

BEATRIX FARRAND
LANDSCAPE GARDENER
124, EAST 40TH STREET
NEW YORK

Valley Club of Montecito
Santa Barbara, California

December 27, 1941
27

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.

