

BEATRIX FARRAND
LANDSCAPE GARDENER
124, EAST 40TH STREET
NEW YORK

December 15, 1941

Miss Anne Sweeney
Dumbarton Oaks
3101 R Street
Washington, D. C.

Dear Miss Sweeney:

It was delightful to hear from you this morning, and to know that you are getting your feet onto the ground again, after the excitement of last week. Naturally, Washington is a hotbed of reports of all kinds, and you know from past experience how fast rumors travel and how frequently they are false.

You will like to know that the family here seem well. Mrs. Bliss was of course shocked and shaken, and how quickly she thought of her friends abroad. The days seem to have quieted her, and I honestly think one of the best things that could have happened is her interest in the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, which, as you know, is a worthwhile institution. She is expecting to give it the library-herbarium building which it sadly needs; and its placing, design and construction is in her mind, and I truly think tends to distract her from the outside happenings to good purpose.

Thank you for thinking of us here in the west coast with your affectionate concern. The seats we have for the performance are certainly front ones, but as there are no big storage tanks of oil, nor forts or big air fields in the immediate neighborhood, it seems as though this were a reasonably safe position. After all, one can only be killed once, and this is also true of one's friends. Naturally your attendance would fall off in such a week as the last, but it is part of your job to try to keep the interest of people going in the garden and its usefulness, as all of the sort of work that you are doing is as quieting and steadying as anything that could be thought of.

Your little notice to be inserted in the various magazines is excellent, and the report to Mr. Thacher is equally good. The more you can fill your reports for Mr. Thacher with just such notes as you have given him, the wiser it will be. Thank you for asking about Mr. Farrand. He stood the journey well, and evidently this pleasant little cottage is the right place for him, as we have a lovely, quiet place on which he can walk; the nights are quiet and the club house nearby gives him what he needs in the way of mid-day food and change of scene.

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Mr. Thacher wrote me hastily on the Tuesday after the declaration of war, saying there was an idea in his mind of transferring the orchids to the orangery. I at once wrote him, and it went out airmail yesterday, saying that if he would give me a couple of days to think things over, I would consult with Mrs. Bliss and see what seemed wise, so that I am taking a few hours to try and sort out confused thoughts and send him a statement based on something more than emotion.

Don't fuss and worry about us, as we are really better off than you are, and we have the satisfaction of knowing at least what we have to do, and that we may now go ahead as a united country to do what has so long been our obvious job.

With best regards to you and to yours, I am

Very sincerely always,

Beamy Thacher

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