

Valley Club of Montecito,
Santa Barbara, California,
November 19, 1943.

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss,
1527 Twenty Eighth Street,
Washington, D. C.

Dearest Mildred:

Truly I am ashamed not to have written you sooner, but we seemed rather tired when we got here on the 10th., and box Max and I have been fatly resting and trying to catch up with some of our dropped stitches of strength and energy. He lost several pounds on the way out, but is regaining them, and, as you know, the cottage is comfortable, small and quiet, and we are happy there, thanks to your discovery of it.

The plan of the 28th Street garden has been re-worked, as I agree with you that the central empty space was far too large. How about a green grass plot in the middle? I remember we spoke of it, but you quickly said that it was unpractical as legs of chairs and tables sank deeply into the soggy bog. The surrounding ~~base~~^{area} might easily be a good four-feet wide, as the accompanying plan will show you, and as to the position of the arbor, I find myself recoiling a little from the immediate southwest corner, as I fear it will be too close to both the noise and the dust of the street. Perhaps centering it on the space would be a happier solution, and planting in the south corner ^{could} obliterate the neighbor quite satisfactorily. I wonder whether a squared redwood-post arbor, with palings like the paling we think of for the north vista, would seem to you appropriate. The paling could be used on the back (south side) of the arbor, and they could be laid together like little bamboos on the roof.

Whether or not you decide on the arbor, I hope and pray you will go ahead with the garden changes this autumn and early winter, as otherwise the changes must be made in Spring, just when you are most wanting the use of the outdoor air.

A recent letter to Bryce has asked for the elevations of the north vista walls, as I want to assure myself that they swing into line agreeably, and this is the time to assure one's self, rather than too late.

It seems queer to pass the "Casa Dorinda" gates, and find the main one constantly closed and the service gate only open a short time, and each guarded by a sign asking one to keep out.

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One wonders whether it is being used as one sees no movement inside on either road.

Anne seems well, but I think a bit over-tired and strained. She has done a colossal job in building up the Garden membership as she has, and is naturally both pleased and a little "fed up."

You will have more, and more satisfactory letter later on when we have settled down, and some of the sediment of the journey has disappeared.

Yours ever and always,