

February 9, 1923.

Dear Miss Morgan :

I sent you a telegram about the pomegranate walk instead of the plane tree walk. I think the pomegranate walk is a gorgeous idea. The effect should be as good as the plane tree walk at its best, as I suppose the pomegranate trees can be trimmed similarly to the planes.

But, as I understand it, pomegranates are evergreens and plane trees are not; so the pomegranate walk would be beautiful winter and summer. Also the fruit lends an additional charm.

I certainly congratulate you on that idea, and I hope you will be able to find the pomegranates in sufficient abundance.

I said in the telegram that I hoped we would be able to use evergreen trees generally in our planting-- I mean almost everywhere from San Simeon to the Hill Top. Evergreens are fine all the year round, and there is no reason why we should not maintain that all-the-year-round verdure, especially as in the foliage of the trees evergreen is the characteristic of the ranch.

I made some exceptions in the various notes I have sent you, and I will summarize them once more.

Exception No. 1 is fruit trees, such as Mr. Porter proposes to plant outside the fence of the orchards and occasionally along the roads, for certain purposes of his own. I approve this.

Exception No. 2 is nut trees. I think English walnuts and black walnuts can be planted. They may be planted individually or in groves or in avenues. I think, as I have said, that an avenue of big black walnut is very impressive, and might be used in some of the lower, flatter reaches of the ranch around the ranch house, or on the roads from the ranch house to San Simeon, or on the road from the ranch house up to the first gate.

I am agreeable to the planting of the almonds and other nuts as well as English walnuts and black walnuts. I think it is a good idea to plant olive trees in certain selected sections I have outlined to Mr. Keep, where I think they might be planted advantageously. I have no objection to their being planted in other places, too, if Mr. Porter wants to plant them there.

I am heartily in favor of planting fig trees along the road. They are extremely beautiful trees-- very useful, too, on account of their fruit, and very attractive to Eastern people, who regard them as a semi-tropical and characteristic California tree.

I think some of these can be planted around the trough, where there is a sufficient amount of water, as I understand fig trees need a little water; and it might be better to plant figs

around the trough than to plant sycamores.

The other kind of tree that constitutes exception number two is the flowering tree. Some of these, like the eucalyptus, I think are evergreen. I think we should plant flowering eucalyptus around San Simeon. We might even make the avenue from San Simeon to the ranch house of flowering eucalyptus-- we can plant them freely around the ranch house as wind-breaks-- and we can use them occasionally in masses on the Hill, contrasting them perhaps with other flowering trees so as to get expanses of color.

I always thought that the steep hill slope above the trough would be a good place to plant flowering trees, with flowering shrubs; and I also pictured clumps of them in certain places from there up to the house.

Inside the gate there should be a liberal use of these flowering trees, and I certainly expect accacias, magnolias, jacquerandas, eucalyptus and such used on the various hills, such as Chinese Hill, Garage Hill, Bath House Hill, etc. I have already outlined suggestions for the use of these flowering trees.

Chinese Hill and Bath House Hill-- which we might call Arabian Hill, to be more poetic-- offer opportunities for some tropical trees, especially as the Arabian house and the Chinese house will have patios where some tropical plants can be protected.

Now there is another class of tree, which constitutes the third exception. That is the quaint and interesting trees such cork oaks, or the useful trees to the ranch, such as St. Jacob's bread.

I do not know that cork oak is not an evergreen. It may be. But even if it is deciduous, I would like some of them on account of their interesting quality. And there are other interesting trees that I would like planted for the same reason. I come across them occasionally in catalogues and in garden magazines.

Of course we only want trees that will grow without attention after they have once secured a start. We cannot bother with tree culture on the ranch. So much for the trees. Now to resume what has been said about the shrubs.

We must use for all shrubs outside of the wall native shrubs or drought resisting shrubs of a character to take care of themselves, and not require attention, except perhaps pruning once a year when they tend to overgrow the road.

I think that from the gate at the beginning of the orchard along the road until we get to our Hill Top, flowering shrubs of this kind should be used in banks. I think Mr. Porter and I agree on what kind of shrubs should be used, except that in addition to native shrubs there are a lot of drought resisting imported shrubs which live quite as well and require as little attention as our native shrubs.

Some of these are flowering shrubs, some have bright berries, yellow and red-- and a variety of these can be used. Outside of this enclosure and below the fence I see no opportunity for the use of shrubs except in occasional clumps perhaps, and again perhaps in contrast with or as a supplement to flowering trees.

Inside the wall-- that is, in what is practically the gardens for our houses, I think our chief care should be not to crowd too many trees which will grow big and obscure the views of the houses.

I would like to have shrubs chiefly in the gardens, and have drought resisting shrubs-- shrubs that will take care of themselves-- in the out-of-the-way places of the gardens-- leaving spaces along the walks in the most frequented spots for the ordinary garden flowers.

The palms are our best tree decoration, and there is not much room for anything else, except perhaps an occasional magnolia or flowering tree where it will not obscure the views; and perhaps an occasional conifer to give an architectural effect.

As regards the citrus planting-- as I have said we should plant the citrus fruits where they will grow, if we have such a place. I would like to see them on the north side of the house, as Mr. Porter suggests, if they will grow there. They will certainly look well there-- probably better than anything else we could plant.

But I think we should let them grow where we have planted them already if they will, and then thin out later if we have to.

That is about all I have in mind.

I think you can add to this note what I have already written on this subject, and I hope you will have some other great ideas like the pomegranate walk.

Sincerely yours,

W B Hearst
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