

September 3, 1943

Mrs. Beatrix Farrand
Reef Point
Bar Harbor, Maine

Dear Mrs. Farrand:

Thank you very much for your letter of August 30th, which I have read with great interest and have discussed with Mrs. Bliss. We both agree that for the duration of the war, or in any event for the coming year, it would be wise to seed over both the herbaceous border and the beds in the herb garden. I share your reluctance in breaking up the east lawn and planting it with vegetables next summer, but on the other hand I think Bryce's suggestion is a wise and sensible one, so that I advocate going ahead with it and shall tell him so, if you approve, when I see him.

Bryce, I believe, is to return some time today, and I have no doubt but what I shall find him looking much better and in gayer spirits. I am sure I would be, if I had had a holiday on Mt. Desert.

Mrs. Bliss, I am glad to say, is well again, and does not seem as tired as she was a few weeks ago. The worst of her packing, repacking, and sorting is over, and I can assure you that it was a nightmare and would have taken anyone who did not have her extraordinary energies many months to do.

As I believe Mrs. Bliss told you, I still have certain moments of uncertainty in regard to the wall for the north vista, particularly the north end. The walls, however, for the cedar terrace and the bench terrace, and up to the point where the grills are to begin on the east and west wall on the last terrace, seem to me to be excellent in every way, and I see that Steinbraker's men are now proceeding with the work, although they have not as yet received the final elevations from Miss Havey. As soon as I see Bryce I will find out exactly what it is that Steinbraker still needs and will try to get it out of Miss Havey.

My doubts about the wall are chiefly in connection with the material. It is my feeling that the north vista is the one section of the gardens which is an integral part of the house, and therefore I feel that brick, or at least a definite introduction of brick, would be wise. On the other hand the strength and the effect of light and shade that one would get through the use of stone would be extremely pleasant, and would probably carry better particularly when seen from the north entrance of

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the house. But do you think it might look as though one had run out of brick? I also wonder whether the north wall does not look a little bit too much like a stage set. A few weeks ago I saw the whole wall in brick, but now I realize that this might be a mistake. But how would it be to have blind brick arches introduced into the north wall, and do you think an arch is really necessary? I am sorry that we are so many miles apart, as it would be much easier for my groping mind to find clarity if I could talk with you. In any event Steinbraker can proceed with the first two terraces and the foundations.

I hope that my indecision will not disturb you, and that you will have the patience to write me again.

With best wishes to Mr. Farrand and to you,

Ever yours sincerely,