

BEATRIX FARRAND  
LANDSCAPE GARDENER  
124, EAST 40<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
NEW YORK

Valley Club of Montecito  
Santa Barbara, California

December 27, 1941

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Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss  
Casa Dorinda  
Hot Springs Road  
Santa Barbara, California

Dearest Mildred:

It is fortunate that there have been delays in starting the actual construction and moving work at the Botanic Garden, as there have been several unforeseen developments.

In the first place, it was extremely lucky that a new survey was ordered, as the levels on the old one were most inaccurate, the trees wrongly placed, the big boulder shown nearly 10' out of its proper position and the gardener's cottage shown considerably smaller than its actual size. Also, the edge of the canyon wall was not correctly drawn.

Now that we know the exact position of the boulder, the axis line through it and to the top of the La Cumbre has had to be shifted: the corrected size of the gardener's cottage has meant choosing a slightly different position for it farther east than had originally been thought of. The additional space between the new library building and the edge of the canyon will give a little more ease in placing Mr. van Rensselaer's office.

Mr. van Rensselaer and Mrs. Fithian have both decided, with my hearty concurrence, to cut out a small misshapen oak northwest of the new library building, and another one due south of the building.

Mr. van Rensselaer told me yesterday that Mrs. Fithian had reported the possibility of the gift of the whole "Island Flora Herbarium" from the Museum of Natural History, and which Mr. van Rensselaer estimates may run to some 7000 sheets. This acquisition will make necessary nearly double the amount of space originally planned for the Botanic Garden Herbarium, and may mean a considerably more "important basement" than had originally been thought of. Mr. van Rensselaer says it would be wise to provide for 30,000 sheets rather than the 15,000 originally discussed.

Mr. van Rensselaer also pointed out that it would be wise from the point of view of the herbarium users to have a sink with cold water near the herbarium itself, as it appears that the violent poisons used in the herbarium sheets should obviously be possible to clean off the users' hands. Miss Riggs and I both think that the addition of a toilet in this building would be wise, especially as there is a question of moving the public toilet building to a site near the exhibition building.

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss  
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Probably the house mover will not start until the Monday after New Years, as the masons are experimenting on the stone near the library building, and under the new gardener's house site, and will use as much of the local boulders as they find suitable.

In Miss Riggs' mind and mine, there is a question as to whether or not to move the library building ~~some~~ ten feet south of the point we had planned it, and I am asking her to get estimates on the building as first placed and the building ten feet farther south, in order to see whether the southern site is much less expensive as to excavation. The northern site is the more desirable from the point of view of future possible addition to the south, but obviously the two estimates should be submitted before any decision is made.

The floor plan of the library looks attractive, and so do the elevations. The building is slightly lower than the first sketch showed, but will, to my mind, fit in extremely well to the site and its framing.

Please forgive a dry letter dictated merely to keep you abreast of what is going on in the Garden.

Yours ever,

*Trix*

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*The scheme is developing really well  
- the whole project very work-able -*