

Haverford's Penn Treaty Elm

Your elm seedling is the offspring of the Penn Treaty elm of Haverford College. Seeds from the ailing tree were sown May 5, 1976. Please plant your seedling as soon as possible. During hot weather it is a good policy to water the tree regularly. Also, stake the tree to give support while the root system becomes established.

The following excerpt is from an article written by Prof. Howard Knickerbocker Henry, published in 'Forest Leaves' in 1942:

"The Penn Treaty Elm, one of the best-known trees of the campus, displays the typical urn-like form of the elms directly between Founders and Sharpless Halls. The tree is actually a living part of the ancient elm under which William Penn met the Indian chiefs in 1682. Botanists regard propagation by scions as a distinctively vegetative process, as contrasted with sexual reproduction by seed, and plants so produced are to be considered a continuation of the original, separated in space and time. The original tree was of majestic proportions, having a girth at the base of twenty-four feet, and a branch spread of one hundred fifty feet, and many an Indian council was said to have been held beneath its wide, spreading branches. The old elm finally came into the possession of General Paul Oliver, who transplanted a shoot from the dying tree to his home in Bay Ridge, New York. There it grew for about fifty years. Then General Oliver moved to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and so great was his sentimental attachment for that tree that he had it transplanted to his new home. The tree survived the dangers of moving and may still be seen near the town chapel at Wilkes-Barre. A scion from the General Oliver tree was presented to Haverford College by Joshua Baily, at one time head of the J.L. Baily Cloth Manufacturing Company. This tree, our elm, has now a circumference of over ten feet, a height of ninety feet, and a branch spread of one hundred twenty feet, not yet as large

as the original tree, but with an excellent chance of reaching and even surpassing it within the next one hundred and fifty years."

.....so wrote Prof. Henry in 1942. The tree did not survive the next one hundred and fifty years as it was badly infected with the Dutch Elm disease. The College has tried valiantly to preserve the tree as long as possible. Now it must be destroyed. However, these seedlings may soon become part of the legend of the Fenn elm. We would be interested to know how your tree survives. It has a very good chance of being in the first generation of elms to live through the difficulties of the Dutch Elm disease because of the new treatments for the disease. Good luck!