

BEATRIX FARRAND  
~~1650 ORLANDO ROAD~~ Reef Point  
~~SAN MARINO CALIFORNIA~~ Bar Harbor, Maine,

June 28, 1941

430

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

Dearest GardenTwin:

You have been so badgered by letters from me bristling with Dumbarton Oaks questions that you probably will dread the sight of the Bar Harbor postmark.

Perhaps you will give a glance to this rough outline of a report intended for the outlined guidance of Harvard in the care and preservation of Dumbarton Oaks and what you have made of it. The statement must of course be brief, in fact I find in looking back through our files that the whole planting scheme for the University at Princeton which has held for over twenty-five years, is not longer than a page and a half. Therefore only the most salient points are supposed to be touched upon in this report, but it has been read to Bryce, Mr. Russell and Mr. Thacher who approve it in principle, now we wait for your criticism and suggestion. A copy of the report is being sent to Mr. Thacher and Mr. Sachs also asking them to show where I have omitted important points or failed to make others clear.

When you get time do send me a note as to how Robert progresses as you are unceasingly in heart and mind.

Yours ever with deep affection

Trix

REPORT SUBMITTED FOR CRITICISM AND SUGGESTION.

The splendid gift from the Hon. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss of Dumbarton Oaks house, collections, and grounds to Harvard University carries with it the need for a re-study of certain problems in grounds management. The transfer of ownership from an intimately personal control to a necessarily more impersonal but an enduring educational institution, must alter the point of view from which the gardens are considered. The responsibility of keeping up the integral units of the design is fully realized and accepted by Harvard together with the recognition of an alteration in certain principles of maintenance. It is not necessary to emphasize that the first duty of an educational institution is to use its resources for the benefit of its students; and for them the teaching staff, library and collections are of paramount importance. At the same time the training of the eye to an understanding of outdoor beauty should be acknowledged as a vital part of the student's life at Dumbarton Oaks. The composition of the views from the windows at which they may study, the unconscious infiltration into their minds of daily familiarity with garden problems and their solution must be important.

It is hoped that the larger simple lines of the design may remain reasonably unchanged as none of them have been established without much thought. The entrance roads, wide lawns, flower terraces, Lovers Lane Pool, Green garden, and North vista all seemed to fit the landscape better than other features which were discussed and, in some instances, tried. There is no intention implied or latent that the design be kept unchanged, but the suggestion is made that alterations if considered be made only after careful study and with a reasonable hope of their fitting into an already established scheme. Therefore certain few principles should be taken into account.

One of the characteristics of the Dumbarton Oaks grounds is a pleasant sense of withdrawal from the nearby streets, together with the feeling of an intimate connection with all that a great city can offer. This quiet and seclusion should be preserved by care and re-planting of its boundaries, and as the students will mainly be in residence during the leafless months of the year evergreen plant material should make up the bulk of its boundary shields. For the same reason the plants immediately surrounding the house should be mainly evergreen. The open lawns to the south

