

BEATRIX FARRAND  
LANDSCAPE GARDENER  
REEF POINT  
BAR HARBOR, MAINE

July 28, 1947  
*Aug 8*

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss  
El Mirasol Hotel  
Santa Barbara, California

My ever so dear Mildred:

Your westward journey must have been exhausting as both Clemmy and I well know what it is to dodge and circumvent Mississippi floods and the Big Muddy. Once we carreered through many of the Middle States in trying to reach Chicago from Kansas City and arrived only a day late!

Two unanswered letters from you look at me with friendly reproach. I am guilty and do not deny it, and you will be merciful and understanding as you always are.

The last few days have been occupied fully with preparation for Miss Sweeney's coming, and now she is here. We have had a short and very fruitful talk and she is deeply interested and wants to help in whatever way may be possible to aid Dumbarton to take the place it should have in the garden world. You and I are all agreed that the "Garden Center", if so it may be temporarily called, is a natural outgrowth of the gardens themselves and the love you have given them. It will complete the work the whole enterprise seems destined for. With her usual good sense Miss Sweeney has brought a fairly complete list of the books Mrs. Clark has; and while at the moment no "rare" items rise over the horizon it gives me an idea of what there is and how to plot our campaign.

The book list in its three grades - good, better, best - has been checked and a list made of books lacking here which are badly needed. When the list is copied, and it may take a little time, it will be sent you and I should think a copy should stay here and one go to Miss Sweeney.

Thanks for your cheque for \$300. Now that I am sure Miss Sweeney and Mrs. Clark have not got them the books mentioned in my note of June 24th will be ordered - ~~if~~ in good condition, of course.

Miss Sweeney will have time to look at some of the books here and will take a fairly clear picture with her and will go to the Massachusetts Horticultural Library with a mind prepared.

Now as to the library you have in mind. Even today it should not be very costly in terms of "rare book prices" but it will be slow to unearth many of the titles.



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By all means first a useful library for horticulturists (not especially for botanists) arboriculturists and garden designers. Botany books should not be generally included as they are in a big department by themselves in botany departments of universities. - "Non ragionam di lor."

The second list of the library on old books on garden design will be the most interesting to acquire and the slowest. I should counsel only two or three herbals, such as Gerarde and Parkinson and the reprint of the Paradisi in Sole. The great medical libraries - Dr. Cushing's at Yale, and I think the Surgeon General's or the Library of Congress - have the vast number of them. Dumbarton Oaks should have representation rather than a collection. As to the Garden design books, not only should you have the great ones like Kip and some of the Silvestre "Receuil" but many monographs - Sweden, Holland, Sicily - individual villas in Italy, as the Brenta, etc., and some of the fine 18th and 19th century flower books like Mrs. Loudon and Redoute.

Then, physically - an "ordinary" reading room where current books could be consulted - current magazines kept on file, shelves of catalogues for consultation, card indexes of the Dumbarton Oaks plants, and sectional plans made available for students.

A fairly good collection of prints - garden design of which it might be well to have a few framed and hung (I find the students here are absorbed in study of the old engravings) certain flower prints, perhaps a few Debouté and Thornton and some of the modern ones.

A rare book room will be needed on the second storey for students only, properly accredited to work there. These are the lines on which Reef Point is working and they seem to develop on natural curves and grades.

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August 6, 1947

Here I seem to have been overtaken by a stupid and painful attack of lumbago which "bedded me" for some days and has left me fairly weak. But I think the Dumbarton Oaks part of the letter is fairly clearly answered and therefore it goes forward. Miss Sweeney's visit here was a great success. She seems to catch hold of the idea of the library and the Garden Center and its usefulness to the community, and Mr. Patterson will this autumn probably see the live Garden Center at Stockbridge or Lennox and the other one at Cleveland. The lines I have suggested for Dumbarton are the ones on which the work is being pushed forward here as it seems likely that an ordinary reading room with catalogues and magazines and the current books will be far more used than the rare book room which will appeal to the small group of students to whom you have a special message. I am hoping to start buying some of the books as soon as I get from Miss Sweeney a fairly clear list of what she has on hand. The Rare books will await Mrs. Clark's return unless Miss Sweeney is able to give me a fairly complete list of them. You can trust to me for this.

Probably here at Reef Point we shall have a fair sized reading room for plant



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lists, files, current books, magazines, and bound periodicals. Then the so-called rare book room will have the source books and the good illustrated ones. Does this help you?

The news of your reaction from the cholera inoculation was dismal. How well I know the reactions from these inoculations which are really almost as bad as having the "thing" itself! I do hope you are pulling out of the hole and will try and give yourself a little chance to rest.

As to the American Horticultural Society. My impression of all of these societies is that until they are established for a number of years they are almost entirely dependent on the leadership of one individual - in this case B. Y. Morrison. So that the alliance of Dumbarton to the present American Horticultural Society would not seem to me a good idea. As to the question of the relative use of B.Y. Morrison for the Department of Agriculture and the Arboretum, I am so out of touch with the whole situation in Washington that my opinion would not be very much use. It would probably be worth while for you to talk the question over with Gilmore Clarke who is a sensible man, and on the Art Commission question - if that is its title- he has experience and good sense and has the landscape architect's point of view. It has been said fairly generally that the Arboretum at Washington being under the control of the Government would have rather difficult times as it would be subject to the whims of Congress and the allotments of funds.

As to Mr. Morrison on the Garden Committee of Dumbarton Oaks, that is also a question which might well be discussed not only with Mr. Thacher, and Mr. Patterson but with Gilmore Clarke. It would seem to me rather questionable to put me on the Committee as a sort of "veiled prophet" but you must mull over this yourself.

and

On the question with regard to the Cathedral/Mt. St. Albans, it would seem to me wise not to talk to the Garden Club of America about assuming this responsibility for a year or two as they have gone in rather heavily on a scheme at Greenwich which will mean using much of their funds to support a \$500,000. scientific project somewhat sponsored by the New York Botanic Garden. Until they get their heads above water with this project I think they would simply decline to consider Mt. St. Albans, but it is by all means a project that they or the Federated Garden Clubs should interest themselves in.

It seems as though I was coming to the end of my rather short strength so in order not to delay this another day a fond epistolary hug goes to you my darling Mildred. Do take care of your dear self as you are very close and much loved by your

*devoted*

*Trix*

*Back really better  
fresh got to go slow. Thanks for your  
"secretary" enquiry letter -*