



Christine Johanna Buisman  
in Italy



Dear Elmfriend,

It is our honour to present this paper on Christine Buisman (Stien she was called by her colleagues, Chris by her family), on the occasion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Elm Conference in Florence Italy, October 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> 2013.

We want to thank **Dr. Alberto Santini** for taking the initiative to organize this Conference in an delightful historic ambiance: Florence, not only the capital of Tuscany, but a centre of elm research as well. A tradition that goes back to the 1930's, from which era Italian researchers tried to crack the mystery of Dutch Elm Disease, just like the Dutch had done when the disease occurred in the year 1919 in the south of Holland.

The editors,

Ronnie Nijboer  
Hans M. Heybroek

**Holland, October 7<sup>th</sup> 2013**

## Introduction

In no other European country the loss of the elm trees was felt so hard as in The Netherlands and Italy. In the Low Countries the elm was the major street and park tree. The whole country was garnished with magnificent elm lanes and the Dutch had decided ages ago that the elm was the best tree in their villages and towns.

In some regions in Italy the elm had an even more important economic significance. As far back as the Roman times the Italians united the elm and the vine, using elm trees as living supports of their vineyards. At the end of the summer the elm sprays were harvested as a nutritious fodder, which the cattle liked very much. Dutch Elm Disease threatened the divorce of this long-lasting marriage.

## DED-research in The Netherlands

It was Christine Buisman's predecessor Ms. Dina Spierenburg, working at the laboratory of the Plant Health Service in Wageningen who first found a fungus of the Graphium family in diseased elm twigs, which were sent to her in the summer of 1919. Ms. Beatrice Schwarz working on her thesis at the Phytopathological Laboratory "Willie Commelin Scholten" in Baarn in 1920, realized she dealt with an unknown and thus new Graphium species.

Spierenburg reported that the cause of the sudden elm dying had to be found in abiotic factors and she thought fungi and bacteria were only secondary.

Schwarz, supported by her professor, the celebrated Ms. Johanna ("Hans") Westerdijk concluded the unknown fungus as the cause of the elm disease and named it Graphium ulmi Schwarz. Hence the common name Dutch Elm Disease.

Several years of disagreement on the true cause of DED followed, which on hindsight seems to have been a competitive conflict between the establishment of elder botany professors and the emerging young female scientists from the frisky phytopathological laboratory of "Hans" Westerdijk. In the latter environment Christine Buisman was educated.

Born in the Northern provincial town of Leeuwarden on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1900, Christine moved over for her study Biology to Amsterdam in 1920. She graduated in 1925 after which she became assistant in the Central Bureau of Fungus Cultures, under the same roof and direction as the "Willie Commelin Scholten" Laboratory in Baarn, between Amsterdam and Utrecht.

In 1927 -at her birthday- she successfully defended her thesis "Root Rots caused by Phycomycetes" at the Utrecht University, with Prof. Johanna Westerdijk as her promotrix.

In the following year Christine started her career as elm researcher. In 1928 Westerdijk's "WCS" Laboratory was granted an allowance of twice 2.000 Dutch guilders from the National Trust *Oranjebond van Orde* to finance a two year research program on DED. Professor Westerdijk entrusted her most appreciated and best pupil Christine Buisman with this elm project. It would be the start of Buisman's life work and also the start of one of the most prolonged research projects dealing with a tree species.

The report of this two-year elm research, published in 1929, finished the discussions on the true cause of the elm disease. Christine had indisputably shown that Graphium ulmi was the one and only causal agent of DED. This conclusion was simultaneously confirmed by the research from Wollenweber and Stapp of the *Biologische Reichsanstalt* in Berlin Dahlem, Germany.

Prof. Westerdijk and Wollenweber were good friends, which explains Christine's stay at the *Reichsanstalt* for 5 months in the first part of 1929.

In August 1929 Christine attended a meeting of the International Federation of University Women in Geneva, where she persuaded Bernice Cronkhite, dean of Radcliffe College to grant her a fellowship for 1 year. Radcliffe College was the women's section of the prestigious Harvard University in Boston, Massachusetts. Christine had to travel to the USA in a rush.



**Vintage in Tuscany (Illustrated London News, October 1849)  
A vineyard between Florence and Vallombrosa**



**Elm lane in The Netherlands, between Heerenveen and Leeuwarden**

In February 1930 the Elm Disease Committee was founded in Holland, in order to tackle the increasing problems with DED. The institutions involved did no longer compete but joined hands in the battle on saving the elm. By letter Westerdijk invited Buisman to be the Committee's researcher on her return in October that year.

In the following years Christine quickly established herself as the paramount elm specialist in Europe. With the inoculation technique she had developed, she was able to screen thousands of elm seedlings in her search for resistant specimens. Soon several promising plants could be cloned to be put for the test more thoroughly. And in the winter of 1936 she made the preparations for controlled crossing the best resistant parents. Unfortunately she has not been able to finish her beloved work. An infection after an operation was fatal and Christine died in hospital on March 27<sup>th</sup> 1936.

After Buisman's sudden and untimely death the project was carried on by her fellow Johanna Went. It was in 1953 that Hans Heybroek took the baton. He would lead the project for almost 40 years! With his retirement in 1992 the Dutch administration seemed to be tired out on the DED topic. In fact it was the introduction of several resistant elm clones that reduced the urgent need for further research in The Netherlands.

But the fading attention to DED caused a renewed outbreak of the disease in the late 1990's, which could be called "The Third Wave". This time it was not a new or more aggressive *Ophiostoma* fungus that caused it, but a change of legislation which suddenly cancelled the obligation for a nationwide removal of DED-diseased elms which had ruled for two decades. The success of this 1972 legislation (hardly any elms died of DED) led to its downfall twenty years later. Instead of a saving measure it became very expensive as over the years ever more elm trees succumbed under the pressure of the exploding population of beetles, spreading the *Ophiostoma novo-ulmi* spores.

Due to the "third wave", a new generation of elm researchers, nurserymen and city managers have put DED on the Dutch map again, trying to restore the faded confidence in the marvellous elm tree once more. No wonder that so many Hollanders join this 3<sup>rd</sup> International Elm Conference. By coincidence these Dutch all follow in Christine Buisman's footsteps!

### **Buisman's Italian tours**

Christine visited Italy at least twice. Although these visits took place during her holidays she used the opportunity to visit her Italian counterparts in order to exchange the knowledge on DED.

The first time Christine went to Italy was in March 1933. It might well be that she was invited by the nurseryman Arturo Ansaloni in Bologna, to give up-to-date information on her research about Dutch elm disease and on possible disease-resistant elms. The disease had caused severe problems for the farmers in the region of Emilia Romagna in the Po valley, as they were accustomed to growing their field crops between rows of grapevines trained on field elms. These had to be pruned in summer to give the vine more sun, but the pruned sprays were important fodder for their cattle. In the early 1930's the elms were being killed in alarming and increasing numbers by DED, and the question was what to do. Some advocated to replace the dead elms in the rows by wooden or concrete poles connected with wire, many others wanted living props. Ansaloni naturally belonged to the second group. As Christine Buisman, in her experiments, had found that the Siberian elm *Ulmus pumila* was highly resistant to DED, the question was whether that species could replace the dying field elm.

We have no detailed information on the program of this visit by Christine; oral tradition says that she had hurried to learn Italian, so that she could give a lecture to farmers about DED, its (failing) control and about the resistance of Siberian elm. And, back home, she wrote a very thorough paper (in Dutch) on the problems caused by DED in Italy, showing that she had studied the situation in all its complexity.



Stien Buisman Elmdisease - pricking the elms  
Helped by her fellow Ms. Diddens

**Nederlandsch Boschbouw-Tijdschrift**  
Organ van de  
**Nederlandsche Boschbouwvereniging**  
Opzichter Dr. J. E. Beversluis

---

6e Jaargang                      No. 5                      Mei 1933

---

**Oorspronkelijke Bijdragen**

**IEPENCULTUUR EN IEPENZIEKTE IN ITALIE**  
 door Dr. CHRISTINE BUISMAN.

In de laatste jaren kwamen er herhaaldelijk klachten uit Italië over het optreden van de iepenziekte. In de betreffende publicaties wordt er den nadruk op gelegd, dat de iep in Italië een zoo belangrijke rol speelt. Eenigen tijd geleden was ik in de gelegenheid te zien, wat deze rol dan wel was, en waaruit de economische betekenis van den iep in Italië bestaat. Men vindt daar de iepen niet alleen als straatbeplan-

Fig. 1. Iepen als straatbeplanting te Rome.

Elmiculture and Elmdisease in Italy by C. Buisman

Ansaloni was strongly involved in the DED problems in his country. Of course he had a commercial interest in the use of *Ulmus pumila* as replacement for the indigenous field elms. And he promoted this thoroughly, by sending articles to professional journals as well as to local newspapers. In 1933 he had all these articles bundled and published it as a promotional book in favour of the use of the Siberian elm. Ansaloni was clever enough to mention also Christine's visit to Italy and to devote a separate chapter on this occasion.

In 1935, two years later, Christine made her second trip to northern Italy, combining visits to Ansaloni and others involved in handling the farmers' problems with visits to the famous art treasures in the region. On this trip she kept a diary which survived and which we have translated from Dutch to English. The diary contains information on the disease, on the use and the great numbers of Siberian elm, on the discussions on how to handle the problems, on the use of Siberian elm for fodder and on much more.

Her remarks on the art she saw, show that her viewing was not a superficial affair. It really mattered to her. Interspersed are some glimpses on the political realities of the days: Mussolini was just about to invade Abyssinia, and she witnessed the departure of troops, young boys, to that war, with the accompanying propaganda. Out of courtesy she felt obliged to greet the Italian flag in the current fascist way when a funeral passed by, but feeling uneasy about it: small wonder for a person with her heart on the left. Her visit to the Dutch author Mrs Scharten who had written highly admired books earlier, but who now advocated Mussolini, gave cause to admiration for the person and condemnation of her present book.

But most of all, the diary gives a picture of the personality of Christine, her admiration for the beauty of nature, her efforts to get to the essence of art; you feel she would have loved to be able to paint that field of olives moving in the wind, with a single flowering almond and a motionless dark cypress, but in the end she concluded that her strength and vocation was in phytopathology, that meant for her: fighting for the elm.

## The diary

(In *blue italics* the authors added some extra information. In red brackets ( ) you find the page numbers of Christine's diary. We find her daily reports starting on (Monday) 25<sup>th</sup> of February in Bologna, ending it a fortnight later in Nervi near Genoa on Friday March 15<sup>th</sup>. In the back of her booklet she scribbled notes: upside down, from back to front, see page numbers).

*Catt. Amb. = Cattedra Ambulante = the local information service for small farmers, run by teachers and professors of agricultural schools.*

### (1) 25<sup>th</sup> of February

Bologna – Massa Lombardia – Lugo – Ravenna.

In Ravenna prof. della Catt. Amb. Marani. Wants to replace the rows of dead elm trees by poles.

In Lugo I have also visited Catt. Amb. (dott. Dotti of this Catt. joined us). On the trialfield of Lugo *U. pumila* are planted, as well as wooden and concrete poles as support of the vines, to compare the yield. For the time being, it seems like the grapes of the sostegni inerti (= *dead supports*) appear in larger numbers (twice as much). Usually the branches do not provide grapes in the shade of the elm trees.

### (2) There are countless dead elm trees nearby Forlì and Forlimpopoli.

In Ravenna I have seen La Chiesa di San Vitale, with its astonishing mosaics.





Arturo Ansaloni (left) showing 3 and 2 years *U. pumila*, grown in the Bologna plains

For the first time in my life I set my eyes on Byzantine pillars (smooth concaved ornaments, not embossed like the Corinthian ones). Also purely Byzantine mosaics, with straight figures, without perspective, and symbolic. The church originated from the 6<sup>th</sup> century, peculiarly hexagonal. On some parts of the floor there were old mosaics. Women belonged upstairs. (3) (Byzantine Christianity?) The grave of Galla Placidia, windows made from alabaster, Roman mosaics with a lot of action. Christ with lambs, just above the door, has perspective. There appears to be gold on the mosaics, which sparkles when you walk along them.

Verticillium in Acer camp. Rather serious.

We visited Manareti, head of the Plant Health Service in Bologna, just before we left.

#### (4) 26-2.

Already witnessed a lot this morning. First to the post office, then to the lab of Peglion. Peglion did not appear to be there, Sachetti did. He asked his brother-in-law Barbieri to show me the Archiginnasio. This was extremely interesting – the public hall of anatomy (wood, with wooden statues), then the auditorium and the smaller lecture rooms, all filled with students' heraldic coats, who represented their family (or their country) in the counsel of the university. Previously, it was the students that chose the dean, etc. (5) They constituted the university.

A lot of wind, rain too, and colder, but in general the weather has been pretty manageable.

Un cappuccino – another brief moment in the Dome, grab some food and then off with Ansaloni again. This time to Modena - Reggio Emilia - up to nearby Parma and back. (Near Parma there were planted 40.000 olmi Siberiani).

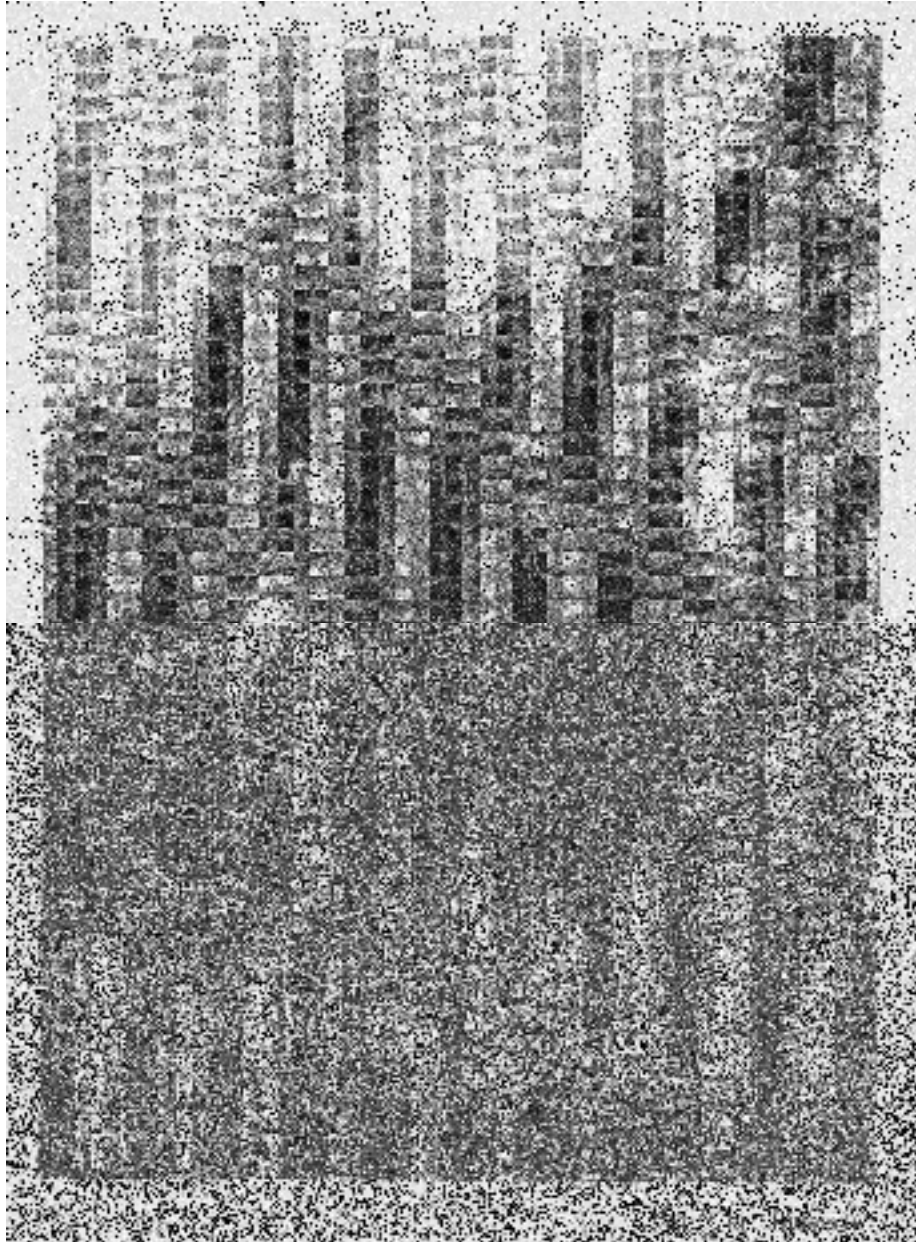
In Modena first to the Catt. Ambulante. The prof. over there was not entertaining.

Then off to Draghetti. (6) Staz. Sperimentale di Agricoltura. Mainly chemical (especially soil research), also physiological (huge greenhouse with Mitscherlich pots, an ingenious method to catch the percolated water from 1 m<sup>3</sup> soil and maintain water in that m<sup>3</sup> on level (cement pipe with drain devices). Nice secretary, also Draghetti himself was very amiable and “capable”.

In Reggio Emilia “conference” with Bertolini, (Catt. Amb.) and Fornaciari (ex-Catt. Amb., right now at (7) the bonifiche (= *land reclamation*)). Bertolini is indignant that Fornaciari is still interfering with the business. Bertolini does believe in sostegni vivi (= *living supports*) (against the late frosts in the night, like a roof shelter). (Is in this context the huge amount of hail – in the summer – in the Po plains also important? Draghetti had covered a part of the trial field with a net for that reason.) Marani thought the development of the *U. pumila* was too vigorous in connection with nutrient extraction. Bertolini, on the opposite, approves of this. The opinions of the (8) Cattedre are obviously contradictory. Probably the situation differs between regions. We went to the trial field with Bertolini and Fornaciari to see some 3 years old *U. pumila*. The best were taken out, but developing well. Even though in our Tegelen (NL) field this seems to be better.

On the way back Ansaloni delighted me with the news that Bertolini wanted me to write an article. Luckily it can be in English! It should be popular, not (9) complicated, understandable for farmers, with a clear directive. I hope to fix it tomorrow – it's enough for today: all morning out, this afternoon leaving at 1 and returning at eight! I can almost dream the Strada Emilia – still beautiful with all its rivers and a beautiful view on the Apennines.

Congrespapers  
Dott. Nerina Vita  
Via Cappucini 7, Bologna



**Christine Buisman posing at a line of *Ulmus pumila* in summer garnish.  
Perhaps the Tegelen trialfield ?**

**(10) 27-2.**

In the morning I saw the nurseries of Ansaloni. Countless *U. pumila* – now apparently his main business. Took a photograph of a 4 year old. 3 in Bologna and one of seed. 2x with Ansaloni under the trees. Furthermore layers of 2 years old, ready for shipment, once with Ansaloni and once with me. Then to his office and home. Signed (written on a postcard) that the farmers of Emilia can feel secure, because the type *pumila* of Ansaloni is in ogni **(11)** rispetto raccomandabile (=recommendable on all grounds). Had lunch at Ansaloni's. In the afternoon I went to San Michele in Bosco by tram, where I had been with Ansaloni in the morning already.

After that downwards to the house of Nerina Vita. She was at home, goes to the Riviera tomorrow. She hopes to attend the Botanical Congress (*September 1935 in Amsterdam*) and would like to obtain papers of it. I sat in the garden with her and her sister.

Then I had a blissful walk. I am writing this on the top of a hill with an astonishing view. The weather, all morning bright, sunny and even sultry at the moment, begins to change. **(12)** On the hills grow *Helleborus*, *Primula acaulis*, *Anemone hepatica*. Of the last two I bought a small bouquet from a little Italian boy.

The salvation of a first spring day is still indescribable! From above the Po valley looks like a sea – I do not believe it is imagination that in the distance, the Alps, covered in snow, lean out!

Later still have to write my English paper.

**(13) 28-2.**

This morning first to the lab of Peglion – but he was not there yet! Let Sacchetti persuade me to come back tomorrow, before the train will leave.

Afterwards Pinacoteca, almost too much to enjoy it well. Some very nice portraits of Reni. Also, there were some pieces of a painter, Elisabetta ... , even a self-portrait. It stands out how complacent the portraits appear next to the Madonna's and saints! What a set-up, all these enormous paintings. In the afternoon the Museo Civico. I especially liked the Greek **(14)** vases, from which a part was made in Etruria. Peculiar Etruscan graves. Also there was good Egyptian art, mummies with and without coffins. Furthermore a hodgepodge, a big platter stood out, with a sort of white web inside the glass.

Then to San Lucca, because it no longer rains! First there was some view, but then everything was covered in a thick fog, which ended the trip shortly after initiation. Nevertheless the trip in the cableway was enjoyable.

**(15) March 3<sup>rd</sup>**

I am three days behind now – But there is too much to see and then this magnificent weather! **Friday the first of March** Ansaloni picked me up in the morning with his car. We went to the lab of Peglion and while A. was chatting with Manareti, I was welcomed by Peglion. A tiny man, but beside that he does not seem Italian! It was truly a pleasure to confer with him and it seemed to me my Italian was even better than usual, although I am still stuttering sometimes. We talked some gallimaufry and I am happy that I met this "personnaggio elevato" after all! Also if **(16)** I would act silly in this country someday, it could be useful to rely on Peglion. (I caught myself before, being in a military zone with my photo camera. Those things should not be happening!)

Afterwards I talked to Manareti and Ansaloni – but after all it's always the same talk about the *pumila* again. I was able to shake hands with Grandi when we left. I had a last cup of coffee with Ansaloni at the station and then I said *adieu* Bologna! Since **(17)** it had been raining all morning, I did not feel sorry.

*"In the morning I saw the nurseries of Ansaloni. Countless U. pumila"*



Fot. A. Ansaloni

*... L' Ulmus pumila ha offerto ottimi risultati nelle nostre terre a contatto del nostro clima... (pag. 32).*

**... *Ulmus pumila* have offered outstanding results in our soils and in our climate.....**

The train to Florence passes many tunnels and takes less than 1½ hours. Along the way the sky turned brighter. In the afternoon we had some rain in Florence, but not for long. Soon I was exploring the city and hiked up to the Ponte Vecchio. Along the way I stopped at the Dome, which was very obscure on the inside.

I felt tired that afternoon – it must have been the consequence of the full schedule in Bologna! The Arno was cram filled with water, vibrant and brown, because it had been raining so much in the mountains too.

**(18)** At night to the movie Lorenzino de Medici with a German lady and her son whom I met at the guesthouse. I did not understand much of the Italian, but the costumes and Florentine ambience were very interesting.

The next morning (**2<sup>nd</sup> of March**) we first went to Peyronel, which kept me talking all morning. Di Micheli worked on the *Calla*-disease, couldn't isolate the *Phytophthora*. He claimed that an American said that the *Cambivora* is identical to the *Richardiae*!

Promised him my dissertation\*. Peyronel is friendly, he speaks quite clearly.

\* *Christine Buisman's thesis dealt with this Calla-disease. She took her Ph.D on March 22<sup>nd</sup> 1927 (her 27<sup>th</sup> birthday): Root Rots caused by Phycomycetes.*

**(19)** Work about *Botrytis*, different strains. Also a small collection of fungi.

I also spoke to the botanical professor, but I was not able to catch his name.

In the afternoon Viale dei Colli of Porta Romana to Piazzale Michelangiolo – magnificent!

And beautiful weather! If only I see a *Mimosa*, I get so excited. The view on Piazzale Michelangelo is indescribable. And this morning, **Sunday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March**, I immediately went back there to write. It is so lovely with a cloudless sky. Snow-capped mountain peaks in this Southern Sun!

**(20)** There is a lot of military activity in the city. It looks like **Pieter Boukes** (*unknown person*) arranged this expedition because the enthusiasm for the current regime has diminished. A human being cannot live under pressure and enthusiasm for years and years. The frame of mind now is weary. Peculiar was seeing a passing troop saluting the flag on the Piazza del Duomo.

In the afternoon Giardino Boboli – beautiful views, especially seen from the roof of the **(21)** Casa dei Cavalieri, where I sat for a long time. That magnificent weather! A view without a lot of city, for a change, but with the olive fields. The silvery grey of the olives seems the colour of old paintings. This whole scenery must have been painted so many times. From the top also almonds and a small mimosa. The land is blue – blue like Portugal.

A couple of Carabinieri (now in a grey war costume) started a conversation. They were normally checking the passports at Chiasso. In this way they seemed much more innocent!

In the grass I saw *Anemones de Caen*, **(22)** and a small *Crocus*, which looks like the *Tomasinianus*. Like most other parks in Italy there are few flowers here (on the rooftop garden I saw *Iberis*).

Carnival fuss all around the city – blowing on horns and throwing confetti! But it is mainly for kids, only the little ones are dressed up.

**4<sup>th</sup> of March.** This morning in Fiesole – bright and sunny weather again, but a little foggy. Beautiful view but what a climb to get there! Luckily most of the track is done by tram. **(23)** Walked back along the big road for a while, beautiful views. How many birds! Mustn't be a lot of hunting going on. In the afternoon I first walked for a bit in the Cascine. Beautiful *Populus alba* and holm oaks (*Quercus ilex*). No flowers – more like a summer park. Afterwards to Passavalli. Visited the Arboretum in the Cascine. Beautiful *Pinus Sabiniana* with extremely long needles, and *Cupressus Guadeloupensis* the cortex peeling off like *Eucalyptus*. - Also the *pumila*, partly infected by *Sibilia* (*who first identified*



**Flowering Mimosa on the road to Fiesole, March 2011**



**Carabinieri in Giardini di Boboli – *“In this way they seemed much more innocent!”***

*DED in Italy*). Quite small because of multiple transplantations. (Not ideal for infection (24) either!). Passavalli is very much in favour of *pumila*. He was the first recommending to import them.

Correspondence with Chen (Nanking, nothing new) and Nakai, see the backpages of the booklet. Deviating *pumila*, coming from Texas, larger leaves, other wood colour, Vilmorin calls them *nitens*. Graft wood is being sent to Doorenbos on Wednesday.

Am probably going to Vallombrosa by the lab's car!

At night a call from Doortje Scharten – I said “pronto” on such a neat manner and then the answer was in Dutch!

**(25) Martedì grasso (= Shrove Tuesday) 5th of March.** First Santa Maria Novella, a beautiful church with painted chapels, I especially took the time to investigate the one of Strozzi. By the way, the sun shined on the church on a real nice way, but it did not clear the chapels! Palazzo Strozzi, a rather square lump of stone, very mighty, but not very pretty.

For a bit in the Loggia dei Lanzi – the arch is beautiful and spacious. Then Or San Michele, on the outside beautiful sculptures, on the inside marble tabernacle of Orcagna, for a part gold-plated, with an especially beautiful carving. Coloured windows of Lorenzo Monaco.

**(26)** Afterwards a funeral with military honour at the Dome-square, very strange with masked monks, (*volunteers of the Misericordia*) holding fire torches. I paid my respect to the funeral coach and the Italian flag with a fascist salute – I owe it to this country from which I am enjoying so much hospitality. In America you also rise for the flag, so why not an Italian salute here?

After that in the Dome again, which was obviously less dark with this beautiful weather, but in some way also a little sober. **(27)** Then in S. Maria Annunziata. The vestibule is the prettiest, the church was very overwhelming because of all the gold and marble (baroque). There were all sorts of masses, which made me insecure about moving and kept me from seeing things. The square is beautiful, with all its colonnades. (Findelhaus).

This afternoon to Fiesole again. At first a beautiful walk, then a short look in the Dome. Very simple, but with beautiful carving in a side niche. Then back on the Via S. Francesco – enjoyed the view, and drank delicious tea with still this **(28)** beautiful view in front. Those are the mountains, blue and roundly shaped in the distant view. A lot of olive fields with a few flowering almond trees growing in between. The light silver grey of the olives sometimes looks like blossom in the sun and the wind. It is a peculiar contrast with the dark, stiff cypress trees, which stand motionless and seem untouched by the sun! A real decorative tree, but barely living, it looks dead next to the shimmering silver grey of the dynamic olive branches. **(29)** The olive branch – sign of the world that can be inhabited again, also symbol of peace, how understandable is that!

**6<sup>th</sup> of March.** In the morning Palazzo Pitti. Paintings. Especially beautiful the Madonna's of Raphael, a Madonna of Murillo (bit sentimental) a concert of Giorgione, Pope Julius II (very worrisome) of Raphael. There is too much to enjoy all of it. Royal chambers, also the bathroom of Maria Louise.

In the afternoon San Miniato, on the inside extremely pretty, **(30)** full of colors and still not overwhelming. Then in the sun on a bench on the roof terrace, hidden in my coat!

On top, at the graveyard with the peculiar Italian Cult, might be the most beautiful view that I have seen so far! Mandorli and mimosa again, snow-capped mountains, olives and cypress trees. And it is so quiet there.

**(31) 7-3.** Today an ice-cold wind, a strange, “southern”, sharp cold. Could it be so cold at home, when it is not freezing?





*"In the afternoon **San Miniato**, on the inside extremely pretty, (30) full of colours and still not overwhelming."*



*"Then in the sun on a bench on the roof terrace, hidden in my coat!" "And it is so quiet there."  
(Well, it was, back in 1935)*

*"might be the most beautiful view that I have seen so far!"*



*"at the graveyard with the peculiar Italian Cult"*

First to San Lorenzo. The old Sacristy is beautiful, with a high dome, simple but still impressive. After that Academia delle belle Arti. The David of Michelangelo grand, but it bothered me that his right hand was so large.

I was very impressed by the primitives – the whole transition from the extremely simple and wooden Madonna's from the 13th century up to the work of Raphael is exposed. (32) (From the last one there are no paintings exposed here). The primitive altar pieces with mostly rich colours on a golden fond are very striking in their simplicity. It is the same as the Flemish primitives in Brugge – it is like you only get to gain insight by viewing these. They do much more to me than large paintings filled with characters. As a matter of fact, Raphael's painting also does the trick by its simplicity. I often prefer one single portrait over complex, overwhelming paintings.

(33) On the other hand the Stanze di Raffaello in Rome are also beautiful, and the paintings of Michelangelo in the Sistine chapel could not be called simple either! Nevertheless the paintings on the ceiling are more beautiful than the tremendous canvas in the back. It is not so simple to explain. I still maintain that for instance, Rubens does not move my feelings.

Afterwards to S. Annunziata once more – a full church again, but this time I was able to get to the cloister, and also managed to take a real good look at the pieces in the forecourt. This is mainly Andrea (34) del Santo. It is unbelievable that one country provided us with so many artists in a limited amount of time. That must have been more than a divine talent, they must have truly trained their skills as well.

I overheard a Dutch woman at the Dome a few days ago telling that all of the artists back then were kind of goldsmiths. Even our greatest painters came into contact with paint and palette at a young age and slowly started working on (35) their talent? With us, everything is so focussed on the intellectual part. No one takes the time to see "art" develop itself. Making art under big pressure can only be done when this development is finished.

Could it be the same for writing? Would I, by slowly and patiently describing small occurrences, landscapes or characters, be able to express what I feel inside and would like to show the world so often, but lacking the time to do so? Would I be able to (36) paint with words, or would I lack fantasy?

A rose, painted with love could be beautiful, even though it would never actually be a real rose. Why then all this effort to paint a rose? To make someone else also think that a rose is perfection. I would like to describe a flowering almond tree in the olive fields, to let someone else experience the salvation of the first spring of the South. That would be so much easier by painting than by (37) words – with words you might only reach the ones that know the rose or the landscape. How can you amaze someone that does not know the rose, by giving that someone a representation of that rose? But neither a painter can paint the scent of a sweet spring breeze. But still the painter has to paint in such a way that when we see the painting, we smell the scent or feel that breeze.

(38) This afternoon San Marco. Astonishing the arcade with this one, huge cedar. Fine, warm altar pieces with tender colours compared to the larger paintings and frescoes (upstairs, in the cells) of Fra Angelico da Fiesole. It is a pleasure to see all of this – it is a shame that I only had so little time. Maybe there will be a next time.

Afterwards drinking tea with the writer Mrs. Scharten and her daughter. Very pleasant, and such a blast to talk Dutch again! A very charming and special lady – how could she fall from such high quality books (39) of Francesco Campana to the product she sells now? She appears young to me, not at all like she is living her last days.

**8-3** Medici – chapels. What a difference between the two! The first one is wealthy, marble and paintings, a large dome. The new sacristy looks like the old one yesterday, but with the sculptures of



*San Lorenzo, "beautiful, with a high dome, simple but still impressive"*



*San Marco, "Astonishing the arcade with this one, huge cedar."*

Michelangelo. There is some difference between this dawn and the one from Pier Pander (NL)! This one is less conventional. (40) After that Battistero mosaic over the altar, odd S. Magdalena of Donatello, wood, like an old woman.

Da Bargello – what an overwhelming amount of art! First the hall of Michelangelo with Bacchus and beautiful Madonna-embossing. The inner courtyard is picturesque. But upstairs, along the staircase, first loggia with the famous flying Mercurius of Giambologna.

Then in the Donatello hall – the painted bust is very realistic! Bronze David with hat, A. Giorgio (41) from Or San Michele, young John the Baptist, everything Donatello. Marble David of Donatello, indescribable pedantic! - Upstairs a lot of colourfully enamelled embossings of the della Robbia's. It is a shame that they are covered in colours and enamel, they are so delicate and full of expression! Afterwards Benvenuto Cellini – also a great man. Verrocchio, Mino da Fiesole. The David of Verrocchio is upstairs now.

(42) In the afternoon Certosa (Galluzzo). Nothing like the one at Pavia, but still some pieces of art are beautiful (especially one of the tombs, representing a very old bishop). Small cells, etc. just like every other monastery. Picturesque yard with medallions of della Robbia, also a small Chiostro.

Afterwards I did some wonderful mountain climbing, nevertheless it is cold! Beautiful view because of the clear sky in March. I am getting to know the landscape so well, by walking between all these olive trees. I will be very grateful though, when I will not catch a cold (43) today. All the museums I visited so far were also freezing cold.

**9-3** This morning the Uffizi – with the friend of Ansaloni. He was very innocent and modest, and was not very hard on me at all, but it was not easy to understand him. He has some kind of speech defect. I found it annoying that he insisted on paying for the entrance tickets! - There is so much beauty to see in that Uffizi – again the transition from primitives to others. The primitives here are not as beautiful as the ones in the Belle Arti. Then Raphael, Michelangelo, (44) Titian, Dürer (with a typical German Madonna, more like a mother and less ethereal, admired by the three kings), Flemish primitives. - A lot of good pieces from Dutch painters, which in some cases were placed in a bad way, with far to less light. Again, altogether too much to process!

In the morning troops leaving from Via Cavour, a miserable view, those cheerful boys that have to leave – the crowd applauding and throwing flowers. A different view from last night, (45) when a troop in a beautiful outfit (without flowers) marched by – far ahead a fascist, shouting “la bandiera” every time there were not enough flags hung out according to his taste!

On the way back the luxury of a large bunch of mimosa for only one lira. They shrunk shortly after buying, but now they begin to scent in the heat. The richness of the soft yellow bulbs in large bunches is a pleasure!

In the afternoon S. Maria del Carmine with beautiful frescoes, from the beginning of the Renaissance. S. Spirito, beautifully crafted, (46) with a dome similar to the one of the sacristy, which looks like the old sacristy of S. Lorenzo. A lot of pillars – 3 naves and 3 transepts. Rather light for a church. Saw the astonishing Annunziata of Da Vinci in the Uffizi.

Afterwards I drank tea with Doney and Nipoti, tired from all that I had seen. I was home at six, which is early compared to normal. But there was so much to enjoy today!

After seeing all those pieces of art I got the same feeling as when I read Faust or Jean-Christophe: what more should be (47) be painted or written? In this work everything is said, what could be said!

Dutch newspaper March 9<sup>th</sup> 1935:

## Italië's conflict met Abessynië

Nog steeds troepen naar Afrika.

Uit Rome: De verschepingen van troepen naar Afrika duren voort. Uit Turijn vertrokken 2 compagnieën militaire spoorwegarbeiders, die te Napels zullen worden ingescheept. Uit Florence vertrokken de officieren van de 19de brigade en het 84ste regiment infanterie met de vanden van dit regiment. Verder vertrokken uit dezelfde stad 2 bataillons mitrailleurs en hospitaalsoldaten met vrachtwagens.

Uit Tripolis wordt gemeld, dat de gouverneur, maarschalk Balbo, aldaar is aangekomen.

## Italy's conflict with Abyssinia

### More troops to Africa

Rome: The shipping of troops to Africa continues. From Turin 2 squads of military railway-workers left, to be shipped in from Naples. From Florence departed the officers of the 19<sup>th</sup> brigade and the 84<sup>th</sup> regiment infantry with the banners of this regiment. From the same town left 2 battalions machine gunners and medics in vans. From Tripoli the arrival of the governor, marshal Balbo, is reported.

## NIEUWE TILBURGSCHE COURANT.

WACHT HUN EEN EXPEDITIE NAAR AFRIKA?



De Italiaanse soldaten, die gemobiliseerd wegens het conflict met Abessynië, in de kazernes te Florence zijn gelegerd, nemen de gasmaskers in ontvangst.

Op  
ook  
15 m

Dutch newspaper February 15<sup>th</sup> 1935: "Italian soldiers in Florentine barracks, mobilised because of the Abyssinian conflict, receiving gasmasks".

And it gets clear to me that my work could never be artistic – let me work in the field of phytopathology and leave the writing to others! Still, I write my experiences down for myself, but only because I like to and it might provide me a better insight into myself and others. Something I would be working on for a long time, (48) would turn into something sentimental, I know myself too well for that. And sentimental is something I do not prefer to be.

And that in particular is the strength of so many of the art I saw here – it arises from genuine feelings and not sentimentality! I found the collection of self-portraits of modern artist in the Uffizi (for instance Thérèse Schwartze) amusing in this respect, because they were absolutely free from any sentimentality and full of astonishing honesty. The honesty in the feeling remains the most important. No pretending or false (49) embarrassment, but self-knowledge and humour – that’s what it is about. And then try to make something of life. As said at the conference in Bilthoven (NL) – to know the place where to put yourself, instead of pretending to be more or to strive for things you will not be able to reach. Freedom and truth, the second cannot be reached without the first. It is important to strive for this, instead of striving for the applause of the crowd.

There is one factor that occurs in all those artworks – truth. Only the (50) de Madonna del Gran Duce appeared hypocrite to me – probably because of the mouth. I’d prefer the Madonna della Sedia! The primitives but also Donatello en Pia Angelico – totally honest and true (remind the M. Magdalena in the Battistero). The more we approach the truth, the more we might be able to understand art. Fantasy may be the dearest truth.

If the Italian travelling has brought me any closer to the truth, it hasn’t been for nothing. But I have to beware myself of becoming self-centred! (51) I used to be so self-centred I barely recognized what happened around me. Perhaps I needed that for developing myself, but sometime I have to be able to study other people’s life or see and understand causes.

All these trips give me so many obligations. I have to fully carry every kind of responsibility, I do not have an excuse for any mistake. Because of talent, and the opportunity to develop talent, there is no excuse possible. I dare to fully recognize this, even though I know that I often (52) achieve less than what is required from me. Luckily there is always a possibility to turn over the page – it is never too late to strive!

### **Sunday 10-3**

Palazzo Vecchio, forecourt with embossed pillars and a source (boy with fish, Verrocchio) beautiful, main hall was impressive. Medici Palace, beautifully painted chapel, a lot of perspective with mountains and colourful figures. Gozzoli. In the little museum a Madonna of Fra Filippo Lippi. (53) Afterwards the Dome – museum, very worthwhile. Beautiful silver altar, Michelozzo, and marble stands for vocalists (Luca della Robbia, Donatello). Then the cloisters of S. Maria Novella – pretty frescoes in the Refectory. In the afternoon to Piazzale Michelangelo, walked via San Miniato to San Gallo. Beautiful views, but it was so cold!

**11th of March:** First giardino della Fortezza – giant cedars and holm oaks.

Then walked through the city to Santa Croce. The (54) narrow streets with big palaces are nicely picturesque and provide a medieval ambience. Afterwards S. Croce – gothic, with a flat wooden ceiling, fine coloured windows, spacious, big and light – for sure one of the most impressive churches here. Beautiful merry message of Donatello, further a lot of frescoes of Giotto da Milano, etc. Cappella dei Pazzi, just like the old and new sacristy, very simple, beautifully proportioned. The coloured and (55) glazed embossings do not look so bad in the church, they look good and radiate some warmth. The Annunciazione of Donatello in Santa Croce might be the most beautiful one I saw so far. Of course there are no postcards of that one! - The Museo dell’Opera di S. Croce doesn’t appear to have any extraordinary art.

**(23) Le Cascine**

*“Beautiful Populus alba and holm oaks (Quercus ilex).  
Also the pumila, partly infected by Sibilina. Afterwards to Passavalli.”*



**I pittoreschi olmi delle cascine (Firenze) in veste invernale (L'Alpe March 1932)  
The picturesque (field) elms in the Cascine (Florence) in winter garnish**



**A bunch of Ulmus pumila in the Cascine (June 2011)  
Silent remainders of Passavalli and Sibilina?**

In the afternoon Viale dei Colli again, walked round the back of S. Miniato down to the river, past the Ponte Vecchio and Piazza Vitt. Emanuele (Cappuccino at Gilli!) back (56) home, a big trip! At first the Viale dei Colli was shaded and the weather seemed like spring, but afterwards there was this icy wind – I could not stand the weather at Piazzale Michelangelo!

**12-3.** This morning I bought some welcome-home gifts. - A storm, first the weather appeared mild, but that was not the case! Still cold and awful. I was home early because of that.

In the afternoon I tried to walk up north, but I did not choose the right road. Over and over again (57) these walls with olives growing over them, and a storm raged through the trees! Those walls were useful after all. Huge clouds of dust everywhere – one should not go out for a healthy walk right now! It's a shame that it remains cold – it would be so beautiful here, outside of the city, with the mountains on the background all the time.

The holiday is almost over now, and it would be good to start working again. Three weeks truly are enough to recuperate and to enjoy all of it! Nevertheless, it would be so annoying to always (58) be free and to be able to do anything you'd like. I am grateful that after all this enjoyment, work awaits me and that I will be capable to dedicate myself to it! I will try to make the most of the elm research this summer.

**13-3** Yesterday evening I looked at the illuminated Dome, Pal. Vecchio en S. Maria Novella. A small loggia on the corner via Calzaioli and the loggia dei Lanzi were also beautifully illuminated. The Ponte Vecchio on the other end was quite dark and the wind (59) howled over the water! The details of the Dome look way better when it is alighted against the dark background.

This morning first to Bibliotheca Laurenziana with sir Scharten. I was not able to admire the vestibule of Michelangelo, too crowded and cold. The books on the other hand were most charming! Then to the museum Bardini with its beautiful terracotta Madonna. All very simply but nicely drafted.

This afternoon I first looked for Passavalli, but he happened to be in Bologna. Then to S. Miniato again – it remains so beautiful , (60) not only the view, but also the church with all of the marble and colourfully painted ceiling.

The view from top of the graveyard remains beautiful, after all I have seen so far – it is so ample and wide to all sides. And then on the foreground olive fields, with on the background the snow-capped mountains.

Then – goodbye Piazzale Michelangelo! Notwithstanding the cold, it took me some effort to leave this beautiful square. I will remember the view as one of the most delightful I have witnessed, the Pincio ([Rome](#)) does not even come near to it!

**(61) 14-3.**

The parting went quickly this morning! In a kind of diesel, warm and narrow, I went to Pisa. The Dome and Campanile were visible from the train, the Campanile thick and not quite tall! Furthermore a beautiful trip – through the dense woods filled with *Pinus pinea*, then the marble alps. After that the Riviera – only occasional glimpses outside of the tunnels! But everything looks beautiful in the sun light!





*"Cappucino at Gili!"*



**The view from Piazzale Michelangelo**

In Genoa everything went quickly – promptly finished in *(Hotel)* Britannia.

And now I am relaxing on the beach promenade in Nervi. The weather moved from bright and sunny to cloudy, but it is still mild and without wind. What a difference from (62) Florence! From the tram stop I walked through an avenue with orange-trees on to the promenade – it is impossible to not enjoy it.

But I feel some kind of cold coming up – must be the sudden change of air. I drank tea in the cosy café at the station on the seaside, and then walked back through the orange-tree avenue again. A very pleasant afternoon.

(63) 15-3. By bus to Rapallo via Nervi, Portofino, S. Margherita – wonderful weather, the Riviera at its best! Lovely blue sea, palm trees and pines, but the mountains are mostly bare and the olives seem a bit dusty here! Flowering plums and all kinds of flowers, but not like those of Annonciata!

On top at Portofino Kulm – one of the most beautiful things I have ever seen! The heat is scorching! The weather is wonderful, the sea so blue – a little hazy in the distance.

(78) After Portofino Vetta Kulm I drove to Nervi by bus. I got out at the parco pubblico – beautiful trees! Then again to the via alla marina – everything blue and sunny now. Wonderful view on the peninsula of Portofino. Even after all the beauty of today the beach promenade of Nervi still is marvellous. And the sea air is indescribably delightful!

On the promenade of Nervi a stone to Michelet, who wrote:

*“Le pain sacré de l’Italie me rendit mes forces et augmenta mon coeur.”*

Had dinner in Nervi. A summer evening at sea!! Enjoyed the sunset from an arcade! Along with lobster, sprat and lamprey!

(63) Considering the following about the *pumila*:

The leaves mature too late, +/- September, while the farmers need fodder in July and August. Apart from that, the cattle enjoys it very much.

*So far Christine’s experiences in Italy.*



**“On the promenade of Nervi a stone to Michelet ”**



*Portofino*



*Nervi "an avenue with orange-trees – it is impossible to not enjoy it."*

### Directive for farmers

On page 9 and page 12 she mentions Bertolini's invitation to prepare a directive to the farmers: ***"On the way back Ansaloni delighted me with the news that Bertolini wanted me to write an article. Luckily it can be in English! It should be popular, not (9) complicated, understandable for farmers, with a clear directive. I hope to fix it tomorrow."***

"*Luckily it can be in English!*" she writes. Which implicates that Bertolini would translate it into Italian. On the back pages of the booklet we find a concept of this directives. Read here what Christine wanted the Italian farmers to know. Please note, this part she wrote in English already, so we needed not to translate it. We only left out her cancellations.

**(77)** *When I visited Italy for the first time two years ago, the elm disease, caused by Ceratostomella ulmi, had already made its appearance in Italy. Of course I was much interested in the problem, created by the disease in Italy, as I knew elms have a great importance in this country as a support of the vine, I could not have imagined, however the multitude of elms that are used for this purpose in Emilia. I have never seen elm trees used as a support of the vine in the countries I visited during my studies (76) of the elm, and perhaps Italy is the only country in the world where such a culture can be found. Just now, during my second visit, the kindness of Sign. A. Ansaloni enabled me to get an impression of the importance of the elm tree in a large part of Emilia. We visited the region between Ravenna and Reggio Emilia, and had conferences (75) with the various directors of the Catt. Ambulanti.*

*Though I did not see so much of the elm trees during my first visit, since there was about 1m of snow then, I have the impression that the disease made much progress in the past two years. In many parts the white trunks of dead trees may be seen everywhere in the rows. When one realizes the huge damage this disease must cause to the farmer, one regrets that as yet there exists no (remedy) to cure the diseased trees. (74) Talking with various authorities about the best way to cope with the disease, it appeared they were not all of them of the same opinion. Some were in favour of replacing the elms in old rows by a dead support, poles of wood or of cement, others wanted to replace the dead trees by other ones. Of course the best course to follow must be pointed out by experiments, and I am in no way competent to judge questions of viti culture. I must confess my thoughts on hearing about dead support and especially about supports of cement, were – how ugly this will make the valley of the river Po! The solution of this question, moreover may be different in various regions.*

**(73)** *The authorities seemed to agree, however, that in the Siberian elm we have a valuable tree, that maybe planted in new rows instead of U. campestris. I may add in this connection that in Holland we have tested many elm trees from diff. parts of the world on their susceptibility towards the C. disease. All European and all American species proved to be susceptible, (72) whereas some of the species from China and Japan proved to be resistant. Among these U. pumila is the most resistant, and I know of no better type of this species than the one you have got in Italy now. The fact that also in your country where the infection of C. Ulmi is so wide spread no cases of this disease have appeared as yet among specimens of U. pumila, proves itself that this species is highly resistant.*

**(71)** *There has been some talk of grafting U. pumila on diseased elm trees. It is my opinion that it will be possible perhaps in this way to save diseased trees for some years. With regard to this problem, though, we are still in the experimental stage. In Holland, two specimens of U. pum. grafted on Dutch elm, where infected naturally by Gr. ulmi. Therefore we cannot guarantee this grafting of U. pum. on U. camp. will work out alright in the long run. (70) Whoever wants to try it, has to do it on his own risk. As I pointed out already, however, it may be possible to save attacked trees, that will die anyway, for some years by grafting U. pumila on them.*

*It has been a great pleasure for me to have been able to state the importance of the elm tree in Emilia, and to see which measures are being taken to replace the diseased trees. I want to thank the various dir. of Catt. Amb. for their kindness in showing and telling me anything that might be important with regard to the study of the elm disease.*

*We, in Holl. are only too glad to cooperate with other countries in (69) trying to reduce the damages caused by the elm disease, as much as possible.*

*Bologna, li 28 febr.*

*Chr. Buisman (dell lab.*

*Phytopatol. di Baarn, Olanda*

And indeed Bertolini, the director of the Cat. Amb. in Reggio Emilia translated Christine's directives and they were published in the March edition of the monthly bulletin of A.O.P.I., the Association of Professional Italian Horticulturalists, titled **"The dying of the field elms and the growth of the Siberian elm in the Po Valley"**.

Eravamo nel febbraio 1933; in quei giorni nevosi venne a Bologna la Dott.ssa Chr. Buisman ... (pag. 37)

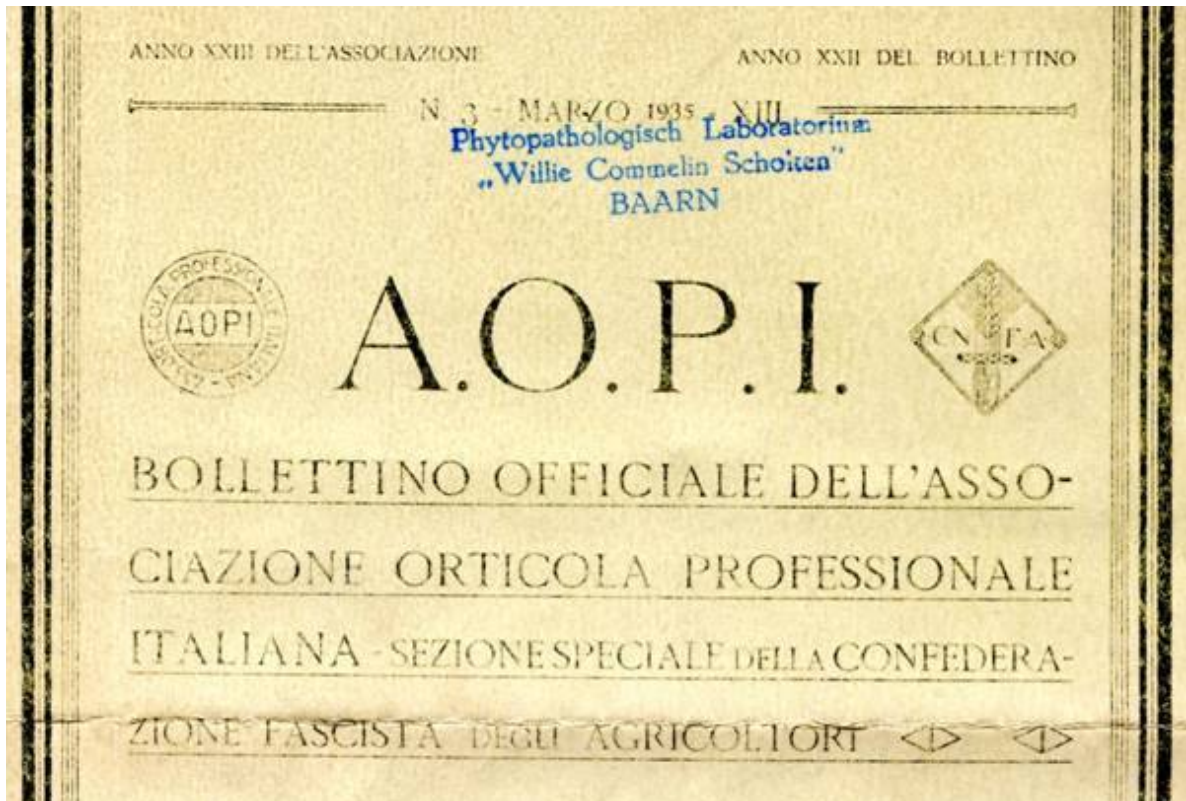


Fot. Chr. Buisman



Fot. Chr. Buisman

... nelle vicine campagne della provincia la visione dei filari di olmi, consociati alla vite, fu trovata molto interessante ... (pag. 37)



It was introduced by following words of Bertolini:

*La Dott.ssa Buisman dell'Istituto Fitopatologico di Baarn (Olanda), che dal giorno 24 al 28 febbraio ha visitato le coltivazioni degli olmi sparse nelle provincie dell'Emilia e della Romagna, prima di partire, ha fatto, sul problema degli olmi, le seguenti dichiarazioni al Direttore della Cattedra d'Agricoltura di Reggio Emilia:*

***“Doctor Buisman, of the Phytopathological Institute in Baarn (Holland) visited the different elm cultivations in the provinces of Emilia and Romagna from the 24<sup>th</sup> till the 28<sup>th</sup> of February. Before parting she did the following statements to the Director of the Catt. Amb. in Reggio Emilia.”***

Christine Buisman passed away after an operation in an Amsterdam hospital, five days after her 36<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Her working life she dedicated to the elms and the DED-research. She took her position very serious, as we can read in her diary (58). ***“I am grateful that after all this enjoyment, work awaits me and that I will be capable to dedicate myself to it! I will try to make the most of the elm research this summer.”*** she eagerly wrote a year before she died.

Both in Holland and Italy her untimely death was deeply regretted.

Mr. E.D. van Dissel, chairman of the Dutch Elm Disease Committee, from October 1930 her employer, wrote in Christine's **In Memoriam**:

*"Her work required many visits to other countries. But even during her holiday trips, to Italy, Spain, Portugal, France and England, she kept her eye on matters relating to her work and collected much information that was of importance for the research. There too was a great interest in her work and her name was often mentioned with high esteem. During the International Forestry Congress in Paris in 1931 it was remarkable to find how high her reputation was. I cite from a letter by the well-known Italian nurseryman Ansaloni, written to Dr. BUISMAN: "We Italians are greatly indebted to the Dutch Elm Disease Committee as it provided us with the first directives that were useful to steer our efforts in the right direction. We owe that especially to YOU!"*

It is clear that nurseryman Arturo Ansaloni appreciated the interest of Christine Buisman in his initiatives to introduce *Ulmus pumila* in Italy on a wide scale. Besides his commercial interest he considered her a personal friend and took good care over her during her stays at Bologna. After all, it was Christine's performance on the International Forestry Congress of 1931 in Paris that triggered the interest of the Italians to the Siberian elm. She had tested several *U. pumila* in Baarn and they all had survived with hardly any reactions to her inoculations.

In Italy Christine's friend Ansaloni had published an In Memoriam in the Italian Forestry Periodical L'Alpe:

***In Memoriam.*** – *Recently Dr. C. J. Buisman passed away. The Directors of the Regional Extension Services, many technical co-operators and agriculturists have met her personally during her travels in Italy (February 1933 and February 1935). She was here to study the reaction of the elms affected by Ceratostomella ulmi Buis., the deadly fungus discovered by her. She was a true friend of our country, whose language she wrote and spoke very well. She liked to inspect with her own eyes and hands the things that interested her, and in that she spared no effort. The decease of Buisman deprives phytopathology of an outstanding researcher, who in addition to many other merits must be seen as the driving force in the Dutch Elm Disease Committee.*

*Arturo Ansaloni*

**View from San Miniato del Monte,  
one of Christine's favorite**



***(28) The light silver grey of the olives sometimes looks like blossom in the sun and the wind.***

***(30) Then in the sun on a bench on the roof terrace, hidden in my coat!  
On top, at the graveyard with the peculiar Italian Cult,  
might be the most beautiful view that I have seen so far!  
And it is so quiet there.***



**In 1929 and 1930 Christine spent a year at Radcliffe College in Boston – USA. From this stay a workbook has been saved, in which she wrote a dozen short stories in English about her life and her home country Holland. As we can sense from her 1935 diary Christine loved to write and she did have a humoristic pen. From this workbook we selected Christine’s story of getting a visa to the USA, after dean Cronkhite had arranged her a fellowship, at the IFUW meeting in Geneva in Augst 1929.**

## **Visum difficulties**

In the middle of August I attended the triennial meeting of the International Federation of University Women at Geneva. There it was announced to me that I could have a Radcliffe College Fellowship. This statement was quite unexpected, I had never dreamed that it would be possible for me to go to Radcliffe. I learned I had to be in Cambridge on September 23, and consequently there were only a few weeks left to prepare my departure. As I had been working at the Biologische Reichsanstalt in Berlin for the last five months, I had to go there to pack [my things]. ~~there~~ The Berlin police gave me a certificate that I had lived there for 5 months and this was immediately mailed to Leeuwarden, the town where my parents live, for I had to be registered in Holland in order to get a visum.

Meanwhile the Dean of Radcliffe College and the American Consul at Geneva wrote an official letter to the American Consul at Amsterdam, that an American fellowship had been awarded to me. The Amsterdam Consul then invited me to come to his office with a passport, a certificate of birth, certificates of good conduct for the last five years, four photographs and a declaration of my father that he would eventually provide for me, so that I should never need to earn my own living in America. I had certificates of good conduct only for the last 4½ years and I thought that would be enough, but when I presented my papers to the Consul, he appeared to be of another opinion. So I had to get a certificate of good conduct from the mayor of Amsterdam, where I lived before 1925. I went to the Amsterdam registration office first. They stated I really lived at Amsterdam, and sent me to the town hall. At the town hall I was told to go to the registrar of taxes, for they wanted to know if I had any debts. If I really had not paid my taxes, I am sure they would have found me out long ago!

From the registrar I went back to the town hall, paid the cost and thought I could have my certificate. But I had reckoned without the police! I was sent to the main police office and then to a sub-office. From there I had to go to the law court, then to the principal police office again, and at last to the town hall, to get the signature of the mayor on my certificate. Triumphantly I went back to the consul’s office with my previous document. The clerk there was astonished I had succeeded in getting the thing within two days! But then I had difficulties with this clerk. He asked contemptuously: “Where did you get that doctor’s degree of yours?”- in a way to make my blood boil. Then he denied that the Consul had ever received a letter from the Dean of Radcliffe or the American Consul at Geneva, and when I produced a letter the Dean wrote to me, he said: “But everybody can say she is Dean of a College that awarded you a fellowship, and this letter has not even been written on paper with the College’s name on it!” We quarrelled some time about this, but then I remembered I brought the letter from the Consul with me, wherein he stated that he received a document from the Consul at Geneva. This solved the difficulties, for now they ~~he~~ knew the letter must be there and he succeeded in finding it.

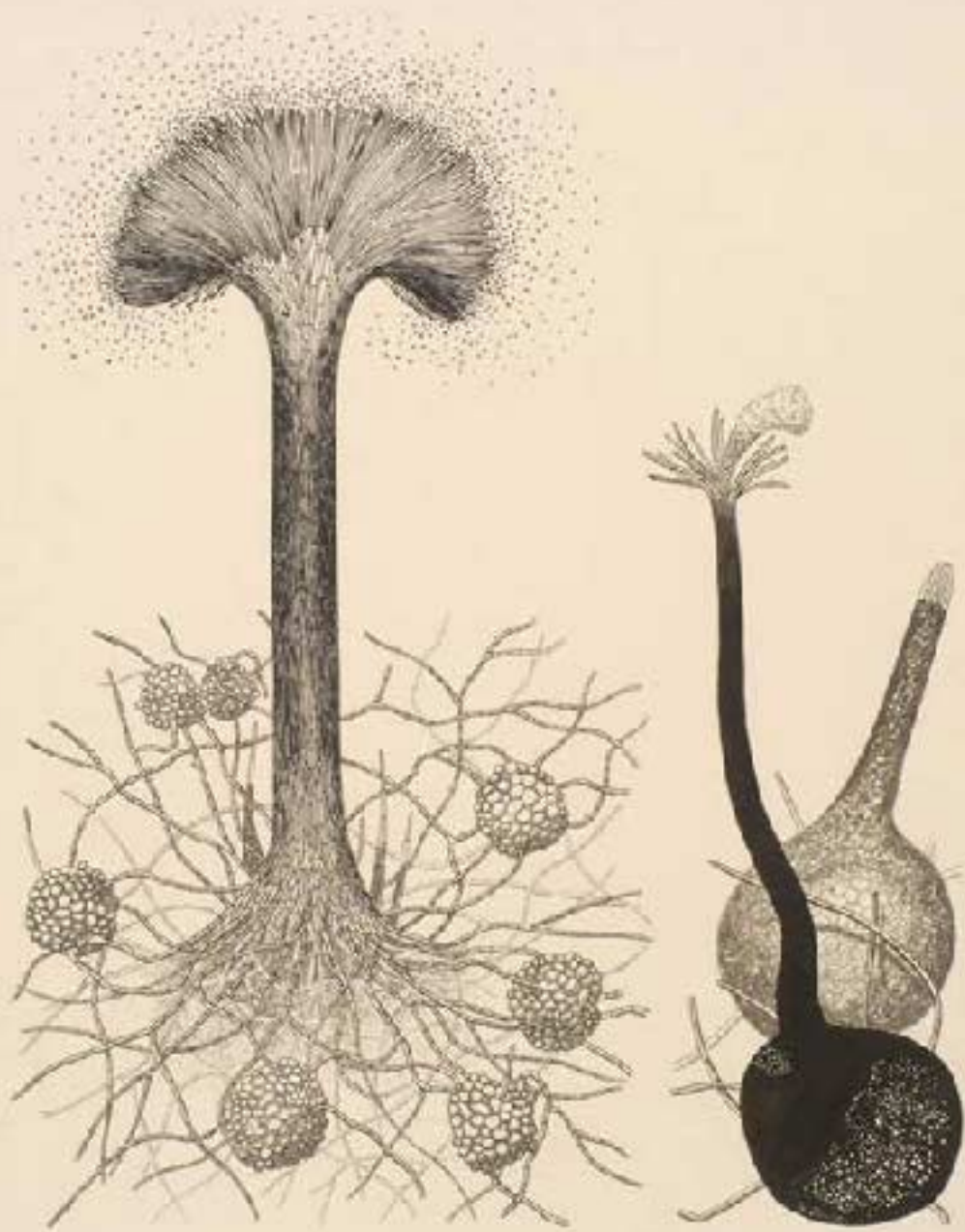
It was August 30 then and I ~~wa~~ wished to sail September 11. I had to present myself to the Rotterdam Consul before and at Amsterdam I was told this could not be done before September 9. Consequently I went to Rotterdam on that date, I had been ordered at the office as soon as possible after 9 o'clock in the morning. But I happened to be there somewhat before this time, I waited quietly in the corridor, when someone said me to enter his office. ~~There~~ Then this man began to scold me that I had come too early! As I had only been patiently waiting in the corridor, I was so astonished that I could hardly defend myself. After this another clerk began to ask me about my whole life, and even about that of my parents. Then the Consul came in to have me swear that I had spoken and should speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. I had to swear ~~to~~ that I was not a vagrant, a professional beggar, a fascist or a bolshevist, that I did not suffer from a contagious disease, that I never had tuberculosis or a brain disease, that I had never been in jail, that I had led a good life, and many things more. But I am a mennonite and mennonites do not swear. ~~So~~ Consequently I asked the Consul to have my promise that I should speak the truth. The Consul said that it was a very serious and important matter to enter the U.S., serious enough for an oath. I answered I did not doubt that, but nevertheless I was not inclined to swear. I had to wait there upon for two hours in the corridor, and then the Consul came to me, saying that without exception every immigrant had to swear, unless his religion forbade it, and it was his opinion the mennonite religion did not strictly forbid it. So if I wished to enter the U.S., I simply had to swear. Well, I did it, then.

After this episode I went to the doctor. At the doctor's office I was asked to pick out all the ~~green shades~~ threads that had a green shade from a heap of wool. That was not too difficult for me! Then I was sent to an adjoining room, where a nurse examined me from my hair to my toes. Again I had to answer many questions. The nurse was quite excited about the quality of my eyes, that proved to be far better than the average. At last the doctor came in to examine my lungs and have a look at me, before he passed me on for the visa. He thought me somewhat thin in the face, but fortunately, the muscles of my arms made up for that, and after I assured him that I was in perfectly good health, I got his seal on my visa-papers. After this, I had to speak to the immigration officer. Of course there was a long time of waiting in the corridor before, but I had become so patient that I scarcely noticed it. The immigration officer had me sign a paper, saying that I should not accept any job in America, or ask the authorities to stay for longer than a year, and so on. I am afraid I do not remember half of the things that I promised not to do while I was in America. Further on the immigration officer had to examine my knowledge of the English language, and fortunately he seemed to be convinced that it would be possible for me to follow the courses at Radcliffe College. But then there were some difficulties again. The letter of the Dean to the American Consul at Amsterdam, that the latter should have sent to the Consul at Rotterdam, could not be found. The officer did not know whether it had been lost at Amsterdam or at Rotterdam. He asked me about the Dean of Radcliffe and then, fortunately, found her name in a big book about American Colleges. "The letter must have been mislaid", he said, "and as long as I do not have it I cannot give you your visa. But by tomorrow morning I guess that the letter will be found and that your visa will be ready". I was furious. My last days in Holland were completely spoilt by all tiresome waiting. Next day I went to the ~~office~~ consulate again. ~~At first~~ The officer could not find my papers at all, and then they appeared not to be ready! I was ~~all~~ allowed, however, to pay 10 dollars for the visa, and I was asked to come back between four and five o'clock. In the meantime I had to go to the office of the Holland-America Line, where another medical examination was necessary. But this proved to be only superficial: it

consisted merely of a look at one's hair and at once's eyes. But it is rather a funny thing to have ~~your~~ one's hair examined twice in two days!

~~I had to sign a paper~~ Every passenger of the Holland-America Line has to sign a paper, to assure the officers that he does not intend to throw over the government of the United Sates or to murder any official person, that he can read and write, that he is not a polygamist, and many, many things more. Beyond my hopes, my papers were ready at the Consulate, when I came there at four o'clock. ~~But~~ I hope to have given an idea how extremely difficult, even for persons who are as healthy as possible, who have led a good life, who are not going to earn their living in the New World, and who have a very good reason for wishing to work there for a short time, it is to enter the United States. And even if her papers are sufficient, a student is not allowed to go off the boat at New York unless there is someone at the docks to meet her. ~~So~~ Consequently there is a lady of the Committee on International Student Relations who spends a great deal of her time meeting foreign students at the docks!

But the funniest thing I heard about entering the United States, happened to a Leiden Zoologist. This man had a wooden leg, and the immigration officer told him that he was not allowed to stay for longer than a year, because the American Authorities did not wish him to become a father of American children!



**CERATOSTOMELLA (GRAPHIUM) ULMI**  
**(SCHWARZ) BUISMAN**