

April 1, 2023

Special points of interest:

- **Conifer Book Library Sale**
- **Extensive Grafting Article**
- **A Bloodbath at Franklin**
- **A dangerous time in the Black Hills**
- **Dragons and Conifers**
- **The school principal is not always a “pal”**

Inside this issue:

- Conifer of the Month: *Pinus densiflora* dragon eye forms 4
- Conifer Understocks Article 6
- Tree of the Month: *Fagus sylvatica* 'Rohani' weeping forms 9
- Stack 'em Deep & Teach 'em Cheap, an excerpt 10
- The Death of an Army: The Battle of Franklin, Chpt 5 (cont) 12
- A Western Serial in Three Parts: The Dog Soldier and the Army Scout (part 2) 14
- Future News, Contact Information, and Book Special 16

Bob's News & Musings

What's New?

I have written six books on conifers and am now focusing on historical fiction. Soon I will also be writing fantasy stories with wizards and such.

With that in mind, I have to consider making shelf space. I have been collecting conifer books for the past fifty years.

I seldom refer to these books at this point in my life, so it is time to pass them on. I had considered listing individual books for sale but decided against it.

I had also considered a library donation, but I figured they would probably be sold by the library as individual books when they needed some

extra funds.

I would like it to remain as a collection and I will be offering these books as a historical conifer library.

If any of my readers are interested, feel free to contact me directly. The books are all shown in these pictures. Several are signed by the author.

The Clinton book consists of three bound volumes and a later, unbound fourth volume. It is the most expensive set in my collection.

Descriptions of the books can be found at [Books \(robertfincham.com\)](http://Books.robertfincham.com).

I will be driving across country to Charlotte, North

Carolina at the end of April. I can haul the books with me.

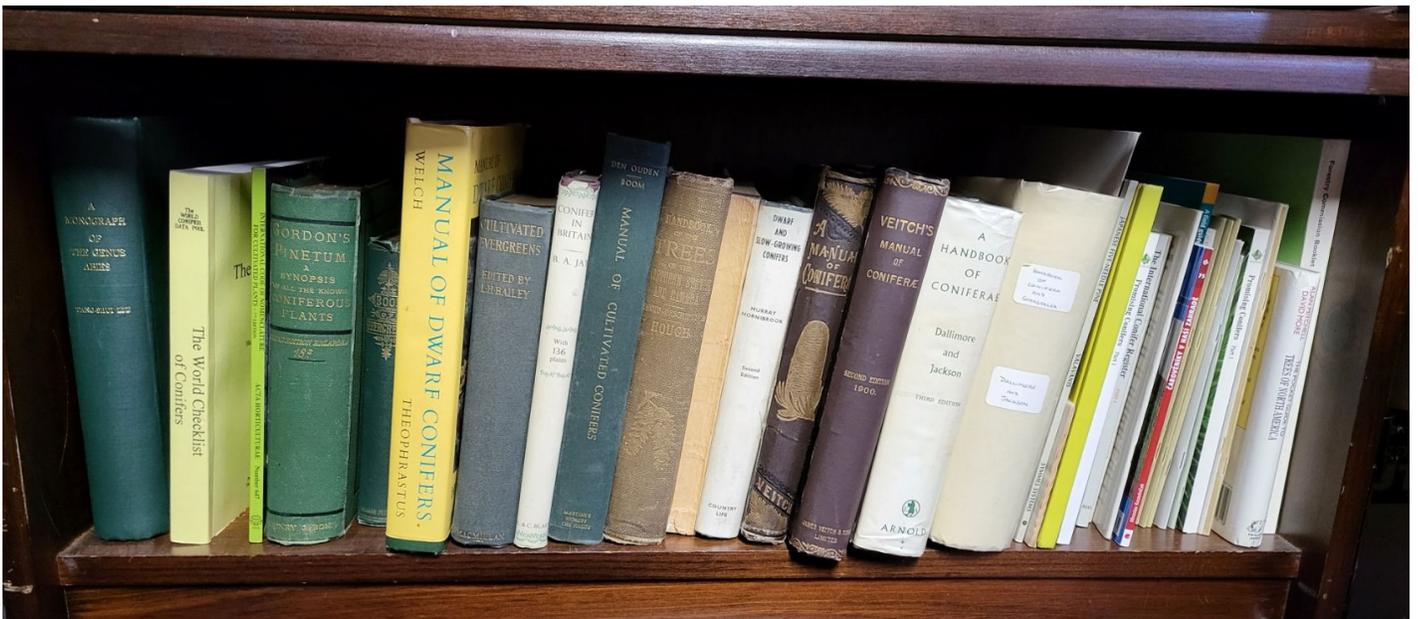
The pictures below and on the next page are best observed on a computer for enlarging to read the titles.

There are about sixty main books and a number of small, paper back types.

The books range in value from about \$45.00 to \$150.00 each. I believe the overall value of the collection to be about \$5,000.00-\$6,000.00. It is difficult to say for certain since many of the books are no longer available anywhere.

If any readers are interested, contact me with an offer or to request a list of titles.







Pinus densiflora

'Oculus Draconis' in

England and Gee

Farms in Michigan.

The big picture is a tree

in the National

Arboretum in

Washington DC in

1980



***Pinus densiflora* with the eye of a dragon**

I can still remember the first time I saw *Pinus densiflora* 'Oculus Draconis'. It was 1975 and I was walking through an old nursery in eastern Pennsylvania with my friend Joe Lankalis. Joe had introduced me to the world of freaky conifers and wanted me to go along with him to meet a fellow who had recently purchased a rare conifer nursery and was selling some of its material. I could hardly believe what I saw. Conifers that twisted or crawled on the ground and conifers that were very small or had fantastically colored foliage were scattered throughout the property.

When I came across a pine with yellow banded needles, I knew I had to have it for my new garden. I could not afford to buy any plants but the owner was fascinated with my stories about some of the fern fossils I had seen in the strip mines that were scattered throughout the coal region of northeastern Pennsylvania. I worked out a deal and swapped

a complete fern fossil I had collected in an old strip mine for several plants. These plants marked the start of my conifer collection that was once very extensive and quite well known. The pride of that trade was the pine with the yellow bands.

First described in 1890, *Pinus densiflora* 'Oculus Draconis' is possibly the oldest banded pine introduced into cultivation. I have always wondered why it never became a popular plant for landscape use in America. It is fast-growing and puts on a striking color display in most parts of the country.

Growing up to 1 foot (30 cm) per year, *Pinus densiflora* 'Oculus Draconis' creates a picturesque addition to the garden. The growth rate is faster as a young plant, slowing as it ages. It does not become a "monolith" in the landscape, but it does get big enough to shade a picnic table. The central trunk does not grow like a spire, rather it sort of crookedly

wends its way upward. As the name implies, it does produce a large quantity of small cones and fits very well into the informal landscape. It can be kept densely-branched with some judicious candling. Otherwise, it becomes an open tree in the garden.

In my garden, the only variation was in the width of the yellow bands. Some years the bands were so wide and bright that the green was hardly noticeable. Those years the plant would be almost defoliated by the winter's cold temperatures. Other years I had no such trouble. However, in the Northwest, the color display is often pathetic with the yellow almost non-existent. I believe this selection needs warm summer nights and hot days to produce the yellow banding. The local wholesale plant nurseries did not carry it for sale because it would not "color up" and customers complained when the plants arrived at their garden centers.



Several seedlings have been grown from *Pinus densiflora* 'Oculus Draconis' that exhibit more consistent banding on the needles. I first heard about one of these seedlings when I was visiting with Joe Reis at his home on Long Island in the early 1980s. He had grown some seedlings that exhibited yellow banding but were not an improvement over the mother tree. However, several of them showed a color change when the yellow turned pink/red in their first winter. Joe got all excited. They changed that color one year and never did it again. Joe told me that story one day when we talked about some seedlings that Joe Burke had grown from *Pinus densiflora* 'Oculus Draconis'. One of them turned from yellow to red variegation in the same way. Burke stashed it in the back of his greenhouse

and it became a legend on Long Island. Eddie Rezek, a close mutual friend, wanted it and tried to get it many times.

In the winter of 1987 I took some conifer friends from Oregon back east on a scion collecting trip. Joe Burke's place was one of our stops. Eddie Rezek joined us when we visited with Joe. We spent some time exploring Joe's greenhouse and in the back of the greenhouse was the seedling from *Pinus densiflora* 'Oculus Draconis' that Joe had been growing. During our visit, Joe was all excited and having a great time. When Eddie brought the plant out of the greenhouse and offered Joe some cash for it. Joe sold it to him.

The plant has been introduced as *Pinus densiflora* 'Burke's Red Seedling', a misleading name for a special plant. Its

yellow bands are wider than its parent and generally much brighter in color with never a tinge of red. The name is more of a reflection upon its story rather than its color.

When grown in the Northwest, it is reliably variegated. If anything, it will sometimes produce very wide bands that are nearly white, leading to winter sun scald of the foliage.

Pinus densiflora 'Golden Ghost' is a Talon Buchholz introduction that is perhaps the brightest dragon eye of them all. It is dependable in the Northwest and grows very fast, becoming large with open branching in a short time.

For consistent coloring and a beacon in the garden, either 'Burke's Red Seedling' or 'Golden Ghost' is an excellent choice.



Pinus densiflora
 'Burke's Red
 Seedling' at Suncrest
 Nursery in
 Pennsylvania and at
 Gee Farms in
 Michigan (below
 and to left)



Tools of the Trade



Conifer Understocks From *Abies* Through *Tsuga*

Grafting involves attaching a twig from the desired plant to a seedling that is compatible with that twig. After the twig combines with the seedling (cambiums grow together), the portion of the seedling above the graft union is removed, and the twig becomes a Dr. Frankenstein sort of plant with the twig using the seedling's root system as its own.

The twig is called a scion, while the seedling is called an understock. The origin of the term scion can be traced back to its definition as "the descendant of a notable family". However, the source of the term understock is more evident since it is the lower or underpart of the newly created plant.

Here I want to focus on conifer grafting. I will have comments on deciduous grafting in a future newsletter.

The choice of understock is relatively simple, but some considerations need to be followed. The species of the cultivar must be related to the seedling's species, and the process of grafting can have various effects on the resultant plant.

Cultivars of *Abies* (true firs) are compatible with any of the various *Abies* species of understock. However, the actual selections are restricted to a few species mainly due to availability considerations.

For example, three fir species are most commonly used in North America. *Abies balsamea* is possibly the most popular species used. The plants

created cannot be grown in warmer climates as the roots cannot withstand constant high temperatures and hot sun. *Abies fraseri* is preferred in the northwest since greenhouses are exceptionally humid during the grafting season, and winters are mild and wet. This species appears to tolerate these conditions better than *balsamea*. Cultivars propagated on this species can be grown in a broader range of climates.

Abies concolor has always been a popular understock in the northeast, but it performs poorly throughout the northwest, primarily when grown in containers.

I used *Abies procera* as an understock for *Abies procera*, *concolor*, and *lasiocarpa*. They perform well and do not develop a large burl of callous tissue at the graft union, which can occasionally happen with other species' understocks.

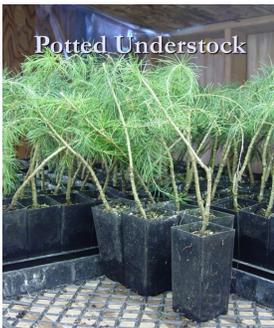
Abies koreana is a popular understock throughout much of Europe. It would probably be more extensively used in America, but the seedlings are not widely grown. As my *Abies koreana* cultivars matured in my Eatonville garden, I collected cones and grew many seedlings. I found them compatible with my fir grafts, and they seldom formed knots at the graft unions with other species.

The big push today is for firs grafted onto *Abies firma*, especially for the southeastern United States. Supposedly it adapts to the climate better than other firs. Personally, I

doubt that very much. Root systems have a different climate from that of the foliage and stems. Firs cannot tolerate heavy clay soils. However, some species are more tolerant than others. I believe that *Abies firma* fits in that category. For example, if a cultivar of *Abies koreana* or *Abies nordmaniana* can survive in the southeastern heat and humidity when grafted on *Abies firma*, then the climate is not the limiting factor for those species and their root systems should not have a problem with the climate either. The soil climate has to do with moisture content and aeration. Roots that can tolerate poor soil conditions may do better in southern soils and *Abies firma* may fit that criteria whereas others may not.

A true test would be to select five fir species to use as understocks, including *Abies firma* as one of them. Select five different cultivars and graft 25 of each onto each different understock. Then create five groups of grafted plants for testing (125 plants in each group with each species of understock having 5 each of 5 different cultivars). Prepare one field so that it has optimum growing conditions and line out one group of plants and record survivability and growth rates. Plant the other four groups into different fields with different growing conditions and do the same recording. That type of a controlled experiment should demonstrate whether or not *Abies firma* is

Potted Understock



Conifer Understocks From *Abies* Through *Tsuga* (cont.)

needed for southern fir growth. Just working with a scattering of firs throughout an area does not answer that question. Neither does working with just a few individual plants. There are too many variables, especially if the plants are container grown.

Cedrus atlantica, *brevifolia* and *libani* are all grafted onto *Cedrus deodara*, the least hardy of the three. There are several reasons for this choice. First, the hardiness is not a factor since the *deodara* root system in the ground is at least as hardy as any species of *Cedrus* cultivar above ground. Secondly, the root system is more fibrous and better developed than the other species making it a much better choice for nursery use.

Chamaecyparis species are relatively easy to propagate from cuttings, so grafting is seldom used as a propagation method. *Chamaecyparis obtusa* (hinoki cypress) is compatible with *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* and *Thuja occidentalis*. Since *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* has disease problems, it is not used in North America as an understock. In Europe, it works well but eventually creates a deformed graft union when it develops a much larger diameter than the cultivar.

Chamaecyparis obtusa is often grafted for two reasons. First, it will grow faster than a rooted plant and become saleable in a shorter period of time. Eventually, the growth rate will return to normal. Secondly, when it is grafted onto *Thuja occidentalis*, it can be grown in heavier or

wetter soils.

Chamaecyparis lawsoniana has limited use in America due to disease entering the root systems. Grafting could prevent this problem and allow the wide use of hundreds of cultivars nationwide. There is no control for this disease but researchers have found a *Phytophthora lateralis* resistant strain of Lawson cypress. Nurseries are growing the plants from cuttings and using them as understocks for the propagation of cultivars by grafting. It is very important not to let the graft union come in contact with the soil or the plant above the union will send out its own roots and contract the disease. Grafting onto a disease resistant understock is a process that may make this species and its treasure house of cultivars very popular in much of the United States.

Cupressus macrocarpa and *glabra* can occasionally be rooted but are most commonly propagated by grafting since rooting of cuttings is an inconsistent process and the plants cannot be grown in the field for digging when sold. Those species have terrible root systems and once planted must stay put. Some propagators contend that they can be grafted onto *Juniperus* or *Thuja occidentalis*. However, there is a strong tendency for *Cupressus* propagated in this manner to overgrow the understock and be very susceptible to blow over. *Cupressus x-leylandii* has been used in Australia for

many years, and I also used it for my understock. The compatibility is excellent, with no understock overgrowth and a sound root system supporting the growing tree.

Juniperus cultivars are compatible with any *Juniperus* species, but few are grafted since most cultivars are relatively easy to root. On the other hand, *Juniperus virginiana* cultivars are difficult to root and generally grafted. The understocks most commonly used are *Juniperus x-pfitzeriana* 'Hetzii' or *Juniperus scopulorum* 'Moonglow' or 'Skyrocket'. They all root easily and rapidly grow into a graftable size.

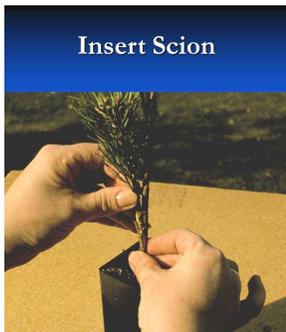
Larix cultivars can be grafted onto any of the species. However, if a dwarf selection is grafted as a standard, the understock may not develop the necessary caliper to support the plant without falling over. This issue is especially true for the Newport series of dwarf selections. The higher the graft, the more severe the problem. It can be alleviated by leaving branches along the trunk for several years.

Spruce (*Picea*) cultivars may be grafted onto any species of spruce understock. *Picea abies* is the most abundant understock grown from seed and is most commonly used. *Picea pungens* is also used by many growers in the northwest because it develops a more fibrous root system on plants that are field grown in the nursery.

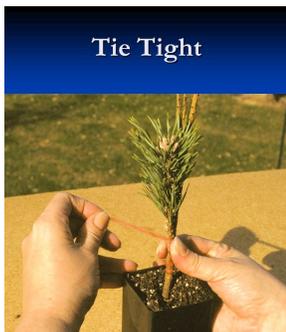
Pine cultivars are best grafted onto seedlings with the



This picture shows the graft union between *Cupressus glabra* 'Chaparral' and its understock of *Cupressocypripus x leylandii* 'Star Wars', a variegated sport from 'Castlewellan'. Notice how there is a nice size balance between the tree and the understock.



The origin of the term scion can be traced back to its definition as “the descendant of a notable family”.



Conifer Understocks From *Abies* Through *Tsuga* (cont.)

same number of needles per fascicle as the cultivar.

Pinus strobus is the most common understock used in North America for species cultivars with five needles per fascicle. *Pinus peuce* is used in parts of Europe, and *Pinus parviflora* is occasionally used as an understock for *Pinus parviflora*. I have seen large specimens of *Pinus parviflora* grafted onto *Pinus strobus* that were healthy even if the trunk of the parviflora had a 12” diameter and the *Pinus strobus* understock had an 18” diameter. Such a thing can be unsightly on older plants with a high graft union, but *Pinus parviflora* seedlings are expensive and hard to find.

Pinus thunbergiana is used by some people as an understock for *Pinus parviflora* since it gives a higher salt tolerance to the plant. Bonsai growers especially like this combination; it even works with some five-needled pine species. However, there is a lower grafting success rate, and some plants die each year due to delayed scion/understock incompatibility. I heard a story about a bonsai master in Japan who was showing his collection to a visitor. The visitor touched an old specimen of *parviflora*, which broke at the graft union. The Master told him not to worry. It was an effect of using *thunbergiana* understock on *parviflora*.

Pinus bungeana is a three-needle pine and only grafts successfully onto five-needle understock. I used *Pinus strobus* with great success.

The two-needle pines are fairly well inter-compatible, but different grafters have different preferences. For example, *Pinus sylvestris* is a universal understock used worldwide, with the Spanish strain preferred due to its superior root system. *Pinus nigra* is used by many nurseries for all two-needle pines with success. I have found that *Pinus contorta v. latifolia* (lodgepole) is an excellent universal understock for two-needle pines and is by far the root hardiest of them all. I have had good luck with ‘Frisian Gold’ and ‘Chief Joseph’ using this understock when other species have failed. *Pinus thunbergiana* is another universal understock but is the least hardy of the group.

Some grafters like to put *Pinus leucodermis*, *mugo*, *nigra*, *virginiana*, and *thunbergiana* onto *nigra* and the others onto *sylvestris*. However, using too many different kinds of understocks increases expenses and impacts production schedules, so most grafters like using the fewest possible.

Pseudotsuga menziesii (Douglas fir) is usually grafted onto hardy strains of the species grown from seed harvested from the mountains of the western United States. As a result, the cultivars don’t show many compatibility problems since most of the cultivars originated from the hardier varieties of the species.

Tsuga canadensis should never be propagated by grafting. There is always a delayed incompatibility problem with this

species. If 100 plants are grafted, count on several deaths yearly until 10-20 attain a mature size before eventually dying. Since cultivars from this species do root, that is how they all need to be propagated.

Taxus (yews) root from cuttings with a few exceptions among the *Taxus baccata* that need to be grafted. *Taxus media* ‘Hicksii’ is a common understock since it is compatible and readily roots from cuttings.

***Fagus sylvatica* ‘Rohanii’ weeping forms**

When grafted high on a standard, *Fagus sylvatica* ‘Rohan Red Weeping’ is hard to beat. It has the good color of ‘Rohanii’ with its serrated leaf margins matched with a strongly pendulous growth habit. In my opinion it is one of the best of the new beeches to be marketed in some time. It was a seedling selected by Andre van Nijnatten in 1997.

I first saw this plant at Trompenburg Arboretum before its introduction. Dick van Hoey Smith was an ex-

pert on beeches and often the first to receive any new discoveries.

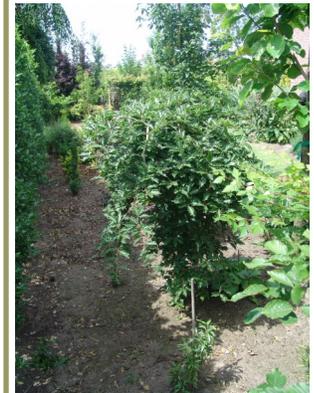
Fagus sylvatica ‘Rohan Green Weeping’ appeared at about the same time as the ‘Rohan Red Weeping’ selection. It was another seedling selection made by Andre van Nijnatten. Its deeply serrated leaves coupled with its prostrate growth habit make it a natural for high-grafted patio trees or for cascading down over a wall.

It grows faster than its red sibling and has a number

of uses in the landscape.

Dick was the first person to work with what I call cultivar hybridizing of the beeches. He had a very old collection at Trompenburg and seedlings from his fastigiate trees showed characteristics of other cultivars while retaining their fastigiate growth habit.

The two cultivars described here were probably from ‘Pendula’ seed that had been pollinated by ‘Rohani’ and ‘Quercina’.



Fagus sylvatica

‘Rohan Green

Weeping’ (above)

and ‘Rohan Red

Weeping’ (below)

make great high

grafted patio trees.



Andre can be seen above, next to a ‘Rohan Green Weeping’



Stack 'em Deep & Teach 'em Cheap

Section Two: Administration

Unit Two: Staff Concerns

Chapter One

The Administrator: Once a teacher, always a t... (I don't think so.)

I have worked with a few teachers who became principals and superintendents. For some reason, several of them decided that the administrative role demanded a different persona.

When I taught at Tamaqua High School, Richard was a math teacher who was regularly active in the teacher's association. He was a real "bulldog" when it came to contract negotiations. Richard was an excellent negotiator for teachers' contracts. He focused on what was suitable for the students and the teachers. He also often represented a teacher who needed association representation during a dispute with the district. An outstanding ambassador for the teaching profession, Richard was an excellent classroom teacher with high standards. Unfortunately, when he moved into administration, he became the antithesis of everything he stood for earlier in his career. It was as if someone flipped a switch, and he changed.

Eventually, he became the superintendent of the school district. But, when he died, few people remembered anything about his years in the classroom.

Another example from my days at Tamaqua was Bruce. He was my department head. I learned more from him about organizing and preparing a good science lesson in my first year with the district than I had learned in four years of college.

Bruce had built his reputation by consistently advising state and national science fair winners from his science classes. In addition, he taught advanced chemistry and physics classes and brought many national science grants to the school district.

Unfortunately, his goals were set much higher than in the classroom. As he moved into a district position, the science grants dried up, and budgetary cutbacks became commonplace. By the time he worked his way into the role of Superintendent of Schools, he had pretty much forgotten his classroom career. A teacher-antagonistic school board made the position so complicated that he had a minimal positive impact on the educational system.

Richard and Bruce helped me develop improved classroom techniques. They also showed me how detrimental leadership without teamwork could be to the educational process.

A third administrator at Tamaqua who started in the classroom was Geoff. He graduated one year after I did from Jim Thorpe High School. He was a social studies teacher who became our assistant principal.

Being the assistant principal put him in the most challenging administrative position. He was under pressure from all sides since he was the point man on educational policies from the district while being responsible for any discipline problems among the students (and sometimes the staff).

There were times when I was not much help for Geoff. Especially when I felt the administration was unfair to the

staff, and I would try to even things out.

I could have gotten into trouble over one episode that frustrated him, but he showed me some mercy. The high school was a three-story building with an elevator for people with special needs. I could not figure out what special needs administrators and counselors suffered. Then I noticed that a few select teachers with invisible special needs had keys. So I decided to "even the playing field."

Joe Lankalis was a close friend who shared a laboratory preparation room with me. We both taught earth science and tended to press our luck. We knew how to get special keys and always had a master key to the classrooms. We even had building keys, which we seldom used. We believed that anyone who used multiple classrooms needed a master key rather than a ring full of separate room keys.

My classroom was on the third floor, and my planetarium classroom was on the second floor. As a result, I often had to haul materials from floor to floor and could not use a cart., So Joe and I managed to make copies of the elevator key. We even shared them, especially with older staff members who had trouble with flights of steps.

Geoff noticed all the keys floating around and had the elevator rekeyed. It took us two weeks to receive our copies of the new key. I shared extra keys with some staff. My generosity led to my discovery, and I had a meeting with Geoff. He was frustrated but never mentioned the key issue again. I believe he did not want to make a big issue out of it, pri-

Richard was an excellent classroom teacher with high standards. Unfortunately, when he moved into administration, he became the antithesis of everything he stood for earlier in his career.

Stack 'em Deep & Teach 'em Cheap

marily since some bad feelings existed toward the district-level administration.

Geoff later became a principal at the Jim Thorpe middle school, where I understand he did a fine job. I always felt that he remembered his classroom experiences and applied that knowledge to his work in administration.

Ann taught with me during my years at Keithley Middle School. She taught a core class of history and English. Whenever Ann interacted with the eighth-grade teaching team, she appeared naïve but wanted to do her best. She was attractive and wore typical outfits for a young woman that were not necessarily the best choices for

the classroom. With her short skirts and distressed jeans, she often looked like one of the students.

After a few years, she left Keithley and took a position as principal at an elementary school. I ran into her at our office one day. She was visiting our school and had several assistants following her. I almost did not recognize her in a professional outfit with lots of makeup. I assumed she knew how to fill an administrative role from her professional appearance. However, since she ignored me when I said hello, I also figured she had forgotten her past at Keithley.

She was fun and related well to staff and students while

at Keithley. Hopefully, most of that personality stayed with her in her new position. I believe she aimed to become a district superintendent and took a politically correct approach to education. Since her father was a superintendent for a large district, she followed a role model.

Administrators who come up through the ranks and remember their days in the classroom generally understand the teaching profession. When they take the attitude that the spokes of the educational wheel operate antagonistically, they become a detriment to the educational process.

A Story Behind the Story

Sometimes a teaching staff can make a principal's job very difficult. When I was at Keithley, we had a principal for several years who had been a high school counselor. Most of the staff was uncooperative and made his life difficult.

John was a Vietnam vet who suffered from sleep apnea. It was not being treated and as a result he could doze off in the middle of a meeting. Keithley was his first school as principal and he had some challenges among the staff who undermined his work at every opportunity.

I discuss John quite often throughout this book as a person who was treated unfairly by his staff. However, he interacted with the students and was well respected by them.

His door was always open and whenever I had a problem

with one of his decisions I could go right in and tell him my feelings. He never took offense.

I used to make videos for my classes to introduce dissections. Once John and Tom, the Vice Principal, volunteered to assist me on a video that explained frog dissection.

I always started the video with something silly to catch the interest of the class.

For my crayfish dissection video, I explained how the proper tools were needed to do a good job. Then I used a two-bladed axe to chop a crayfish in half. It got their interest and forced me to be especially creative for the video on frogs.

John and Tom pretended to be hunting frogs in a swamp. Tom had a machete and John had a chain saw. Tom spotted a frog and swung

the machete at it. He deliberately missed so John stepped in and tried starting the chain saw to get it. When it did not start, John gave the camera a funny look and I came running in with an empty coat sleeve. I was showing what could happen if a hunter got careless with a chainsaw.

The kids would have loved the video if the Superintendent had not gotten wind of it.

A school is only successful if the administration and staff work together and practice real teamwork. John tried to create an atmosphere of teamwork. Unfortunately, many of his staff members did not reciprocate.

*Tom spotted a frog
and swung the
machete at it. He
deliberately missed so
John stepped in and
tried starting the
chain saw to get it.*

The Death of an Army (cont. from March issue)

Battle of Franklin, TN

Chapter Five: 5th/13th Combined Arkansas, November 30, 1864

There were two drummer boys and a bugler near Arron. They were positioned near the Captain to relay his orders to the line and were never far from the colors. Knowing the difficulties of keeping battle lines separated and active, Aaron wanted to get the Arkansas Line moving forward again. Pointing his sword at the drummer boys, he ordered, "Loud and steady, boys. Let's get the men marching for'ard. Give them a steady drumbeat and bugler, sound the advance!"

As the line moved forward, Aaron ordered independent fire, "Pass the word! Independent load and fire and don't stop 'til you are dead, or in Franklin!" With that, the line marched forward fifty yards, the men firing and reloading while on the move. Then Aaron increased the pace.

"For'ard at the double!" Aaron shouted as he raised the sword and pointed it toward the Union lines. The Arkansas Line moved forward at a rapid pace, filling in the gaps by spreading slightly apart. They continued their reloading as they advanced. Eleven of their comrades lay unmoving where they had fallen. Six others with severe wounds either sat staring at the advancing line or

slowly made their way toward the rear where some would survive long enough to find a surgeon.

Private Dunstan would no longer be supporting Fordge in any of his plans. He had taken a Minié ball through his right arm. It had smashed the bone and pushed a wad of clothing into the wound. He knew the arm would have to come off. He had seen this sort of a wound many times on others.

Often, they died as the surgeon sawed through the limb or soon afterward when the flesh near the amputation turned green and rotten. Dunstan had tied off the wounded arm with his belt and the bleeding was just a slight trickle. As he made his way toward the rear, he passed the lines following the Arkansas Line. They were marching in near perfect order, filling in gaps as men were shot or blown out of position by an artillery shell. It was a magnificent sight until you noticed the carpet of dead flesh being put down behind the moving lines and the men slowly walking toward the rear with torn limbs or ghastly wounds to their torsos. Many of these men were already dead; they just did not know it yet.

Dunstan looked up toward Heaven, to pray or to curse his fate just as a Minnie ball hit him between the shoulder blades and he was gone. As he fell forward into the enveloping

blackness, he cursed the war while looking forward to the first peace he would know for over three years.

Dunstan was gone along with many others as the Arkansas Line moved forward. They needed to move in close to the Yankee lines before they all became casualties from their rifle and cannon fire. Aaron led the advance, followed by the Regimental flags, carried by the color guard. As he watched his footing, he also watched the Yankee positions and estimated when he would be able to order the line into a charge. If he ordered it too early, the men would contact the enemy but be too winded to fight. He had to time it just right. Lieutenant Davis was no help. As Aaron glanced to his left, He saw the Lieutenant walking as if in a trance. He was obviously a staff officer in his first real fight. That was unusual at this stage of the war. He also noticed Private Gates rapid marching with the others but holding his rifle by the barrel. His other arm was flopping uselessly at his side and dripping blood. Then the Yankees fired another volley and Gates was gone, along with several others. Now the Yankees would just maintain a steady fire as the Confederates approached their positions.

The line quick-marched, approaching the point where Aaron would order a charge. The Arkansas Line would be

*They were marching
in near perfect order,
filling in gaps as men
were shot or blown
out of position by an
artillery shell.*

The Death of an Army (cont. from March issue)

the first line to charge. He figured that roughly, 250 men still advanced with the line. The rest of the twenty-thousand Confederate soldiers in their battle lines were duplicating the actions and sufferings of the Arkansas Line. The pomp and majesty as the army marched onto the field of battle had degenerated into an orgy of death and destruction as the army moved across the blood-soaked ground.

Aaron had fought in similar battles during the war but nothing on such a scale as this one. Thousands of men in gray were marching across an open field while thousands of men in blue fired rifles and cannons into their ranks, attempting to kill them all.

He could barely make out the men of his own command and the Union lines had disappeared. Shrouded in smoke, the battlefield was a lethal hell that took the lives of many men in gray and in blue. Death came unseen out of the smoke. It could be a Minié ball punching through living flesh, a twelve-pound cannon ball smashing a body into pulp, or an exploding shell shredding flesh with hundreds of pieces of jagged iron. The carnage was widespread and increased as the battle lines came closer to Franklin. It would only get worse as the Confederate lines came into canister range for the twelve-pound Napoleon cannons. Aaron dreaded that time and

planned to rush the line ahead when they reached that point.

When the Arkansas Line came close enough to the Union lines to charge the enemy, the men became more animated. The trip to this point was frustrating since there was little chance of doing any real damage to the Yankees. The Minié balls were so abundant that the troops leaned forward as if they were walking through a driving rain. Now they were beneath their trajectory and Yankee soldiers would have to get up onto the parapet and expose themselves to do any accurate shooting. Just as Aaron ordered the bugler to sound a charge, the Union artillery switched their ordinance and started firing canister from the Napoleon guns. They became giant shotguns and many of them were firing from an enfilade position, especially on the eastern end of the battlefield where a small fort held a battery of these guns. A canister held 27 iron balls, each over 1 inch in diameter and was devastating against infantry out to almost 400 yards.

The Union cannons waited until the main Confederate lines came into range before switching to canister. The Arkansas Line was inside and below the field of fire when the switch was made. Aaron heard the whistling of the canister balls as they passed overhead smashing groups of men into

bloody masses. He signaled the men to move faster before the fire shifted to them. Meanwhile, casualties in the main lines must be horrendous.

Despite their heavy losses, the Confederates advanced in good order. Bugles pealed the strident notes of a charge command and the leading battle lines picked up speed as they ran toward the Union entrenchments. The battle was approaching the half hour mark and soon the dead would number into the thousands.

The rebel yell was heard throughout the battlefield. As each line broke into a charge, the men would scream and yell as loud as they could. They continued to scream the whole time they moved forward. It was very effective at unnerving enemy troops. The Arkansas Line was no exception as Aaron led them to the base of the Union embankment at the center of their forward fortifications. There was a hastily erected abatis at its base with the sharpened ends of the logs pointed downward. Screaming like demons, the men attacked this barrier and tore it out while coming under fire from Yankees at the top of the dirt wall. Many men fell, mortally wounded in the few minutes it took to get past the logs. The Union soldiers had to expose themselves to fire down at the Confederate troops and no one exposed at the top of the parapet lasted very long.

The rebel yell was heard throughout the battlefield. As each line broke into a charge, the men would scream and yell as loud as they could.

Short Story Serial Part 2

The Dog Soldier and The Army Scout (May 1874)

The three civilians stood at the edge of the water, and they all shook their heads simultaneously. "We ain't goin' nowhere, Injun. We just struck it rich and will be stayin' here. If'n you try to move us, we'll hafta kill you."

Bloody Knife shifted his weight and rested his hand on his tomahawk. He looked toward the two troopers for support and saw that one of them was holding a revolver. It was pointed at him.

"Bloody Knife, I don't want to shoot you, but I will if you don't leave us be. We see a chance here to be rich, and we aim to take it. I don't want your blood on my hands, so just go away and don't come back."

Bloody Knife stood and said, "What about Lieutenant?"

"If'n the other fellas follow the Lieutenant up here and see all this gold, they'll join us and probably shoot him."

Since there was no reasoning with these men, Bloody Knife decided to let the Lieutenant handle the problem. Besides, the Sioux might take care of these fellas before he even gets back to the camp.

Turning his back on the men, Bloody Knife walked away from the water. He had

only taken a few steps when he heard the cocking of a rifle hammer followed by a whistling sound and a scream.

One of the civilians was about to shoot him in the back. An arrow in the belly stopped him. Believing the Sioux might be attacking and not wanting to take cover with the white men, Bloody Knife hurried into the trees and underbrush. He moved fast and was quickly several hundred yards from the creek.

He lay still for a few minutes, and once he ascertained that no one was close by, he silently moved in an arc to come in behind whoever had fired the arrow.

Meanwhile, the wounded prospector was pulled from the water and dragged up onto the bank by his friends. The two troopers searched for whoever fired the arrow. When they returned to the others, the wounded man lay on the ground next to a small fire clutching his stomach and moaning. The other two were by the creek panning for gold.

Mulvany and Schmidt had searched the area and found no sign of whoever shot the arrow. It made them nervous. They were having second thoughts about staying with these prospectors, especially when they showed no interest in helping their wounded friend.

Schmidt knelt by the wounded man and said, "That arrow must come out right away. It is too deep to cut it out. I think a quick jerk, and it will come back out the way it went in."

"Did you ever treat an arrow wound before this?" Mulvany asked.

"No, but it makes sense to me," he replied. Then he went on to say, "Put your knife blade in the fire and get it glowing red so I can cauterize the wound after I pull the arrow out."

The wounded man groaned and muttered, "Just get it the hell out of me. I can't take the pain."

Before another word was said, Schmidt gripped the arrow shaft and jerked it out of the wound. It came out without an issue but left the head inside his body.

"I think you done it wrong," Mulvany said.

"Maybe so, but I can see part of the head just inside the wound," Schmidt said.

Before he finished speaking, Schmidt had his knife out and enlarged the wound far enough to use two fingers and grab the head, pulling it out of the man's body. Then he seared the wound shut with the hot knife from the fire.

The other two prospectors had ignored them, even when the wounded man screamed

Before another word was said, Schmidt gripped the arrow shaft and jerked it out of the wound. It came out without an issue but left the head inside his body.

Short Story Serial Part 2 (cont.)

and passed out during the operation. They were finding too much gold in their pans, and when one of them, the man named Carl Sommers, found three large nuggets in his pan, he yelled louder than Jolson, the wounded man.

Mulvany left Schmidt to his doctoring and ran over to the creek. He took Jolson's pan and scooped up some gravel. "You fellas ain't takin' all the gold for yourselves. I aim t'get my share too," he said while swirling the stones and sand in the pan.

Schmidt quickly pressed an old cloth against the cauterized wound and sat Jolson's hand on it. Then he went to the creek with a tin plate to do some panning for gold himself. They all ignored Olson and focused on the gold they were washing out of the creek's sand and gravel.

Olson finally opened his eyes just in time to see a painted face looking down at him. Before he could moan or even move his hand, a Sioux cut his throat, and he lay still. The warrior who had cut his throat stood and motioned toward the men panning for gold. Seven others silently came out of the forest, and they all moved toward the creek.

Schmidt noticed some movement out of the corner of his eye and turned toward the approaching Sioux. He

dropped his tin plate and reached for the revolver at his waist. As his hand touched the butt, two arrows pierced his chest, and he went down with a yell and a loud splash.

Mulvany dropped his pan and started running across the creek. The other two men had kept their rifles close by but had no chance of reaching them. One of the Sioux knocked Sommers unconscious with a war club. At the same time, a tomahawk blow from another warrior killed the other man.

Meanwhile, Mulvany almost got across the creek before being shot in the back with an arrow. The water was deep enough for him to float away, severely injured. The Sioux who had shot him figured he'd find the body later and wanted to join in the fun with their captive.

The Sioux tied Sommers to four stakes in the ground while they went through the packs on the four mules and two army horses they found hobbled a short distance upstream. After taking what little they found to be of any value, they sat around Somers listening to him scream while a small fire burned on his abdomen.

When the screaming became a whimper, one of the Sioux decided to find the soldier who had floated downstream. He wanted the scalp,

and if the man were still alive, he'd bring him back to lie by his friend.

Earlier, Bloody Knife had only gone a short distance before stopping and circling back to watch the white men make fools out of themselves. He was also interested in the person who fired the arrow. It was most likely a Sioux scout who even now was reporting their presence in the Black Hills.

If nothing happened by nightfall, he would drive off their horses and mules before going back and reporting to the Lieutenant. That way, the patrol could come up and take them all back to Fort Lincoln as prisoners.

*Earlier, Bloody
Knife had only gone
a short distance
before stopping and
circling back to watch
the white men make
fools out of
themselves.*

Book Sales

Organization

COENOSIUM PUBLISHING

Robert Fincham
12609 118th Street Ct. E.
Puyallup WA 98374

Phone: 253-208-0233
Email: bobfincham@mashell.com



Fagus sylvatica and A Few English 'Quercus

Robert L. Fincham



...this is a guide to the cultivars of the European oak published by Robert Fincham, a code from this species for many years. At one time the most common species in the garden and forest on the landscape, this species deserves greater depth landscape tree suitable in a wide range of soil types, and foliage variations. It ranges from New England, and the Northwest, south into North Carolina. ...

Fagus sylvatica and A Few English Quercus

Total Pages 153

Color Pictures.... 178

Plants Covered 57 *Fagus sylvatica* and 17 *Quercus robur*

Size 6" x 9"

Book Price \$19.00

I find the species, *Fagus sylvatica* to be a very interesting one. There is a nice range of variations in the different cultivars, both in the foliage and the growth habits. Dick van Hoey Smith developed a number of new cultivars in his Trompenburg Arboretum. He had a variety of old specimens and they hybridized with each other to produce new cultivars. The genetics of this species is very easy to work with and the new cultivars show their exact parentage. I had forty selections growing on my Eatonville property.

There is no good English source for information on the species, so I decided to write this book. Pictures and descriptions are found on every page. I included *Quercus robur* cultivars for the same reason. The list price is borderline profitable at \$19.00. Shipping is included for domestic orders.

Available at www.robertfincham.com or at Amazon.com or email me directly.

In Future Issues



Future newsletters will go back to 12 page editions. This one had an article I did not want to serialize and I also wanted to "huckster" some books.

I will be evaluating my golden *Picea orientalis* 'Nutans' seedlings in a future issue.

I also potted 200 *Acer palmatum* seedlings and if they attain a

Pinus densiflora 'Oculus Draconis' at Edinburgh Botanical Garden.

proper thickness, I will report on summer grafting of them.

At the end of May we will be visited by attendees of the Maple Society. That should be a fun time.

The Coenosium Rock Garden at South Seattle is going to have some renovation this year. I will be covering that project.

I will also be adding a section

on gardens worth visiting in the Northwest. It will be an intermittent addition.

Thecla and I are driving across country to the ACS meeting in Charlottesville. I will be sure to post some things about our trip and the conference. Hopefully I will see many of you at the meeting.

