

BEATRIX FARRAND  
THE VALLEY CLUB OF MONTECITO  
P. O. BOX 1140  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

January 8, 1947

4 10 4

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss,  
1537 28th Street,  
Georgetown,  
Washington 7, D.C.

My very Dear,

Your bed-written note of last Sunday has troubled and worried me deeply as it grieves me to have added a featherweight to your too gallant shoulders.

There has been heavy pressure on this end of the line, as the Trustees naturally want to get the wheels turning as soon as possible, and before an eastward journey takes me out of their immediate contact. The Road Commissioners told Mr. Lancaster they had a fund reserve for widening Mission Canyon Road and would like to use it before it slipped away into some less excellent project, as such things often occur. This put pressure on our group here and it was not until the formal adoption of the plan on December 20 by the board, that it would have been right to go ahead with engineers' costs. Then came devastating Christmas days and holidays and only yesterday the definite profiles of the new approach walk and parking space were received. They are much more favorable than I dared to hope. The drawings are very complicated so that if you will trust your garden twin to go ahead on the grading problems the big profiles will not be sent you, unless you wish them.

Van R's condition makes me very uneasy also, as he has not so far learned to measure his effort by his strength. (I have known others as foolish!) So he constantly retards his recovery by overwriting and overworking, then has a set-back and consequent discouragement. The next months are going to show whether he can learn to take a new and slower pace.

Thanks to Mrs. Gould's affection for him and his family she is allowing them to occupy her little cottage -- an ideal solution, as it is as quiet as his mountain retreat and he can be kept away from people, meetings, etc until he is better. As he also is entirely untrained in reading plans or seeing them in advance of their finish, he will be discouraged from going to the garden as his wife acknowledges that it would upset him greatly to see the destruction of some of his beloved plants which stand in the way of the new work.

As far as I know, the Executive Committee mean to see and engage John Tucker in the near future and that should ease some of the questions at the garden office. Of course the publication fund will also be kept for its most essential use.

You are no sorrier to see the director's house building delayed than I am, as we both think it as integrally necessary as the publication fund, but it would not be sensible to start now, as not only costs are fantastic but supplies so limited that delays are inevitable and it might waste time and money to have a half-finished building standing waiting for completion. Thank you for releasing the house fund, or as much of it as may be needed as the board hopes that others will follow the shining lead of Mr. and Mrs. Bullard.

There is no intention of starting the service road or Ceanothus trail, unless filling material from the Commissioners is available without cost or unless some of the present Ceanothus trail boulders would be wise to use for wall building or motor parking buffers in the new space. This would make one engineering project help to complete the other.

Your news of your own self and Mr. Thacher troubles me much and I feel guilty at having pressed you for a decision as I well know what a nervous strain it is to shut the door on one set of ideas and open another one which has been comfortably put away for the season. Somehow I rather feared that Mr. Thacher had been driving the machine too hard, as he seemed very tense in Boston and his letters have shown the strain was telling on him. Do give him my affectionate regards when you write him.

Clemmy and I live our quiet little lives here, she is my buffer and caretaker and has done a magnificent job with her elderly companion. I am really better than last year, and trying to learn that 18 hours of rest a day is not too long ----- a decidedly new point of view for this old thing. Take care of your dear self.

Your devoted

Trix