

BEATRIX FARRAND
1650 ORLANDO ROAD
SAN MARINO, CALIFORNIA

February 18, 1941

Rec'd 2/24/41

John Thacher, Esq.,
Executive Officer, Dumbarton Oaks,
3101 "R" Street,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Thacher:

A carbon copy of a letter to Mr. Sachs, going by the same post, is enclosed to you in order to save time for you both.

As you will see, Mr. Bryce has already been written to regarding the "Bride" and the Green Garden ground cover, and Mr. Russell as to Mr. Coles' time and Miss Sweeney's salary. Mrs. Bliss said she intended to write Miss Sweeney herself, but as she may not have time in her so filled days, I have written Miss Sweeney myself. It may be a useless duplication, but it seemed more sensible to duplicate than to leave the matter possibly uncertain.

Perhaps you can tell me whether the chairs originally designed for the Museum court have been finished and delivered, as Mrs. Bliss suggested a use for the iron work in another position.

Perhaps you could also enlighten me as to whether Mrs. Bliss said anything definite to you about finishing the finials for the south wall of the flower garden; she discussed this with me, but I am not clear whether she intends to finish these herself or not.

She said she had never been convinced that the little flower bed on the south side of the Orangery was needed, and as I quite agreed it was not necessary, it was suggested that the lawn be continued to the base of the creepers on the wall. To my way of thinking, this simplification would be a decided improvement.

We both agreed that the vegetables could quite well be planted in the upper level as well as in the lower near the herbaceous border. It remains to be seen whether it will be cheaper to grow vegetables to can or put up for the Winter or to buy them from the markets. My own impression is that the second method is likely to prove the more economical.

John Thacher, Esq., February 18, 1941

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Can you tell me whether the inscriptions have yet been carved on the Forsythia gate - Dumbarton Oaks on one side and Dumbarton Oaks Park on the other, and if you know where the lantern is intended to be placed in a spot near the service entrance; Mrs. Bliss seems to think you know about this and could have it attended to.

Mrs. Bliss seemed quite willing to agree to abolishing the beds in the central grass plat of the ~~herbaceous~~ garden (E. terrace). Perhaps it might be wise to speak to Mr. Bryce with regard to having this change made before the Spring. I have not done so.

It now looks as though I should be leaving here about the 16th or 19th of April. Would it be likely to suit your engagements to have me come for work at Dumbarton on Thursday, April 24th or thereabouts, and have you any notion how long you and Harvard will want me, as it would seem as though I had a full days work for Mrs. Bliss over and above what Harvard may want? Please don't think me troublesome for trying to plan for so far in advance, but it seems necessary to allot the different days on my eastbound journey to my different "victims" fairly long ahead in order to dovetail into their plans as conveniently as possible.

Pray forgive so long a letter and be patient with

Yours sincerely,

Beaury Farnell

February 18, 1941

Prof. Paul J. Sachs, Chairman,
Administrative Board,
Dumbarton Oaks,
3101 "R" Street,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Sachs:

A few days ago a journey to Santa Barbara gave me the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Bliss and, as your cordial invitation to continue work for Dumbarton Oaks had come and been accepted, it was possible to speak to her on certain points which you and I had already talked about in Washington. She realized that, on account of the very unfavorable weather during my brief visit in January, it was impossible to inspect the whole of Dumbarton and report on all its various details. She, therefore, explained to me that there were a few pieces of work which she had hoped to finish before leaving Dumbarton Oaks, but that lack of time prevented her overseeing the final details. Mrs. Bliss said she would like me to help her with:

1. The finials of the service gates north and south of the Museum.
2. The console at the "Underworld" entrance to the Museum, south of the Music Room wall.
3. Study of the size and emphasis of the lettering of Quod Severis and Dumbarton Oaks in the architraves over the Museum gift tablet and the entrance door.
4. Study of the shields for the gift tablet inscription - as to size - accent of carving - polychroming.
5. Remodelling the side bulges of the standards of the stone seat of the west court loggia.

Various other items were spoken of by her; the painting of the Forsythia and Hazel Walk gates, which she wished to do. Mrs. Bliss also spoke of the closing of the tennis court entrance to the Box Walk by additional

trellis and "wainscot" wall, but I did not definitely understand if she meant to include this in her other "unfinished business" and will later inform you of her decision.

Mrs. Bliss understood the need for pruning the "Bride" Magnolia south of the Orangery, and I am writing Mr. Bryce to attend to this.

The necessity for a change in the ground cover of the Green Garden was also understood by her, on account of the diseased condition of the present Vinca. Mr. Bryce is being written to, to start ivy cuttings for its replacement when possible.

Mrs. Bliss told me to keep a separate account of the work done at Dumbarton for her, and to tell Mr. Coles to send the account for his time to Mr. Russell when he was doing this work.

We also spoke of possible arrangements as to the greenhouse, and I definitely understood from her that she intended to pay Miss Sweeney's salary for work on the Catalogue House until this may be finished, perhaps after my next visit to Washington. I am telling Mr. Russell of these various decisions on Mrs. Bliss's part.

Another item Mrs. Bliss wishes to have me attend to for her is the placing of the tree lights near the new wings: Mr. Bryce seems to think it might be possible to install a light in a nearby tree (preliminary wiring has already been done) to give light in the Museum court. Mrs. Bliss also said she hoped for suggestions for an ornament to replace the somewhat ineffective shell on either end of the inscription on the architrave of the west court loggia.

The question of the inscriptions for the R. Street piers was touched upon, but no decision made. Other details were mentioned, but not decided on. If it be possible to settle any other questions with Mrs. Bliss, you will at once be informed.

Mrs. Bliss seemed greatly pleased with the idea of the tennis and swimming club with its contributing members.

In order to save your time and to inform Mr. Thacher, a carbon copy of this letter to you goes also to

Prof. Paul J. Sachs, February 18, 1941.

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him, and in a few days I expect to send him a review of my remembrance of at least some of the many matters we spoke of in January.

With best regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,