

COMMIPHORA

Burseriaceae

Vessels medium-sized (100-200 μ mean diameter), solitary, and in multiples of 2 or 3, occasionally 4 or 5, cells and commonly with some irregular clusters; with tendency to an oblique radial pattern in some species; usually varying in number between 4 and 15 per sq. mm. Perforations exclusively simple; intervacular pitting alternate, with hexagonal borders, large; pits to ray cells and parenchyma large and simple, commonly unilaterally compound. Mean member length usually between 0.3 and 0.6 mm.

Parenchyma paratracheal, as sheaths wound the vessels, usually rather scanty; when vasicentric, usually limited to a single row; broken bands of parenchyma have been reported in some species. Sometimes containing dark gum; crystals not observed. Sometimes in broad tangential bands in *C. suberenata*, *C. mildbraedii* and *C. heterozygia*. Strands usually of 4 cells, but sometimes of up to 8 cells. Some of the cells reported to be septate.

Rays 2-3 cells wide in most species; Heimsch notes that rays may be up to 5 or 6 cells wide in a few species; less than 1 mm. high; uniseriate rays few in species with multiseriate rays and composed of both upright and procumbent cells; mostly 4-6 rays per mm in woods with multiseriate rays; heterogeneous (Kribs Type IIB and III) with 1-3 rows of square or upright marginal cells; the marginal cells commonly containing single crystals, such cells sometimes wider tangentially than the non-crystalliferous cells and conspicuous in tangential sections; procumbent and upright cells commonly containing dark gum. Intercellular spaces moderately distinct in some species.

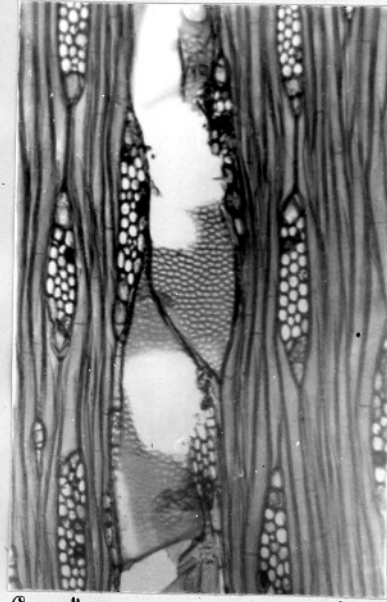
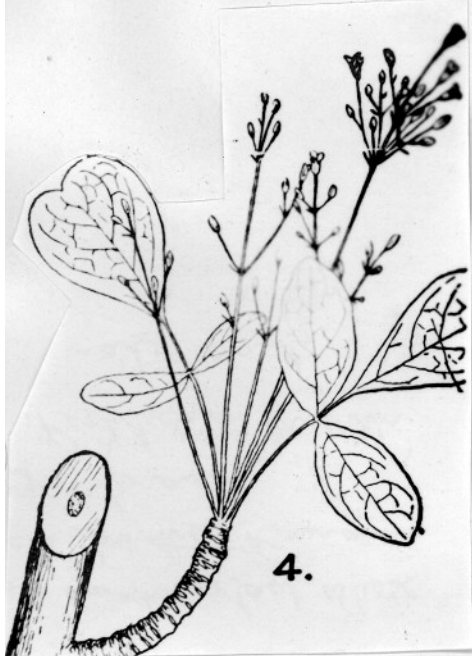
Fibres often thin-walled, sometimes with a mucilaginous layer and sometimes containing gum; septate in all material examined but septa may be absent from *C. holziana*; pits simple, small, slit-like to almost round, and more numerous on the radial than on tangential walls; fibres often in regular radial rows. Mean length 0.8-1.4 mm.

Intercellular canals in secondary rays in some species, small or large, of sporadic occurrence.

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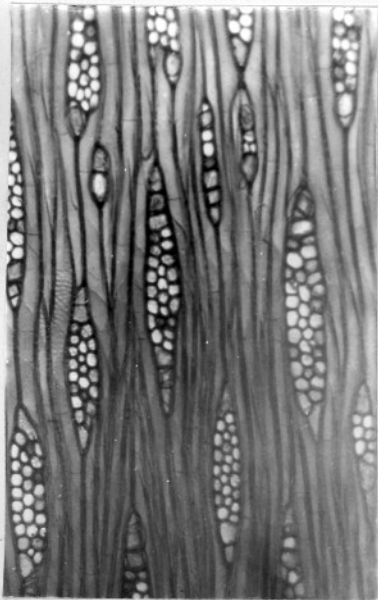
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Commiphora, now regarded as one of the sources of Biblical 'myrrh' is native to Arabia, Abyssinia and the Somali coast.



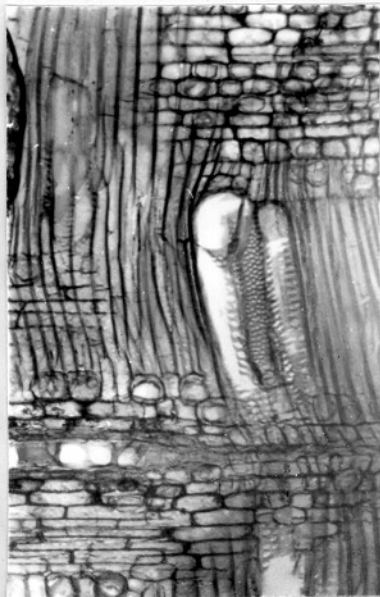
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16/32



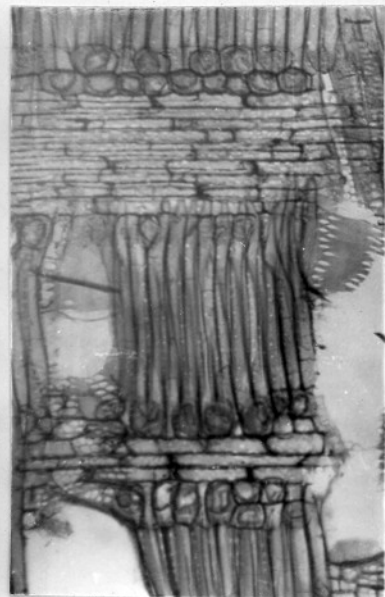
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16/33



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16/35



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16/34