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March 24, 1947

Darling Trix:

Your February 28th letter came March 7th and so puzzled me I asked Mr. Thacher if I might see his copy of Mr. Patterson's report that you mentioned. With great interest I read it and thought it a meticulously accurate resume of "thinking aloud" discussions, which is just what we all feel is due you and what you would expect of his loyalty.

But long it is, and full of detail and consequently tiring, the more so as you have not been at Dumbarton Oaks for so long and as Time and Distance do blur outlines.

From your paragraph 2, page 2, you seem to have misread the temper of Mr. Patterson's Report. We were musing, groping, wondering, interrogating and only that - not a decision - or even a near one - was reached, even in principle, regarding the Orangery, which, as it happens, we all want to keep! Also, dear, in your second paragraph page one you say that Patterson's and my letters "together proposed so many problems" etc., and on re-reading my letter I find I only mentioned one subject regarding Dumbarton Oaks - the Herbaceous Border - and at that, in only one short paragraph of speculative musing!

But, my dear, if this so "bewilders" and wearies you and you feel it too straining to keep on trying to see through the eyes and words of others at long range, you alone can judge whether the moment you foresaw two years ago has come. As you say rightly, Mr. Patterson will, I feel sure, "counsel wisely and sensibly and has feeling and training" and cannot help but "grow more and more to understand and love the place".

You and I were privileged to enjoy that rarest of delights - cooperative creativeness, and the quiet beauty which your knowledge and taste and my day-dreaming brought to life, has been a definite contribution to the total of loveliness in the world. It has stimulated a love of trees and flowers and proportion in thousands of grey lives and quickened the imagination of some who didn't know they had any. So you may well be glad at heart for the many *happy* years of intimacy with every phase of its livingness, as I am.

If you have decided irrevocably that you must retire, then of course, you must write Mr. Thacher, who felt very real personal regret when I read him bits of your letter to me. Of my own feelings I will not speak because the closing of this chapter makes the step we took in 1940 an even heavier load to carry.

You also wrote you "must give up the idea of advising and counselling and probably of further visits". Now that, Trix Dear, we cannot accept, any of us. You owe it to Dumbarton Oaks, to Harvard and to Thacher to bring your professional relationship to a graceful

