

20/11/47

BEATRIX FARRAND
LANDSCAPE GARDENER
REEF POINT
BAR HARBOR
MAINE

November 12, 1947

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss
Claridge's Hotel
London, England

Mildred my so dear:

The cable from Istanbul to Mr. Thacher meant deeply much to us at Reef Point. He has been so full of kindly and affectionate understanding that it has drawn us even closer than before. They were grim days and nights but they taught us much and how many friends we have all over this country and in England. It also taught us what the British endured for seven years, and we for only seven days. It is over, and Reef Point is untouched, so more than ever we must go forward. It has been moving to see how much the townspeople care for Reef Point and its gardens, and how they feel it will help to take people's minds off the devastation which has destroyed so much.

Just there your letter from Constantinople reached me here in Boston, where Clemmy and I are perching for a few days rest before starting California-wards on the 12th and are due there at the Valley Club on the 15th.

Thank you for so deeply understanding what the loss of Reef Point would have meant, but it must have been saved for a purpose and we are more than ever determined to make it show it has deserved its mercy. Thank you for the card to Patterson, he is gallant.

When we meet, we'll talk of what you have seen- but once you get home rest, if you can. Sta. Sophia must be a great spiritual experience and one that will live on in one's heart.

Now as to the possible garden centre at Dumbarton Oaks. Mr. Thacher came to Reef Point on the 13th of October and we three - he, Mr. Patterson and I - had a thoroughly good talk. He tells me he has already written you of his luminous idea of using "his" house for the central garden building, library, etc

We looked at the plan of the house, and it would seem extremely well adapted to the use you and I have in mind, a main library and meeting room, a smaller rare book room, an office, etc. The fundamentals of providing funds for alteration and purchases and later upkeep are the very root of the matter.

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One can make a fairly good guess at what these costs would be, and then we can sit down and see whether you still think it worth while or whether the other Dumbarton Oaks interests will crowd out the Garden Center. It will of course seem to me that the Garden end of D.O. would take its proper place in the Washington community, where such a place is much needed, - not only for Washington but for the country at large.

Mr. Thacher's idea seems to me first rate, and Miss Sweeney has been "sounded" and appears to think well of the suggestion. Turn it over in your mind and later you'll let me know how it pleases you.

Thank you my dear for your letter, so full of all we two share with each other. My devoted love and gratitude to Milrob.

Yours,

Linx
S

Farrand

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Yours,

cc Mr. Thacher
Mr. Patterson

For Mrs. Bliss:

Extract from letter of Mr. Thacher to
Mrs. Farrand, October 17, 1947

****"In thinking over the possibility of using my house as a Garden Center, I wonder if at this stage of the proceedings it would not be wise to have Mr. Patterson prepare the simplest floor plans which would merely indicate the necessary requirements for the following two schemes:

- a. Using my house without any addition to present structure but removal of necessary interior partitions, etc.
- b. Using my house with the indication of the approximate amount of cubic footage which you consider should be added to the present structure in order to make it practical.

In other words have Mr. Patterson prepare the most elementary plans which would give us a basis for further discussion.

BEATRIX FARRAND
LANDSCAPE GARDENER
REEF POINT
BAR HARBOR, MAINE

Dear Mr. Thatcher:

As I have not the address of
Claridge's perhaps you will be kind enough
to address the enclosed envelope in which
to post the letter to Mrs. Bliss. Thank you.

Isabel M. Stover