planting department. This index was stored in the right compartment; the original drawer label reads “Hardiness Index/ Hans Koehler.”¹⁰ The first card in the collection reads “Keep hardiness index of H. J. K.” The index is actually composed of three sections, each organized alphabetically by botanical plant name.

In the first section, each card contains notes about a plant’s suitability for growing in New England and describes the optimal conditions for growth. Observations of a plant’s performance in a specific location are often recorded. For example, the card for *Acanthopanax ricinifolium* states that “On W. A. Roger’s place, Kennebunk, Me. a 6-8 ft. plant planted in Spring 1907... survived one winter but died the next.” In other cases, references are made to articles that discuss the hardiness of a particular plant. The Canada Department of Agriculture is cited frequently, and clippings from its publications are pasted onto a number of the cards. The cards appear to have been generated between the years 1914 and 1926, although some of the cited articles date to as early as 1888.

The second section of the index is comprised of handwritten cards that present more general and varied information about plants. Each note provides facts about the growth habits, propagation, and use of a particular plant. Few dates have been included on these

⁹ Ibid., Folder 7411-5. Olmsted NHS.

¹⁰ The series “Common Names/ Trees & Shrubs” (2001.002/03.01.05) was stored in the left side of the drawer.

cards. Some are stamped with the year 1909 on the verso, but this date may be related to an earlier index that served a different purpose (a NAB/NAC number is always associated with the date).¹¹ A few of the cards record the purchase price of a plant in a certain year at a given nursery; the dates noted are 1909 and 1915.

The third section consists of pink index cards on which magazine clippings are pasted. The clippings all appear to have come from the same publication. Each one provides the common name, description, and possible uses of a plant. Most of the featured plants bear edible fruits or produce other commercially viable material. None of these cards are dated.

VI. *Common Names of Trees and Shrubs, c. 1915*

The collection was found in a two-compartment drawer (A5) of an oak filing cabinet in the lower planting department. This index was stored in the left compartment; the original label reads "Common Names/ Trees & Shrubs."¹² The 3 x 5" index-cards are organized alphabetically by Latin botanical name. The botanical name is handwritten along the top of each card, and the common name is written directly below. In many cases, the source for the name has been included on the card. For example, the card for *Acer palmatum* (Japanese maple) bears the following note: "H. J. K. ex C. A. H." "H. J. K." likely refers to Hans J. Koehler, a landscape architect and horticulturist at Olmsted Brothers. "C. A. H." may be the abbreviated title of a publication. A card for *Arctostaphylos alpina* (Black Bear berry) reads "H. M. C. ex A. F.," and underneath, "A. F. = Alpine Flowers by Wm. Miller." "H. M. C." is probably Hubert Miles Canning, who was employed at Olmsted Brothers from 1910 to 1917. The fourth card from the end is signed "Canning." This card is the only one in the index that bears a date; Canning's note about *Prunus nana* refers to an article that was published in *The Garden* on April 3, 1915.

VII. *Regional Planting Information, 1959-1966*

This collection was stored in an oak filing cabinet in the lower planting department of the office wing (Drawer D1, labeled "Regional Planting Information"). Folder 1 contains a letter signed "Olmsted Associates" that explains the firm's compliance with professional registration laws. Almost all of the other files contain articles culled from *Sunset*, a

¹¹ The Olmsted firm adopted the NAB/NAC classification scheme in the early twentieth century. NAB/NAC numbers were intended to be subsets of the Library of Congress' classification scheme for fine arts subjects, which are catalogued with an "NA" prefix. Theodora Kimball and James Sturgis Pray devised the NAC classification for city planning literature in 1913. Kimball and Henry Vincent Hubbard devised the NAB classification for landscape architecture subjects in 1919. See the *NAB/NAC Collection*, Olmsted NHS.

¹² The series "Plant Hardiness Index" (2001.002/03.01.05) was stored in the right side of the drawer.

magazine that focuses on plants and landscaping in the western United States. All the articles were chosen for their relevance to gardening in California. Most of the original folders had numbers stamped on the right corner (802-806; 811-817), and were arranged in numerical order. The numbering system and the fact that the folders were followed by a file-divider labeled "Southwest," indicate that this group of files may have been part of a bigger collection of regional planting information. Evidently, Aretmas P. Richardson subscribed to the magazine; his name and home address appear on a mailing label.¹³

VIII. Pamphlets in File Cabinets, c. 1914-1953

These index-cards comprise a catalogue to the horticulture and landscape architecture literature filed in the Olmsted Brothers' office. The collection was stored in one drawer (B5) of an oak filing cabinet in the lower planting department. The drawer of two parallel compartments was labeled "Pamphlets in File Cabinets/ See Files Next to Telephones."

The cards are arranged alphabetically by subject, the subject usually being the name of a plant or a horticulture topic, such as "soil acidity." Cards for pamphlets or articles culled from magazines have a number written in the top right corner. According to the instruction card near the beginning of the collection, "numbers in upper right-hand corners of cards refer to folders which are kept in cabinet near planting dep't. stairs." In many instances, this number has been crossed out and replaced with a "NAB" number. Since not all of the old file numbers have been replaced, it may be that, at one time, the office attempted to convert their old reference catalogue to the new system, but never completed the task. The first card in the collection gives instructions for checking the catalogue; the blue card immediately following the "O-P" divider reads "S. D. O. has weeded as far as this."¹⁴ Cards for items that had not been filed give the title of the periodical, its date, and the page number of the relevant article. Presumably, these items could be easily located in the office library.

In addition to publications, letters in which references are made to horticulture topics are also catalogued. For example, the card for "Beetles, Ambrosia" reads "Letter of J. F. D. to Humphreys at Andorra re. above (Nov. 14, 1913) filed 20." (According to the Olmsted Brothers' filing system, office correspondence was generally filed under job number 20.) There are also a few "Examples of" cards that catalogue job related items such as photographs taken by members of the firm or planting plans produced by Olmsted Brothers.

¹³ "California – Representative Planting Plans and Plantings, 1959-1965," Box 1, Folder 8.

¹⁴ "S. D. O." most likely refers to Stella D. Obst, a secretary at the firm for over forty years.

PART 2:

HISTORICAL NOTE

The Planting Department

In 1901, Olmsted Brothers built a two-story extension to the existing office wing. The first floor of the expansion was assigned to the planting department, which had previously been located along one side of the 1889/90 office-addition (later known as the clerical department.)¹⁵ In addition to the men's lavatory, the new planting department housed the library and served as additional space for drafting work (Fig. 2). The firm described the office as it appeared in 1905: "The Planting Department has a draughting room and a desk room. The latter contains nursery catalogues, a card catalogue of all nursery stock obtainable, American and foreign, with folders containing all planting papers relating to active planting work, about three hundred volumes of reference books and fifteen more or less technical weekly and monthly periodicals."¹⁶

The function and configuration of the various office spaces changed over the years. At some point, a small room was constructed in the southwest corner of the planting department (Fig. 3). In 1913, firm partner James F. Dawson's office occupied this space, which now contains the firm's historic book collection. Hans J. Koehler sat outside Dawson's "coop" at a nearby desk.¹⁷ By the 1960s, the firm (now called Olmsted Associates) was in decline. Productivity was low, there were fewer employees, and several areas of the office were no longer being used. The planting department, however, continued to serve as a reference room and a storage location for correspondence files until the site was acquired by the National Park Service in 1980.¹⁸

The Landscape Architects Associated with This Collection

Robert B. Coe

Robert Barrows Coe compiled the collection of catalog clippings and the blooming dates card file. He was employed at Olmsted Brothers from 1929 to 1941, but there is little personal information about him in the firm's records. A resumé that Coe sent to the firm in 1951 provides some information about his professional life. He earned an AB degree from Harvard College in 1925, and a Master of Landscape Architecture from Harvard University in 1929. After leaving Olmsted Brothers in 1941, he worked for the Tennessee Valley Authority in Knoxville, Tennessee until budget cuts forced him to look elsewhere for employment. In 1951, in the hopes

¹⁵ Amy Millman, *Historic Resource Study, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site* (Boston: Division of Planning and Design, North Atlantic Regional Office, National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1982), 59.

¹⁶ "Preliminary Announcements for the July Meeting of the American Society of Landscape Architects to be held in Boston, Mass. July 7th, 8th, and 9th 1905." *Office Scrapbook*, 1: 52. Olmsted NHS.

¹⁷ Millman, 62.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 102. See also Andrea M. Gilmore, *Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Historic Structure Report* (Brookline, MA: Northeast Cultural Resources Center, Northeast Region, National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1987).

of relocating to Boston, Coe sent a letter to Olmsted Brothers inquiring about job prospects in the area. Another letter, dated only two weeks later, indicates that he was able to secure a position at the Federal Housing Authority in Washington DC.¹⁹

Coe loaned a more finished version of his work on blooming dates to the Arnold Arboretum's library. In July of 1941, he left four volumes of photostat reproductions of blooming-date charts at the library, along with instructions for their use. Coe hoped to one day publish his research, but in the meantime, intended the charts to be used by the public as well as the arboretum's staff. His decision to leave his work at the Arnold Arboretum caused some consternation at Olmsted Brothers. Firm partners Edward C. Whiting and William B. Marquis expected Coe to leave a copy of his research at the Olmsted Brothers office, implicitly, because he spent some of his hours at the firm working on the project.²⁰

Hans J. Koehler

Hans J. Koehler, who compiled the plant hardiness index, worked at Olmsted Brothers for almost forty years. His employee record cards, which are extant from the years 1905 through 1940, reveal that he took a hiatus from work at Olmsted Brothers between 1915 and 1920.²¹ Koehler was recognized as a plant specialist, and worked on many of the firm's important commissions, such as Fort Tryon Park (Job #529) and improvements to Boston Common (Job #946). He was also responsible for much of the planting design for the grounds of the Olmsted house and office in Brookline.²² Koehler's obituary in the *Marlboro Daily Enterprise* stated the following about him: "An authority on trees, he identified the trees on Boston Common and placed name-tags on them..."²³ Like Coe, Koehler studied and documented the blooming dates of various plants. In 1909, he compiled "Notes as to the Flowering of Plants, in and around Seattle, Washington" a series of typewritten monthly records that were bound in a folder and stored in the "NAB-NAC" reference files.²⁴ Koehler also wrote a number of horticulture articles that appeared in the journal *Landscape Architecture*.

¹⁹ *Post-1949 Correspondence*, "Job# 766-2, Robert B. Coe," Box 31, Folder 12. Olmsted NHS.

²⁰ *Legal Records – Upper Vault*, "Firm Correspondence, 1930-1947," Box 1, Folder 1. Olmsted NHS.

²¹ *Personnel Records, Employee Record Cards*, ER 2-6 and ER 4-7. Olmsted NHS.

²² Zaitzevsky, Cynthia. *Fairsted: A Cultural Landscape Report for the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site* (Boston: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, National Park Service, and the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University), 1997.

²³ *Marlboro Daily Enterprise*, July 16, 1951.

²⁴ *NAB-NAC Files*, "NAB 1877.g19." Olmsted NHS.

PART 3:

COLLECTION LISTING

I. Plant Images

Contents of Clamshell Box #1

Box 1

Folder:

1. Abelia – Abies
2. Acer – Aesculus
3. Ampelopsis – Aucuba
4. Azalea – Buddleia
5. Buxus – Cedrus
6. Celtis – Cotoneaster
7. Crataegus – Dendrobium
8. Deutzia – Ficus
9. Forsythia – Hedysarum
10. Hetrophylla – Jasminum
11. Juniperus
12. Kerria – Liriodendron
13. Lonicera – Mahonia

Contents of Clamshell Box #2

14. Dicentra – Exochorda
15. Fenzlia – Gloxinia
16. Glycine – Heuchera
17. Houstonia – Lathyrus
18. Leonotis – Lycoris
19. Malva – Narcissus
20. Nasturtiums – Pancratium
21. Poppy – Picea
22. Pinus – Ranunculus
23. Retinispora – Rosa

Box 2

Folder:

1. Rosa
2. Rubus – Sophora
3. Spergula – Taxus
4. Tecoma – Verbascum
5. Verbena – Yucca
6. Zephyranthus - Zygopetalum

II. Robert B. Coe Materials

a. Catalog Clippings

Box 1

Folder:

1. Narcissus – Daffodils,²⁵ 1934-1939
2. Lilies, 1928-1935
3. Tulips, 1927-1940
4. Bulb Culture, Etc., 1932-1934
5. Bulbs – Spring Flowers / Summer & Fall Blooming,²⁶ 1934-1938 []
6. Bulbs – Miscellaneous, 1931-1935
7. Chrysanthemums – Hardy, 1933-1934
8. Peony, 1927-1937
9. Herbaceous Perennials – in Color, 1928-1934
10. Herbaceous Perennials – Not in Color & Culture Notes & Classification Lists, 1928
11. Herbaceous Perennials, Hardy. Wayside Gardens. Groupings by Date, 1932-1934
12. Iris, 1928-1933
13. Native Herbaceous, Woodland Plants & Waterlilies, n.d.
14. Roses, 1928-1937
15. Broadleafed Evergreens, n.d.
16. Ferns, 1927
17. Shrubs – Deciduous, n.d.
18. Trees – Deciduous, n.d.
19. Vines – Hardy, 1939
20. Fruits: Apple, Pear, Cherry, Grape, Quince, Peach, Etc., 1932-1934
21. Evergreen Conifers, n.d.
22. Flowering Trees, 1929
23. Fertilizers & Sprays, Etc., n.d.
24. Duplicates. Annuals,²⁷ 1934-1937
25. Bibliography & Notes & Tables,²⁸ n.d.
26. Sprag Chart for “Black Leaf 40,” n.d.
27. Shrub Heights – Deciduous, 1940 [Handwritten notes]
28. Shrub Heights – Broadleaf Evergreens, n.d. [Handwritten notes]
29. Rhododendrons and Azaleas, 1927-1930

²⁵ Contains a bulb catalog from Wayside Gardens in Mentor, Ohio with notes by R. B. Coe on plants at a flower show held in 1939.

²⁶ Contains a diazotype of a planting plan for Paul Clark in Brookline, MA (Job #9483).

²⁷ Includes handwritten notes on blooming periods.

²⁸ Includes print of a table titled “Data Taken from Article by F. L. Olmsted in Landscape Architecture Vol. 15 P. 261.”

b. Blooming Dates Card File

- Box 1: Bulbs 1938 – Vines 1938
- Box 2: Fruit 1938 – W.E.S.
- Box 3: W.E.S. – Lilacs by Colors
- Box 4: 1939 – 1940

III. Plant Order Cards

- Box 1: Cards in reverse alphabetical order by botanical name, X-A
- Box 2: Cards in alphabetical order by botanical name, A-Z

IV. Arnold Arboretum Bulletins Index and Duke University Plant Card File

- Box 1: Arnold Arboretum Bulletins Index and Duke University Plant Card File

V. Plant Hardiness Indexes

- Box 1: Plant Hardiness Index, Section 1
- Box 2: Plant Hardiness Index, Sections 2 and 3

VI. Common Names of Trees and Shrubs

- Box 1: Common Names of Trees and Shrubs, A-E
- Box 2: Common Names of Trees and Shrubs, F-R
- Box 3: Common Names of Trees and Shrubs, S-Z

VII. Regional Planting Information FRLA 47436

Box 1

Folder:

1. “Professional Registration and Our Professional Practice,” n.d.
2. California Groundcovers, 1959-1966
3. California Shrubs, 1959-1966
4. California Evergreen Trees, 1959-1965
5. California Grasses, 1959-1964
6. California Flowering Trees, 1959-1966

7. California Shade Trees, 1959-1966
8. California Representative Planting Plans and Plantings, 1959-1965
9. California General, 1959-1965
10. California Borders and Edging Plants 1959-1965
11. House Plants, 1959-1965
12. California Vines, 1959-1966
13. California Flowers, 1959-1966
14. California Specifications – Cost Data, 1961-1965
15. California Ferns, 1962-1965

VIII. Pamphlets in File Cabinets

Box 1: Pamphlets in File Cabinets (A-K)

Box 2: Pamphlets in File Cabinets (L-Sg)

Box 3: Pamphlets in File Cabinets (Sha-Z) and Index to Suppliers

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Marlboro Daily Enterprise, July 16, 1951.

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Post-1949 Correspondence, “Robert B. Coe,” Box 31, Folder 766-2. Archives of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, Massachusetts.

“Preliminary Announcements for the July Meeting of the American Society of Landscape Architects to be held in Boston, Mass. July 7th, 8th, and 9th 1905.” *Office Scrapbook*, 1: 52. Archives of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, Massachusetts.

Robert B. Coe Materials, 1938-1941, Archives of the Arnold Arboretum Library.

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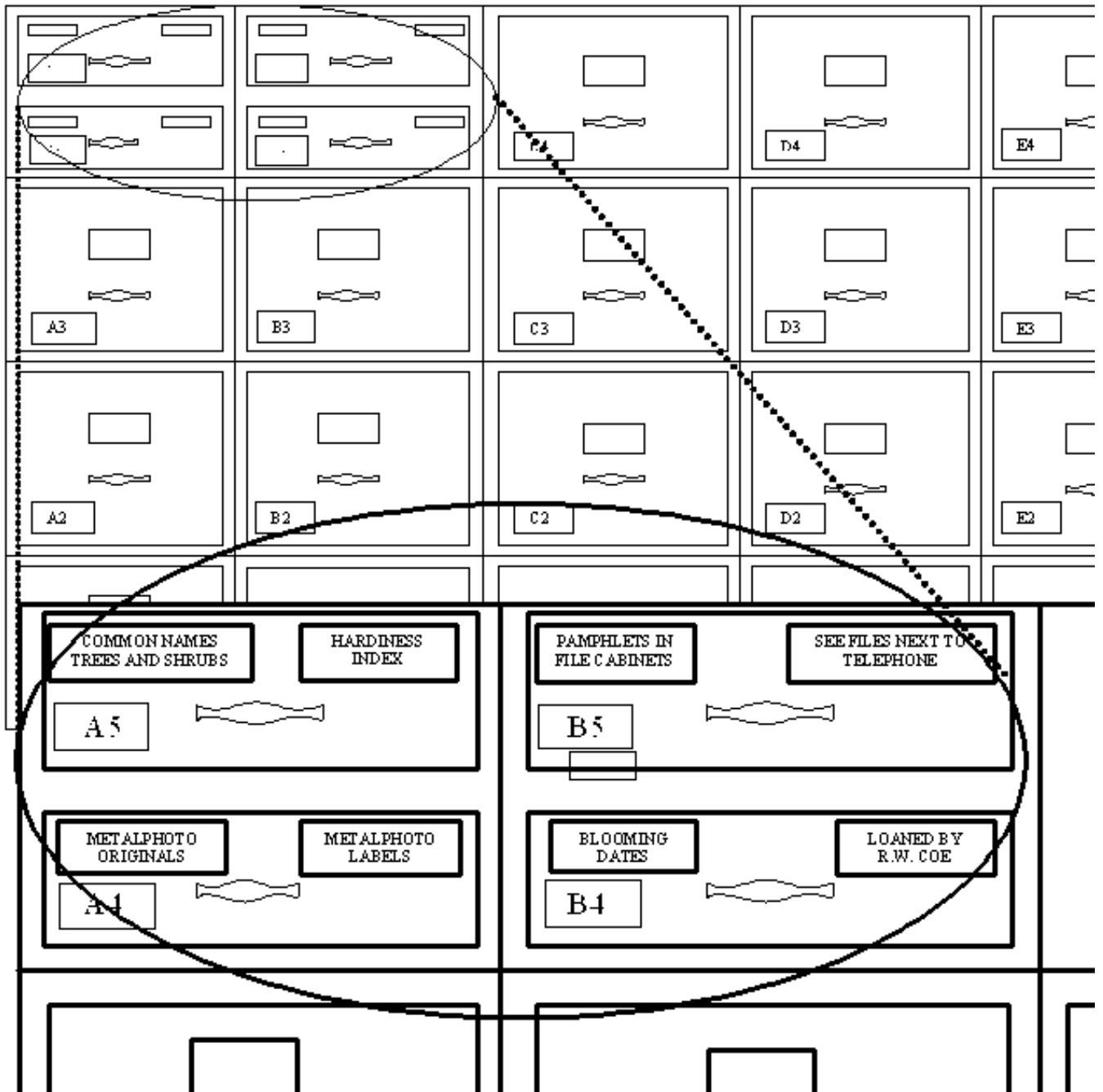


Figure 1. Illustration of Filing Cabinets in Planting Department

Figure 2. Floor Plan of Planting Department, 1900 (Plan 20-43) [To be added]

Figure 3. First Floor Plan of Office, 1913 (Plan 20-28) [To be added]

