

BEATRIX FARRAND
~~1650 ORLANDO ROAD~~ Reef Point
~~SAN MARINO, CALIFORNIA~~ Bar Harbor, Maine

May 20, 1941.

John S. Thacher, Esq.,
Executive Officer,
Dumbarton Oaks
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Thacher:

It is humiliating to realize that my clever husband is always right and that I do not explain myself as distinctly as I should in some of my conversations! This preamble is simply to tell you that I am sorry not to have made it clearer that the main reason Mrs. Bliss was so insistent on the Park Advisory Committee is that the path along the stream must be widened fairly soon, and a path is needed across the face of the hillside, and these two enterprises I think Mrs. Bliss would like to know were done according to her wishes rather than just simply made a part of the Park routine design.

There is also the question of the White Haven Street entrance to the Park as I think that Mr. and Mrs. Bliss both feel that if this design is carried out according to their liking, they may be willing to help in its construction.

I am therefore sending a letter to Bryce, a carbon of which I enclose, and as you will see I have asked him to stake out the proposed walk widening and new path line so that we may at least glance over it together when I am next in Washington.

As to this next journey, I am hoping to leave here on Sunday June 1st and to arrive in Washington about eleven o'clock A.M. Standard Time Monday. As I stupidly found myself very much over-tired when I got here on my last journey, I may or may not be available on Monday afternoon, but should expect to spend a part of Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday morning at Dumbarton, and probably leave for New York on Thursday afternoon. If this is likely to suit your plans it will be a boon to me as I look forward to seeing you and collaborating with you as I find it not only profitable but very agreeable.

I am profoundly sorry that the poor oak has had to be pruned and only hope they have cut back the tall branches as drastically as I am sure they need to be amputated.

Did Mrs. Clark ever tell us definitely where the boundary of Dumbarton Rock was in the old times, whether it was R Street and therefore Dumbarton Oaks outside the Old Dumbarton Rock property, or whether Dumbarton Rock covered part of the present Dumbarton Oaks?

Mr. Thacher, May 20, 1941 page 2

Please don't forget that you are going to send me the piece of the budget that applies to my work out of doors at Dumbarton Oaks, as I can't carry the figures very clearly in mind.

Perhaps the enclosed copy of letter to Mr. Root will show you what I had in mind with regard to the "officiality" of the Committee. I am also writing to Mr. Coles so that I hope we can get a good deal under way in the early June days.

With regard to Miss Sweeney. It is possible that the Gardens could carry at least part of her salary because we hope to make reductions in heating and labor, and I think that these reductions will not be eaten up by Miss Sweeney's salary. Perhaps the Educational end could contribute a small modicum to her pay. This we can discuss later. I am telling Mr. Russell that I think her salary should be paid to the end of May and my impression is that she ought to be on the job until mid-summer.

You are quite right that it was an immense comfort to get home after the moving and travels and field work. It would have been more restful had we not been met with a carload of California furniture to distribute in an already full house!

I do hope we are going to meet in the early June days and will look forward to it far more eagerly than perhaps you know.

Yours ever sincerely,

Henry Fairbank

For Mr. Thacher

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Reef Point
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Bar Harbor, Maine

May 20, 1941

Mr. James Bryce
3203 S Street
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bryce:

Evidently I did not make myself clear in explaining to Mr. Thacher why Mrs. Bliss was so eager to have the three old men continue under your nominal supervision for the coming summer. She very much wants the widening of the walk along the branch to be done according to the way we think correct, and she also would like the path across the hillside constructed as we think right in design. A good deal of the old men's time will be occupied in just this walk construction so that as Mr. Root seems very favorably inclined to the appointment of the Committee it would seem to me quite wise for you to stake out the walk widening for me to see when I am back at Dumbarton in early June. I wish you would study this out pretty carefully and stake out the two sides of the path because as I remember it a good deal of the material that borders the path is spring-flowering and can be moved in early summer. The path certainly should be five feet wide at a minimum, and it would seem to me perhaps wiser to plan for five foot six inches, or six feet, as both you and I know that the tendency of a path edging is to "crawl" in over the path rather than the path to widen.

Other things which I hope we can decide when I am in Washington are the odds and ends of work with Mr. Coles and as he evidently needs to be prodded I am sending him a note, a carbon copy of which is enclosed.

Let me know what further information you need from me before I leave here, as I expect to, a week from Sunday--June 1st. Please do not delay in sending me word of any information or preparation you need as I find I have to go rather slowly and ration myself as to hours.

I hope also it will be possible to come to some conclusion with regard to Miss Sweeney and her future, and that possibly you and I can work out something by which our garden end of the budget can help toward her salary, as a garden guide and school children teacher. Think this over but of course do not say anything to her about it.

Mr. Bryce May 20, 1941. page 2

Have the various over-sized tubbed plants been cleared out, as if not we must again attack the question and get rid of the ones we definitely don't need.

Has the Jasminum nudiflorum been planted on the east side of the east loggia at the east end of the new Museum room?

Can you have a small piece of wall such as you think I mean to use at the south parking space, ready and laid up for me somewhere so that I can get an idea of its appearance, and you can give me an idea of its cost? Remember also that there was to be a curbing about eight inches high at the edge of the parking space.

Have you found the two little lanterns which Mrs. Bliss seemed to think could be placed at the north door of the Museum loggia?

Doubtless the flagged stone has been laid between the men's dressing room and the pool.

Looking forward to seeing you before long, I am,

Yours very truly,

For Mr. Thatcher

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Reef Point
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Bar Harbor, Maine.

May 20, 1941

Mr. Irving C. Root
Superintendent National Capital Parks
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Root:

A nice note from Mr. Thatcher tells me that you and your colleagues feel that it would be desirable to have a Dumbarton Oaks Committee consisting of 1 Superintendent of the National Capital Parks (happily yours^{self} in this instance) 1 Bliss; 1 Harvard; and 1 Farrand. As to the fifth member I quite agree that we could settle upon him later.

Mrs. Bliss was most eager to have this Committee approved of because she felt that she did not want to promise aid in the necessary walk widening along the streamside, or the possible construction of a path across the North Clifton hillside before she was sure that we would all be working hand in hand. Will you, therefore, some of these days write me a note which I can pass on to her to show that you do welcome the Committee so that I may write her and tell her that her three old men will be employed in just this design and construction work which she has so much at heart. Of course incidentally they could be of use in keeping things going but their main tasks would be the walk construction and design work which you might not be able to start.

As I hope to be in Washington in the early days of June perhaps we could arrange to meet at Dumbarton and discuss the path widening and construction, and possibly the present uncertain fifth member of the Committee.

I hope I am not going ahead too fast in telling Mrs. Bliss that you and your colleagues would be delighted to have the Committee, and hope you will feel that the Park foreman and Mr. Bryce will collaborate as colleagues on the walk construction that we may be able to make this summer.

Hoping to see you in the near future, I am,

Yours sincerely,