

BEATRIX FARRAND
LANDSCAPE GARDENER
~~3000 Santa Barbara~~ Santa Barbara,
~~Bar Harbor, Maine~~ California

April 7, 1947
212/a

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss
1537 28th Street
Washington, D. C.

Dearest Mildred:

The only way to answer your long letter of March 22-25 is to try to do it carefully and in detail and explain as the reply progresses.

For many years both Robert and Max have recognized that just because we care so deeply for each other and that we both love Dumbarton Oaks with the same intensity, we tire each other, because we want it all so right and we feel our happy debt to each to each and our duty to Oakdom.

A few weeks ago Dr. Koefod looked at me and said "You really are not giving yourself a fair chance to recover, after what you have gone through." It was direct and true and made me realize that in spite of the will to do and a strong frame, that the fact of my age cannot be overlooked and also long years of arrears of unpaid debts of overwork.

All my life I have owed its happiness to the understanding devotion of those closest to me, and often my propensity for overworking has made them anxious. Now I must face the issue and those who have given me so much in the past and are giving it today are being unjustly treated if I overdo.

There is strength returning, but it must not be overspent, and the sense of pressure and the feeling of duty and obligation to Dumbarton Oaks and the complexities and its variety, and the lovely warp and woof are now unwise for me to try to weave. This does not mean that my heart and thoughts and such strength as there is will not be for Dumbarton, as Mr. Patterson and I will continue to talk everything over. But a visit this spring would not be right to promise, and it will help me to go on getting stronger if I know you feel that the journey should not be undertaken until it seems an easy ascent and not a precipice to climb.

A letter of explanation of the situation was sent to Mr. Thacher saying it seemed both just and wise to ask to resign. A letter full of real feeling and understanding came from him in answer, and he and I both hope that Mr. Patterson will accept the duty and pleasure of becoming consulting landscape gardener to Dumbarton Oaks. But my sense of humour is tickled, because when I become emerita on June 30 of this year, he nevertheless would like me to continue to counsel and aid from the position of "remote control" of emerita. What particularly amuses me is that in twenty years of academic life it became clear that emeriti were joyously and politely got out of the way, with the hope that there would be no "remote control". So apparently those whom I love at Dumbarton Oaks still want my elderly finger in the pie. It will be a much more

