The first two Lychee trees were planted at Mountain Lake during the winter of 1925-26. These plants are located along the driveway, just inside of our South Gate, nearest Lake Wales. The plants were secured from Reasoner Bros.-Royal Palm Nurseries and I am advised that they were about the usual size of young Avocados and came in Avocado boxes. The location and selection of these particular plants, along with the other roadside planting which was done that season, was under the direction of Olmsted Bros., Landscape Architects of Brookline, Massachusetts.

The preparation for planting these trees is not very certain, as this work was done before the writer came to Mountain Lake. Upon inquiry and information available, the general practice for other roadside planting consisted of the following procedure: holes were dug from 5 to 6 feet in diameter and 18 inches deep. The sub-soil was replaced with about one-quarter to one-third muck and dairy manure mixture. The better top-soil was returned, as well as additional top-soil added, to make an even mixture and the hole was filled level with the surrounding ground.

For the following years a varied program of fertilization and maintenance was carried on in which these young Lychee trees were treated the same as Oaks, Hollies, Magnolias, Carolina Cherries, etc., along our roads. From 1926 until 1929 the identity of these two plants was forgotten and probably the only noteworthy fact was their very slow growth and progress through that time.

In 1929 another Lychee tree was planted on one of the private grounds, and again in the summer of 1930 the fourth tree was planted on another homesite. From here on, the identity of these four Lychee trees was known and more attention given.

The program of fertilization and occasional watering of the two trees at the South Gate was quite irregular from 1930 until the summer of 1935. However by 1934, when the first few fruit ripened to attract attention, we were fertilizing more consistently with high grade tankage and one or two applications of dairy manure. In the summer of 1935 I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Doctor G. Weidman Groff, from Lingnan University, Canton, China, and then our interest in the Lychee advanced.
decidedly as Doctor Groff advised us of the habits and culture of this tree. That summer he suggested that possibly more regular watering and fertilizing would be beneficial, so we proceeded immediately to prepare water basins around each of these trees, sufficient to hold large quantities of water when applied from a nearby hydrant, and also to better maintain a heavy leaf and Natal hay mulch throughout the year. Since 1936 we have made varied applications of high grade tankage, a vegetable fertilizer analyzing 5-6-5, and about twice we have used a chemical mixture of 10-8-6.

In the summer of 1936 Doctor Groff again returned and under his directions we made a large number of air layers which were sent to the U. S. D. A. Laboratory in Orlando that fall. The two trees at the South Gate are of the Brewster type and, when in their best condition, present a round, compact growth somewhat similar to the Camphor tree, but the foliage is much denser in appearance. Of the two trees on the home grounds, one is identical in growth and appearance to our first two trees, while the other tree is a much more open, fast and upright growing tree.

Our two original trees have suffered in the freeze of 1934 and again in 1940. The following temperatures are taken from the records of our cooperative U. S. Weather Bureau station in December, 1934:

December 11, 1934 — 33 degrees
December 12, 1934 — 32 degrees
December 13, 1934 — 24 degrees
December 14, 1934 — 35 degrees

As I recall the damage after this freeze, the trees were partially defoliated and the branch tips killed outright. Later in the spring certain branches died back two to three feet in a few places and on the northwest side of the trunk of one of these trees a scar appeared 2 inches wide and 16 to 18 inches long. A few other cold injury scars appeared on some branches and a small injury on the other tree. All of these were scraped and painted and have now healed over.

The following temperatures were recorded for January, 1940:

January 25, 1940 — 30 degrees
January 26, 1940 — 28 degrees
January 27, 1940 — 24 degrees
January 28, 1940 — 21 degrees
January 29, 1940 — 24 degrees
January 30, 1940 — 36 degrees

The first appearance after this freeze was defoliation and injury to tips but as early summer came on and vigorous growth was set up, a line of demarcation was very apparent as to the extent of injury and clearly showed that the first tree, nearest the gate, had been frozen back two-thirds of it's original size. A few of these branches were three to four inches in diameter. The other tree was probably reduced about one-third, with greatest injury on the northwest side.

I have not noticed any insects which appear to injure these trees. I have seen from time to time that in the early spring growth there is a certain amount of leaf injury which may be caused by disease. A branch showing you the nature of this injury is here presented and I would be pleased to hear of your experience as to similar injury. Subsequent new growth through the summer and fall does not seem to be injured like the first flush in the spring. We have sprayed very irregularly with Bordeaux and other copper compounds for the purpose of trying to set more fruit. I believe this has been helpful.

These trees have borne quite regularly since 1935 with probably a maximum crop of fruit in 1939 which I would estimate to be 250 to 300 fruit to the tree. There have been times when much larger crops appeared to set but when the fruit was about the size of small peas and even larger, it would drop off in large numbers. Since these trees have started to fruit, they have attracted a great deal of attention. We have supplied fruit to the Experiment Station and to many others desiring the fruit for planting purposes. Due to the location, so close to the public highway, we have been annoyed at many times by the curiosity of people who were attracted by this bright red fruit and dropped in to help themselves.