

‘Vardar Valley’ Boxwood and Its Balkan Brothers

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In 1934, I visited Rumania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia under the joint auspices of Harvard University and the United States Department of Agriculture, choosing by preference the sun-baked areas of the northwestern Balkans, which have cold, dry winters like ours [St. Louis]. I attempted to collect seeds and cuttings of four interesting evergreens, holly, ivy, yew, and box, on the theory that, even though they looked more or less identical with these same species in northern Europe, they must be different on the inside.

—Edgar Anderson, 1945

With these words, the former director of the Missouri Botanical Garden and one-time Arnold Arboretum staff member, Edgar Anderson described his memorable trip across eastern Europe in search of reliably hardy, broadleaved evergreens. At the time, it may have appeared as just another Arboretum collecting expedition to a distant corner of the globe. But looking back on it—seventy-three years later—we know it was a special trip that resulted in the introduction of a horticulturally important strain of the common or English boxwood, *Buxus sempervirens*, collected from wild plants growing along the Treska River just outside the city of Skopje, the capitol of Macedonia.

In 1957—some twenty-three years after the fact—the first of Anderson’s boxwood selections was named ‘Vardar Valley’ because of its outstanding winter hardiness and mounded growth form. As this cultivar spread slowly through the nursery trade during the 1970s and 80s, it became apparent that ‘Vardar Valley’ was resistant to virtually all pests and disease—including the dreaded boxwood decline—that were damaging or killing common boxwood across eastern North America. The recognition of this resistance, together with its hardiness and compact habit, caused an explosive increase in the landscape use of ‘Vardar Valley’, beginning in the 1990s and continuing through today.

Edgar Anderson, the Man

Before proceeding further with the story of *Buxus* ‘Vardar Valley’, it would be appropriate to take a look at the man who discovered this important cultivar. Edgar Anderson was born in Forestville, New York in 1897, and moved to East Lansing, Michigan as a child. He attended Michigan Agricultural College (now Michigan State University), where his father was a professor of dairy husbandry, and graduated in 1918. Anderson received his doctorate from the Bussey Institution of Harvard University in 1922, where he studied the tobacco genus, *Nicotiana*, under the direction of Dr. Edward M. East. The Bussey was located adjacent to the Arnold Arboretum and provided Anderson with an opportunity to familiarize himself with the collections and get to know various staff members. While at the Bussey, Edgar met Dorothy Moore, a laboratory assistant working for East while finishing up her master’s degree in botany from Wellesley College. The two were married in 1923.

Following his graduation from Harvard in 1922, Anderson went to work for the Missouri Botanical Garden, and in 1929 was awarded a National Research Fellowship for study in England with a focus on genetics under the guidance of J. B. S. Haldane. He also studied cytology with C. D. Darlington at the John Innes Horticultural Institute, and statistics with



AUTHOR PHOTOGRAPH

The original plant of *Buxus sempervirens* 'Vardar Valley,' AA 352-35-E, was 23.3 feet wide by 8.3 feet tall (7 m x 2.5 m) in December, 2006.

R. A. Fisher at the Rothampstead Field Station. Anderson returned to the Missouri Botanical Garden in 1930 and, a year later, accepted an appointment as arborist at the Arnold Arboretum where he worked until the fall of 1935. The primary responsibilities of Anderson's position were care of the living collections and furthering the Arboretum's relations with the public. In his biographical sketch of Anderson, John Finan notes that the four years he spent at the Arnold Arboretum were frustrating because of "the large number of speaking and other public service obligations at the Arboretum did not allow him to pursue his research interests. Indeed, the press of duties became so great that,

as Dorothy Anderson's diary records describe, he suffered severe exhaustion in the spring of 1934. He went with his family to England in July, 1934 and he spent August and September on a collecting trip to the Balkans." Anderson resigned his position in the summer of 1935 and returned to the Missouri Botanical Garden, where he spent the remainder of his botanical career.

Today, Anderson is remembered primarily for his groundbreaking work on the role that hybridization plays in the evolution of plants, summarized in his book *Introgressive Hybridization*, published in 1949. He was also interested in the history of domesticated plants



Edgar Anderson, "Arnold Arboretum Arborist 1931."

and in 1952 published a popular book on the subject, *Plants, Man and Life*, which is still in print. Anderson was appointed director of the Missouri Botanical Garden in 1954, but resigned in 1957 to go back to the teaching and research that he so dearly loved. During his lifetime Anderson was awarded many honors, including membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences, and the Darwin-Wallace Medal of the Linnaean Society. He died in St. Louis in 1969 at the age of seventy-two. Writing in 1972, his good friend, G. Ledyard Stebbins of the University of California, Davis, described Anderson's well-known humanitarian side with the following words:

I cannot conclude without referring to Edgar Anderson's great faith in mankind, which let him to adopt and follow zealously the Quaker religion and way of life. He accepted family tragedies calmly and resolutely. His inner conflict with himself was never wholly resolved, but he

never wavered in his belief that he could make life better for others by his kindness toward them, and his ability to share with them his extraordinary perception of the wonders of plant life, and what plants could mean to people.

The Balkan Expedition

Anderson's trip to the Balkans during the summer of 1934 is not usually mentioned in his list of scientific accomplishments, but it was Anderson's most important foray into the field of ornamental horticulture, and 'Vardar Valley' its most significant result. Indeed, the only other ornamentals—besides *Buxus*—that Anderson collected on the trip, which are still commercially grown, are two cultivars of Baltic Ivy (*Hedera helix* var. *baltica*) 'MBG Rumania' and 'MBG Bulgaria.' Anderson was not successful in his attempt to introduce a winter-hardy butcher's broom (*Ruscus* spp.), cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus* var. *shipkaiensis*), or English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). Several specimens collected from the trip, however, are still growing on the grounds of the Arnold Arboretum: including three accessions of European yew (*Taxus baccata*, AA #935-34, 370-35 and 371-35), one wild lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*, AA #949-34), and one wild pear (*Pyrus elaeagrifolia*, AA #948-34).

The story of how Anderson came to collect Balkan boxwood is best told in his own words, from an article he wrote for *The Boxwood Bulletin* in 1963:

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 Gardens in Belgrade by consultation and study in the herbarium I found that the northernmost extension of this southern strain was just outside of Skopelie [Skopje] 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



A German Army map from 1937 showing the Treska Gorge and the Treska River. The white arrow indicates the location of the Monastery of St. Andreja near where Anderson collected 'Vardar Valley.' The region has changed considerable since Anderson's time, due to the construction of a masonry dam near the Monastery. The coordinates for the Treska Gorge are 41° 58' N and 21° 18' E.

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 led to the unpretentious little whitewashed monastery. [Author's note: *This is most likely the Monastery of Sveti Andreja on the banks of the Treska River, which flows into the Vardar River southwest of Skopje.*] 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 thyme and rosemarys I remember in particular.

At the time of our visit the seeds were already ripe and had been scattered by the browsing



Anderson photos #17415 with the following caption: "Yugoslavia, Skoplje [sic], Treska Gorge. *Buxus sempervirens* habitat. Photos. by Edgar Anderson, Sept. 19, 1934. Locality where herbarium specimen #133 was collected." In the picture on the left, note the boxwood growing along the edge of the road and up the steep slope of the gorge. In the picture on the right, note the Treska River flowing at the base of the Treska Gorge and the boxwood dominating the slopes.

goats. We got down on our hands and knees and picked up the shiny black sees (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.

In the Arnold Arboretum Archives I unearthed several of the photographs Anderson took while on his Balkan trip, including several taken on September 19 of location #133 in the Treska Gorge area, and of boxwoods that were growing there. These photos are particularly noteworthy because this is where Anderson collected the plant that would eventually become the cultivar 'Vardar Valley' (AA #352-35).

I was elated at the thought that I might have discovered a photograph of the original 'Vardar Valley' growing in the wilds of Macedonia. But the joy was quashed after I located an undated, typewritten manuscript that Anderson wrote, probably in mid to late 1935, "Report on Balkan Expedition to the Arnold Arboretum." It lists all of his collections, including *Buxus sempervirens* #133, which he describes as consisting of seeds from two plants (given AA numbers 789-34 and 818-34), and cuttings from two plants, (given AA numbers 352-35 and 353-35). The report clearly indicates that Anderson used #133 to designate a collection location rather than in reference to a specific, individual plant. The truth of this supposition was confirmed when I obtained a high resolution scan of Anderson's original *Buxus sempervirens* herbarium specimen #133 from the Harvard University Herbaria, which showed a plant with long, narrow leaves as opposed to the distinctly rounded leaves that are typical of 'Vardar Valley'. Lynn Batdorf, boxwood curator at the U. S. National Arboretum and registrar for the genus *Buxus*, examined the scan and reported that "the leaves



ARCHIVES OF THE ARNOLD ARBORETUM

Anderson photos #17416 with the following caption: "Yugoslavia, Skoplje, Treska Gorge. *Buxus sempervirens*. Photos. by Edgar Anderson, 1934. Herbarium specimen #133."

of herbarium specimen #133 are elliptic to oblong with an obtuse apex, while the leaves of 'Vardar Valley' are larger, far more ovate shaped with an acute apex."

The Publication of 'Vardar Valley'

Anderson collected cuttings from four different boxwood plants during the course of his Balkans expedition: two from cultivated plants in Bucharest, Romania and two from wild plants at location #133 outside Skopje. Anderson sent the plants and cuttings directly to the John Innes Horticultural Institute in London rather than to

***Buxus sempervires* accessions received
by the Arnold Arboretum from Anderson's
1934 Balkans Expedition:**

350-35 = "*Buxus sempervirens* #1 Bucharest E. Anderson. (from the John Innes Hort Inst., Mostyn Rd., London SW. 19) April 1, 1935. 20 cutts April 2, 1935. 18 boxed Dec. 3, 1935." [According to Anderson's undated report, these cuttings were collected from a cultivated plant. One specimen was planted on the AA grounds in 1950; it was removed in July, 1982.]

351-35 = "*Buxus sempervirens* #2 E. Anderson. Bucharest, Rumania April 1, 1935. 66 cutts April 2, 1935. 58 boxed Dec. 3, 1935." [According to Anderson's undated report to the Arnold Arboretum, these cuttings were collected from a cultivated plant. Two specimens of #351-35 were planted on the AA grounds in 1950; plant A was removed in April 1981; the name of plant B was changed to *Buxus sempervirens suffruticosa* by Donald Wyman on Oct. 25, 1956, and on Sept. 24, 1960 it was "stolen by vandals". In 1984, this clone was assigned the cultivar name 'Edgar Anderson' by Mary Gamble in *The Boxwood Bulletin* 24: 41-53.]

352-35 = "*Buxus sempervirens*. Treska Gorge, Skoplje #133. E. Anderson, April 1, 1935. 44 cutts April 2, 1935. (42). 40 boxed Dec. 3, 1935." [This accession was named 'Vardar Valley' by Donald Wyman.]

353-35 = "*Buxus sempervirens*, E. Anderson no label, April 1, 1935; 58 cutts April 2, 1935. (52) 50 boxed Dec. 3, 1935." [According to Anderson's undated report to the Arnold Arboretum, these cuttings were part of collection #133 at Treska Gorge. An unsigned note at the bottom of the accession card reads: "Do not name this clone. It is not as good as 'Inglis', and has a few browned leaves 4/27/66. On this date it is 6' tall, 7' across. Foliage lighter green than the much lower 'Varder Valley.'" According to Arboretum records, one specimen was planted on the grounds in 1950, and was removed in November, 1982. A cutting of this plant at the National Arboretum was given the cultivar name 'Scupi' in 1998 and registered in 2000.]

789-34: "*Buxus sempervirens*. seed #133 E. Anderson. Treska Gorge, Skoplje, Yugo-Slavia. Oct 5, 1934. germ Dec. 27, 1934. 25 boxed Dec. 27, 1934." [According to Arboretum records, one specimen was planted on the grounds in 1950, and was reported missing in 1986. One plant from this seed lot at the National Arboretum was given the cultivar name 'Treska Gorge' in 1998 and registered in 2000.]

818-34: "*Buxus sempervirens*. seed #133 E. Anderson. Treska Gorge, Skoplje. Oct 30, 1934. germ June 20, 1935. 7 potted July 16, 1936." [According to Arboretum records, none of these seedlings were planted on the grounds or distributed.]

the Arnold Arboretum for two reasons: first, the stopover would cut down on the length of time the fragile material would spend in transit; and second, Anderson knew people at the John Innes Institute from the time he spent there in 1929. In one of the letters he wrote from Yugoslavia to Oakes Ames,¹ the supervisor of the Arnold Arboretum, Anderson listed the material he sent to the Innes Institute for propagation: "Cutting and plants of the following sent to London: *Hedera helix*—5 localities; *Taxus baccata*—1 locality; *Prunus lauro-cerasus shipkaiensis*—2 localities; *Buxus*—1 locality; *Ruscus*—2 localities."

The staff of the John Innes Horticultural Institute successfully rooted all four of Anderson's *Buxus* selections, and sent them on to the Arnold Arboretum, where they arrived on April 1, 1935, and were accessioned under numbers 350-35 through 353-35 [see box this page]. The Arboretum's propagator took a second generation of cuttings from the Innes Institute plants on April 2, most of which rooted and were potted up on December 3, 1935. At some point during the early 1940s, a number of these rooted cuttings were planted out on the Arboretum grounds amidst its other boxwood accessions.

Around this same time, in November, 1942, one plant each of the four cutting-grown selections and one seedling from accession number AA 789-34 were distributed to the geneticist Orland E. White,² Director of the Blandy Research Farm of the University of Virginia in Boyce, Virginia and to Henry Hohman, owner of Kingsville Nursery in Kingsville, Maryland. While other individuals and institutions undoubtedly received rooted cuttings of Anderson's boxwoods at a later date, it is likely that White and Hohman were the first to receive them because they were friends of Anderson's and both had special interests in boxwood.

In 1957, Donald Wyman, who had been appointed Arnold Arboretum horticulturist in late 1935 to replace Anderson,



A high resolution scan of Anderson's original herbarium specimen for *Buxus sempervirens* #133 housed at the Harvard University Herbaria in Cambridge and incorrectly annotated as the cultivar 'Vardar Valley'.

formally named one of his predecessor's boxwoods 'Vardar Valley.' In an article in *Arnoldia*, Wyman explained why the plant he selected was special:

Eight plants were grown to size over a period of many years. Several of these were sent outside the Arboretum for trial elsewhere. Cuttings were sent to at least one commercial nursery which, in turn, rooted them and propagated more, selling the resulting plants [this was probably Henry Hohman]. Enthusiastic responses have come from several of these sources so that now it is thought wise to name this plant *Buxus sempervirens* 'Vardar Valley' and to start propagating it for a wide distribution. . . . Cuttings, rooted in 1935, have grown into plants that are now four feet across, with a fairly uniform flat top, but only two feet high. This habit is of outstanding importance, for it is low enough to be covered or partially covered by snow in winter, or else it is an easy matter to protect the plant in other ways when necessary. It is unlike other varieties of *Buxus sempervirens* in having this low, flat-topped shape. Apparently, it is as hardy as any clone we have yet tried. In January of 1957, the temperature dropped to -23° F at Weston, and although there was some snow on the ground, the top of the plant was not covered nor was it injured. A large plant in the Arboretum has not shown any marked winter injury. Reports from others in Cleveland show that it has withstood temperatures of -20° F there, and we know that it had withstood similar temperatures in Boston. The foliage is a glossy, dark green, similar to that of the species, while new young foliage is first bluish green.

An Interesting Postscript

The story of 'Vardar Valley' is a worthy subject in its own right, but what really peaked my interest was a letter that Anderson wrote from the Balkans to Professor Oakes Ames, then supervisor of the Arboretum. I was reading through the archival material at the behest of my friend from Longwood Gardens, Dr. Tomasz Anisko, who was planning a trip to Skopje in the summer of 2007, and had asked me to help locate any of Anderson's original collecting books in the Arboretum Archives. The books weren't there, but the letters were. One letter in particular caught my attention; it was written on September 3, 1934, while Anderson was

at the mouth of the Danube River in Salina-Tuscea, Romania, describing his earlier travels: "At Cluj my companion, Erhart Muller started back for the Harvard Medical School. He has been very helpful in many ways, gathering seeds, labeling packages, building up my German, and has greatly reduced traveling expenses since he always paid his half of cab and boat fare. I celebrated his departure by going to bed with an acute attack of diarrhea."

What stunned me about this passage was that I actually know Erhart Muller and that he is well and living in the town of Harvard, Massachusetts, about thirty miles west of Boston. I first met him in 1972, when I was living in Harvard and working at the Harvard Forest in Petersham, Massachusetts. I knew that Erhart had traveled with Anderson on his Balkan trip, but somehow failed to appreciate the full significance of this fact when he told me about it thirty years ago. It wasn't until his name popped out at me from a letter written in 1934 that the proverbial light bulb went on. Maybe Erhart had been with Anderson when he collected 'Vardar Valley' was my first thought. But the date of the letter in which he is mentioned, September 3, clearly indicates that he went home before Anderson collected the 'Vardar Valley' cuttings on September 19. So, in much the same way that I was foiled in my attempt to turn up either a photograph or herbarium specimen of 'Vardar Valley', I was thwarted in my attempt to locate a living witness to its collection.



A portrait of Erhart Muller, December, 2006.

Nevertheless, I decided to pay Erhart a visit to see what he might remember about Anderson and their trip together. The answer is, as it turns out, not very much. Erhart was born in 1909—his father had immigrated to the United States from Barmen, Germany and his mother was a New Yorker of German descent. He grew up in the New York City area, spent a year at boarding school in Germany after World War I, and attended Harvard College where he studied anthropology. One highlight of his college days made newspaper headlines in April, 1929, when a small biplane he was traveling in was forced to make an emergency landing on Memorial Drive, a major roadway along the Charles River in Cambridge. Later, after graduation

from Harvard in 1932, Erhart spent the summer in Montenegro with one of his professors, documenting the physiognomy of people living in the highlands.

Erhart first met Anderson—or Andy as he called him—in 1933, at the Keewaydin boy's camp on Lake Temagami in Ontario, Canada, famous then, as now, for its wilderness canoe trips. Erhart had been a camper there during a previous year and had returned for another summer to help out in the “running of the thing.” Anderson was there to lead groups of campers on canoe trips. The two became friends and remained in contact after they both returned to the Boston area. Erhart remembers visiting Anderson at the Arboretum, not so much to



PHOTOGRAPHS AND LETTERS FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE ARNOLD ARBORETUM

Anderson's photo #17432 taken on September 2, 1934 at the Letea Forest Reserve in Valcov, Romania, at the delta of the Danube River. In a letter to Oakes Ames on September 3, 1934, Anderson described the scene: “The last two days have been spent on the ultimate delta of the Danube, hot in summer, cold in winter; a vast swampy region with a very low rainfall. One does not know whether to refer to it as a dusty swamp or a swampy desert. Among the ancient sand ridges there are long strips of a most peculiar forest. The topography reminds one strongly of the Lake Michigan sand dunes. Like them it has been made a natural reservation and is in charge of the department of forestry. . . . The great plant of the delta is *Phragmites*. It builds the land and like the palms of the tropics is used for everything. The young growth is forage, the dried canes are fuel, housing, roofing, fences, sticks, rafts!”

Balkan Boxwood, the “K-series”

Anderson left the Arnold Arboretum at the end of the summer in 1935 and returned to the Missouri Botanical Garden, taking his interest in Balkan boxwood with him. Writing in *The Boxwood Bulletin* in 1963, he describes how he, “. . . got in touch by mail with the acquaintances I had made in the Yugoslav forest service³ and imported a pound or so of boxwood seed which was raised at the Gray Summit Arboretum of the Missouri Botanical Garden.”

Horticultural selections from Anderson’s second importation of Balkan boxwood have come to be known as the “K-series” boxwood, as a means of distinguishing them from the earlier selections distributed by the Arnold Arboretum. The history of the K-series boxwood has been painstakingly pieced together by Mary Gamble in her articles in *The Boxwood Bulletin* published in 1975 and 1984. As she recounts the story, Paul A. Kohl, floriculturist at the Missouri Botanical Garden for forty years, told her that a boxwood seed arrived in September, 1936 from Anderson’s contact in the Yugoslavian Forest Service. The seed, which had most likely been collected earlier that summer, was propagated in two locations, at the main garden in St. Louis by Kohl, and at Gray Summit Arboretum (now the Shaw Nature Reserve), about 35 miles from St. Louis, by Martin Bagby. Eventually, seedlings from both locations were brought together in a special boxwood nursery at Gray Summit.

In June, 1954 Anderson distributed cuttings from a number of these Balkan plants to the National Arboretum with cultivar names reflecting their Yugoslavian origin: ‘Agram,’ ‘Nish,’ ‘Petch,’ and ‘Ipek,’ all being ancient names for famous cities in the region. In 1955, following this initial cultivar selection and distribution, Mr. Clarence Barbré, a retired chemist and avid horticulturist from Webster Groves, Missouri, selected 155 of the Balkan seedlings at Gray Summit for further horticultural trial. These selections were assigned numbers preceded by the letter “K”, which designated the Kingsville Nursery run by Henry Hohman, to whom the unrooted cuttings were sent for propagation and distribution.

Hohman rooted the cuttings and in 1957 and 1958 sent sets of plants under their original K-numbers to the University of Washington Arboretum in Seattle, the United States National Arboretum in Washington, DC, the Blandy Experimental Farm in Boyce, Virginia, and Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. According to the latest research (2004) by Lynn Batdorf, the National Arboretum has fifty of the original plants; the Blandy Farm has twenty-nine; the Washington Park Arboretum has six; Longwood Gardens has twenty; and the Missouri Botanical Garden, including the Shaw Nature Reserve, has thirty-five.

The Arnold Arboretum received unrooted cuttings of 64 of the K-series boxwoods from the National Arboretum on January 29, 1964 (AA # 83-64 through 146-64), and still has three living plants from this distribution: #131-64 (= K-24), a conical plant, currently 11.7 feet wide by 13.3 feet tall; #113-64 (= K-33), a tall plant, 13.3 feet wide by 21.7 feet tall; and #116-64 (= K-75), a low-growing plant resembling ‘Vardar Valley’, 16.7 feet wide by 7.3 feet tall.



Buxus sempervirens # 131-64 (K-24) at the Arnold.

talk about plants, but to get some guidance from him about what he should do with his life. Probably because of Erhart's past experience in Montenegro and his ability to speak German, Anderson invited him to go on the Arboretum's expedition to the Balkans, planned for the summer of 1934. Erhart's memories of that trip are vague, but he remembered well one of the botanists they met, a Professor Stoyanoff from the University of Sofia in Bulgaria:

He was probably the chief botanist there because he was the one who went botanizing with the king, Boris. And I was very much impressed with him. He seemed more aristocratic in demeanor. We went down by bus. The thing that impressed me tremendously was what a gentleman he was. A woman getting on the bus with quite a bit of luggage and so forth, he didn't try to press in ahead of her or anything. He treated her as though she has as much right to be there as he did—that sort of thing. I remember particularly later when we got to the monastery of Rila, and one of the monks there was really quite spruced up, I don't know what to say, but, he had long curly hair and that sort of thing. And I made the comment that it looks as though he had curled the hair, and this botanist, I think his name was Stoyanoff, said in response to my comment, "It is not impossible."

Indeed, Professor Stoyanoff's response could well be used to describe the serendipitous circumstances surrounding the discovery and propagation of *Buxus* 'Vardar Valley'.

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Endnotes

- ¹ Ames had been one of Anderson's botany professors at the Bussey Institution and was appointed Supervisor of the Arboretum in 1927 following the death of its founding director, C. S. Sargent. I suspect that it was Ames who persuaded Anderson to work at the Arnold Arboretum in 1930 and that Ames's retirement in 1935 may have been a factor in his decision to leave. Anderson's 1952 book, "Plants, Man and Life" is dedicated to Oakes Ames, Orland White, and Carl Sauer.
- ² Like Anderson, Orland White was one of Dr. East's graduate students, who earned his D.Sc. degree from the Bussey Institution in 1913.
- ³ For clues as to who this person might be, I turned to Anderson's undated "Report on Balkan Expedition to The Arnold Arboretum." In this document he mentions only one person who worked for the Yugoslavian Forest Service: "Herr Ing. Ohm, Forest Service, Skoplje [sic]. This forester, stationed at present in Skoplje is the best botanist actually located in the neighborhood, though he is liable to transfer at any time. He has an herbarium of his own and has a very real interest in botanical problems. Most of the foresters whom I met are more interested in hunting wild boars than in botanical problems allied to their work."

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