

BEATRIX FARRAND
LANDSCAPE GARDENER
REEF POINT
BAR HARBOR, MAINE

August 14, 1944

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

Dearest Mildred:

A letter has just come from Van Rensselaer which makes me rather uneasy. Evidently things are not going well at the Garden and the General is downhearted and evidently is shifting Garden responsibility more and more to Mr. Kellam. In order that you should see just what is in Van Rensselaer's mind I am copying the two or three paragraphs that have to do with the Garden.

"Santa Ynez Mountain, August 6th.

Dear Mrs. Farrand:

We are camping for a week in a delightful spot in the Santa Ynez Mountain about three gallons of gas round trip from Santa Barbara. We are on the north side of the range away from the fog bank that still persists along the coast. Our camping outfit is quite complete and we all enjoy roughing it for brief periods. Fortunately it is less expensive to camp than to stay at home so it is all working out very well. Eleanor was exhausted by the end of the spring school term and her condition this summer has worried us. This little trip has worked wonders and she seems to be more like herself again now.

I hope that General Lassiter will have word from Mrs. Bliss this past week. This year has been a trying one for him and he doesn't seem to be gaining. Good news for the Garden will give him a great deal of pleasure. He is referring matters more and more to Mr. Kellam in these days, so the wheels of progress grind more slowly than before.

The President of the California Nurseryman's Association is trying to interest me in the position of Secretary-Manager of that organization. This is the second offer of this sort that has come recently and I have somewhat wondered what to do. Either one would make living conditions easier for us. My interests, of course, are in the Botanic Garden in spite of difficulties.

Spare moments for the past few weeks have gone into a paper on *Diplacus* for the Journal of the California Horticultural Society. It seems worth while enough to publish the material also in an illustrated leaflet, and I hope there will be no objection. As you know it is always stimulating to me to have an opportunity to work on something of this sort. I have covered the whole genus so I may get McMinn to do a systematic section. This could be published in monograph form as we did with *Ceanothus*.

Yours always sincerely,

M. Van Rensselaer".

Evidently there is going to be difficulty in transferring the responsibility from General Lassiter's to other hands than Mr. Kellam's so I think a defense must be prepared, as you know that Van Rensselaer will leave the Garden if Mr. Kellam and his family are put in complete charge.

I am writing Mr. Van Rensselaer telling him to hold on for a little while longer and to give a vague answer to the California Nurseryman's Association as I don't think either you or I could contemplate the Botanic Garden without that remarkable and nice man.

We have been flattering ourselves that we have been enduring hot weather here as the thermometer has dared to go as high as 90 for several days, but when we think of jungles and Washington it makes us feel almost chilly.

Mr. Thacher has written that the Post War Security Conference closing date has had to be postponed and that Dumbarton Oaks will be occupied until November 1st. It occurs to me that Dumbarton may not want to be bothered with me as well as the Conference and I am therefore writing Mr. Thacher to ask his wishes. Naturally I shall be bitterly disappointed not to come to Dumbarton this autumn as there seems a perennial flow of things to do which are in your heart and mine.

Max seems to gain and has added another pound to his majestic bulk and the quiet days here are healing to mind and body.

Mr. Thacher gave me the exciting news that the tiger was on his way down here and I only wish you had felt you had to accompany him as I think a breath of this air would revive you too.

Yours perennially,

Trix

Yesterday is a temperature of
'94° The undaunted selectmen of
our little town came to "wage peace"
& to see the garden. It's nice to see them
growing interest - dear me - how low a
practical education seems to be for us all -