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## SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

MAUNSELL VAN RENSSELAER, DIRECTOR

February 20th, 1947  
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Dearest Mildred:

A letter is long overdue as to Botanic Garden matters - and as in life things always happen unexpectedly, the need for a communication to you is urgent.

Day before yesterday the owner of the lot just south of the Garden property on Tunnel Road told Mr. Lancaster he was willing or eager to sell and that a half-built small house and some building materials would go with the two (plus) acres for a sum of \$15,000. There is no question in my mind that as soon as possible the Garden should own all the land between the two roads as far as its northern boundary. From the point of view of design it would seem to me wise to make the purchase if those in financial control of the Garden think well of it from their point of view. The reason you are being told of it is because it may be best to finance the purchase by using your Director's House funds, which are now flexibly wavering between the house and the parking space. It seems unlikely that your funds will be needed for the parking space as there are several subscriptions in the offing and the Road Commissioners have not yet decided just where their new lines will be. This may delay parking space matters.

The reason I suggest using your "house" funds is that the half finished house when completed might serve as a temporary Director's house or more likely for one of the Garden members - such as the Assistant Director, etc. If the property goes into other hands it may mean that later on it will have to be bought back again to add the piece missing from the present pattern. Will you let me know by wire, if you can, whether you would oppose using your funds in this way?

Matters appear to go well at the Garden. The new Assistant Director Mr. Reid Moran seems to be taking hold and has made a favorable impression on the members of the Board who have talked with him. Mr. Van Rensselaer is fairly well, goes to the Garden daily for a short time but still tends to overdue and there are consequent setbacks.

The Board meetings are harmonious and my respect for Mr. Bullard's tact and competence rises with each meeting and report submitted.

You will see the various notes as they appear in the reports, when you have time to glance at them.

Mrs. Bliss

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February 20th, 1947

As for me, all goes slowly and gradually better. It is hard to learn the new pace but I am trying.

Yours with constant love,

*Trix*  
Trix<sup>m.</sup>

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss  
1537 Twenty-eighth Street  
Georgetown, Washington, D. C.

cc to Mr. Billard  
Mr. Lancaster