

BEATRIX FARRAND
LANDSCAPE GARDENER
~~124 EAST 40TH STREET~~ Reef Point
New York Bar Harbor Maine

May 13, 1941

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Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss
Casa Dorinda
Santa Barbara, California

Dearest Garden Twin:

This will be but a brief "pemnican" bulletin, as your old friend got home pretty tired and is taking things deliberately easily for another few days.

First, I was delighted to get the report from Mr. Russell of Robert's apparent betterment. That is the best news that could come to your devoted friend.

Now as to the quick review of the Dumbarton happenings. Mr. Root seemed very favorably inclined to collaborate on the Park. He has not yet answered as to the official appointment of the Committee and my suggestion to you is that you do nothing until we get his approval of our joint supervision. I am poking up Mr. Thacher to see whether he or I is the best person to put a prod under Mr. Root. In discussing the whole place with Mr. Root he was enthusiastic about it and said he was most eager to have everything go on just as it had before, and that he especially wanted to see that the upkeep was as good as he could possibly afford, but he was not quite sure how much special labor he could manage, and therefore welcomed the idea of your "old men" helping out at least for the present.

Bryce seemed well and I thought when I left that he was much easier in his mind with regard to the future, and saw its possibilities with a less gloomy eye than he had in the past. Naturally the house will not require as much in the way of cut flowers or pots for next year, so that it looks as though the two little north houses, and possibly the one alongside the orchid house, could be closed for next winter, and perhaps even the cool house on the west side of the service court. Mr. Thacher seemed to think this building had possibilities for a sculpture gallery---but more of this later.

Naturally the budgets were much under consideration and it looks as though (if there is not something untoward) the gardens would pull through pretty successfully.

It was a good deal of a wrench to give the orders to have the big white oak stubbed, but I saw a considerable amount of vigor in one of the branches and so thought the only possible way of saving its life would be to give it less distance to push its sap. Bryce was most unwilling to have this done but I don't think he could have been more grieved than I.

Mr. Thacher was delighted with the progress and decisions you and Robert and he had arrived at at Santa Barbara. They seemed to help him enormously and he is certainly keen on his job. One of the things we discussed was the possibility of using Miss Sweeney as a guide and lecturer for the school children, her salary possibly to be split between the gardens and the educational end of the enterprise. This I am going to write to Mr. Thacher about again as I know that you don't want Miss Sweeney to go on indefinitely, although I think she should stay on at least a little while longer.

You will I know be grieved to hear that after all our high hopes about our Reef Point Garden bill the legislature has "tabled" it so we are just where we were before, but we will attack it again and if some other method must be found we will find it.

Max has gone back to California and I thought him in better form than for a good many months past. The gradual lopping off of responsibilities has eased up greatly on his nervous and physical condition, and he telegraphs from Pasadena that he hopes for an early "release".

It is heaven to be back at home and gradually to be able to settle our things around us without the idea of their having to take a van and move on somewhere within a month or two.

No more today but further will follow before long.

Your ever fond

T. B. Bliss