



The Katharine Ordway
Natural History Study Area

Box 216
Inver Grove Heights, Minn. 55075
(612) 455-6204

ORDWAY BULLETIN
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MACALESTER
COLLEGE

located at 9550 Inver Grove Trail (Dakota County Road 77), Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

TWO ELMS at ORDWAY

They stand at opposite ends of the building these two American Elms and each has a separate story and the two of them together have a story.

One of them - the one at the north end - is there by design. Its site was selected as a place from which it might in its adult years give some wind shelter to the building and its surroundings. The tree was taken as a one year-old sprout growing on one of the boulevards of St. Paul and was transplanted to its new surroundings one day in early June. It has now taken root in its new location, a transplant presently in its seventh growing year. From its tiny beginning - perhaps 75 mm in length overall including its main root - it has increased in size so that it is now about 15 mm in diameter and probably two meters in height; it has held onto its new life with some tenacity and has endured six snow-covered winters and the attendant blustery winds which brawl across the mound on which it is planted. It now boasts several branches and a rather well-conformed shape, a beautiful plant in the process of attaining maturity.

In a contrasting spot on the south side of the building stands a native American Elm which was first observed as a sprout within a few days of the time the other elm was transplanted. I mowed around it and permitted it to grow there on the lawn slope where it had found root by chance and the haphazard sowing action of the wind. The comparative growth which this tree manifested has been almost phenomenal; it is now about 5½ meters in height and has a diameter of about 15 centimeters at its base; already it is a considerable factor in the shade on the sunny side of the building.

Of course there are many factors involved in the disparity of growth rates of these two plants of the same species; however, one of them has been transplanted into a spot selected by man whereas the other has taken growth in a site which is the result of the accidental yet exacting rules of the environment. To observe the future of these two trees may well develop into a graphic story of nature's selectivity.

R J CHRISTMAN,
Naturalist
Katharine Ordway Natural
History Study Area.

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