

November 28, 1945

Dear Mrs. Farrand,

It seems like a very long time since I saw you at the Ritz Carlton in Boston, and I so often wish that both Santa Barbara and Reef Point were nearer so that we might converse more frequently. It would be a great help to me.

On my return to Washington, I had a very nice and satisfactory talk with Miss Sweeney. I do not see that there is any problem about her or her work, but I do hope that the orangery can be adapted for her use during the winter and before the spring rush begins. As you know Mrs. Bliss has agreed to have the large urn removed from the center, and to the transfer of material from the catalogue house to the orangery, as well as to replacing the present furniture, which is impractical for our present needs. Therefore, what would you suggest doing? The floor needs filling in where the gravel is at present; the creeper needs pruning, etc. As you know, I personally would be in favor of removing the creeper, as I do not believe that the orangery will be wholly satisfactory as a garden, exhibition and study room, as long as the creeper must be sprayed and watered. It is certainly a very attractive feature, but I wonder whether it would not be wiser to make a clean sweep of the whole room at once. When the present furniture is removed replacements will have to be found. Have you any suggestions?

You will be sorry to hear, I know, that Bryce sprained his ankle very badly the other day, on the steps of the Georgetown Post Office. He has been laid up now for about a week and the doctor thinks it will be several weeks more before he will be able to bellow around the gardens. Mrs. Bryce put on such hot applications that he immediately broke out with severe water blisters. He seems to be quite happy, however, sitting down stairs in their living room reading detective stories.

After seeing you I had a long talk with Bryce, which, to my surprise, was extremely pleasant. Evidently he had gotten off his chest everything he wanted to so that after his exorcism at the Cosmopolitan Club he was as nice and gentle as a lamb. He agreed that ten men were ample to maintain the gardens and greenhouses. He said, however, that he did not have enough money for replacement of bulbs, shrubs or even trees, occasionally. Therefore, he had suggested to Mrs. Bliss that an additional fund should be given for the maintenance of the grounds and greenhouses, which should be handled separately from the rest of the Dumbarton Oaks budget. On questioning him he stated he felt that he needed a revolving fund of about \$500. a year for the replacement of an occasional tree, plants, etc. I told Bryce that this did not seem to me to present unsurmountable difficulties as far as our budget was concerned.

The matters which still are waiting decisions are:

1. The azaleas around the Star. It would seem wiser to me to replace them with smaller plants and plant the large shrubs elsewhere.
2. The moving and replanting of the box walk on the beech terrace.

3. The new path from the South Drive to the orangery.
4. The north vista seems to me to look very well down to the point where the railing begins. From this point down to the end, including the north end, it seems to me it does require attention, both as to planting and I venture to suggest design. I really wonder whether it would not be better to remove the end wall and the pediment and try and open up a vista in the direction of the hill.
5. It is definitely understood that there are to be no more vegetables.
6. The Terrior swing seat and furniture. What is your advice as to that situation? The furniture is so heavy that it can hardly be moved and also the wooden backs are continually dropping out and are most uncomfortable.
7. The bathtub! I think we both agree that this can be disposed of. Have you any idea of what it cost?
8. Have you any suggestions as to what can be done in regard to the lady and the unicorn?
9. I understand that the lead fountain is a mute subject. I pick at it all the time but my nails are not strong enough.
10. Replacing some of the large rose plants on the rose terrace.
11. Planting the little oaks.
12. The whole question of the greenhouses. As you know I have been chafing for years on this subject, because it seems to me that we get very little return in proportion to the expense of maintaining the greenhouses. As I have frequently told Bryce the only flowers which should be raised are those for the main house and the Fellows' Building. Naturally, if there are extra plants which are available, we are only too happy to have Mr. and Mrs. Bliss have them. The points in the main house which need flowering or green plants are the bay on the first floor opposite the front door; the music room and possibly a plant in the down stairs library. I personally think the drawing room looks better with hanging ivy on the four standards than flowering plants, particularly as the room is used as an exhibition room and is practically never sat in or used as it used to be in the past.

It is a very attractive feature to have flowers on the steps going down into the music room, but it does not seem to me necessary to have flowers there all of the time. Then, in the Fellows' Building there should be two or three pots of flowering plants and if possible a few cut flowers in the dining room.

Such things as bamboos, philodendrons, etc., look well in the music room and take away the bare appearance. A few flower pots in addition to the green ones is all the room requires. The orchids are very useful for the music room and look well there.

It is not until the latter part of October that we begin to get chrysanthemums from the greenhouse. They continue until about the first of December, but from then on there is a long expanse of time, with the exception of a few poinsettias, until spring, when the bulbs come along, which seems to be sporadic. When the Easter lilies

are finished the greenhouses are more or less over for the year, so that from the middle of April until the middle of October we depend largely upon outdoors blooms for the houses. I estimate that it costs us about \$7000. a year to maintain the greenhouses, which does not seem to me justified, judging from the results. Would it be possible to properly house the orchids and the potted shrubs in the orangery and give up the growing of the flowers? The difficulty is that Bryce does not understand curtailment in regard to the greenhouses. It is apparently all or nothing.

I have asked Bryce to please inform me each time that he is about to start growing certain types of plants for the coming year so that we can discuss it and see whether it can be eliminated or not.

I understand from the heating engineer that some of the greenhouses could be cut off from the heating plant. Would it be possible to put the orchids where the maiden-hair fern is and use the rest of the large square greenhouse for the potted shrubs?

13. Don't you think we should take up again the possibility of changing the name of the Park? I was a bit confused the other morning to read in the paper, -" Dumbarton Oaks closed for the season." What with the Dumbarton Oaks Collection; the Library; the Gardens and the Park, the poor public has every reason to become confused as a consequence.

I hope that you had a pleasant trip across the country and that you were not too fatigued when you arrived in Santa Barbara. Do forgive this long rambling letter, but I wanted to put down on paper the thoughts that are going through my head.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

P. S. There is always the question of:

1. Magnolia clumps at 31st Street entrance
2. Box around parking area, particularly the east side, which is very stringy
3. Bryce tells me that the two large box on either side of the front door are dying.

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