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Arthur W. C. Smyth

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Orlando Fla March 18/93

My Dearest Ben

I have two of your welcome letters to answer yours of 26th & 5th but will attempt the first letter first as Gussie is to help me do it.

We have had Mr. Kennard, the Orlando Architect, on the spot today, and all of us Mr. K. Gussie, Harold & I, discussed the house question very fully. Gussie says we did not do it fully, but H. & I. think we did.

Mr. K. is to make a drawing of what we propose & have it ready to send you by next Str.

Strange though it is, your ideas agree with mine very much & I think I have written you as much already.

I have just been reading ^{over} your suggestions as to positions, facing, &c, and can about answer all your questions by saying I fully endorse all you suggest & further that it shall be done just as you like best.

The dimensions of the portion of the

^{flat} I propose for our lot, are about 140 ft north by 100 west, which would leave a lot of about 365 ft ^{west} front, by 140 ft north, enough to cut up into 3 lots of about 90 x 140 ft each, which we can sell off as desirable neighbors, or rather purchasers, who would make good neighbors, please themselves, I am quite sure I can sell off ~~even~~ these three lots for enough to more than make our lots cost us nothing.

Most of the trees are on our end of the flat & only one will have to be cut down, & that one leans so much it would have to be cut down ^{anyhow}.

I quite agree the with you the best rooms namely, Parlor & dining room, & our bed room, must be on the east side, ~~but~~ where the fence runs is, & overlooking the trimis Court, ~~and~~ a space being there large enough for it without cutting any trees, but the front hall door must open on the north side, when the street is as you say. Yes the kitchen, will be south of the house detached.

The material will be wood, mostly

hardly any brick except for chimneys & fire. Yes, we will have both gas & water laid on, & the brackets shall be from the side if my sweet heart says so.

You shall have the rooms painted as you like, & cupboards to your sweet, hearts content.

I have given the architect all the points you mention & asked him to respect your wishes.

That is a good idea of yours about the tin lined box. Have it made by all means, & I will get the Cupboards cedar lined if possible.

Mr Kimwood says Porquet floors are very expensive, but that very narrow flooring of this Florida pine, which is so easily polished is very much liked & Gussie was delighted with Geo Caltons which was done that way.

Lets leave the Gas stove question until later, I don't know much about them

except that the Negro^{2^o} has yet to be
done, who could use one intelligently.

In order to save trees, the house
will be too near the north side to
admit of terraces toward them, so it
must be on east side, which
we also think you will like better
for several reasons, one of which
the fine lake view.

We shall have verandahs
on three sides, but when we send
the drawing we shall make a long
list of minor, but important things
for you to decide, such as how
doors shall open, how many windows
& doors for each room &c &c

Gussie is tired now & sleepy too
so I must take her home. We are at
the office & it is after ten Saturday
night, so good night my love.
Sun. afternoon.

You must not be uneasy about
me coming back to Florida in
August. The all the year residents
here claim it the best month in

the year, although it's hot during the day, the nights are cool & one never fails to sleep from the heat.

You seem to dread the heat, I am quite sure you have a very mistaken idea about it, I am certain you will need warmer clothing than you think.

I am so glad to hear you speak so favorably of your health, it does me good to hear that you are perfectly well. As to my Carbuncle who told you about it? I was afraid to tell you for fear of making you attach too much importance to it. It is nearly well now & the Dr. says it's a very simple affair which will all go away as soon as he cures me of Catarrh which I he thinks is about done now & which I am quite sure would be, had I followed his instructions closely.

The Carbuncles have all gone I hope I have not had one for a long time now.

I have given Dresden Clara's letter & she was very pleased, & is to send an answer to it, in my next to you.

She sends her best love to you & wants so much to know you I think I told you she had asked me to bring you to see her, at her home in Virginia.

Nell Edgar, is also here now & wants so much to know you & says she knows she will like you. Did you know, that last winter she was continually telling me that she had rather so much I would marry you than Olive, & when it was app. she was perfectly delighted & often would say to me "now go on to England, to see Bee, you know perfectly well you have truly loved her all the time."

Have I answered all your questions? I am afraid not, but I hope my next which will accompany the sketch of the plan for the house, together with this will suffice. In my

last letter I was very blue about the
business, in fact I fear ^{the two last} ~~my~~ ~~last~~ but
I feel better now & begin to see my
way a little clearer. Still I don't think
I shall be at all satisfied with the
results of so much work, but I
have made up my mind not to
let this stop or interfere with any
of our plans not even our little
Continental trip.

Darling when I first read yours
of 25th July from Woking, I just thought
how much I would like to be there
with you, it would be so nice,
but now I am constantly thinking
of how much I shall enjoy you &
how happy I am going to be with you
& the time seems to go by so slowly,
just think of it, after waiting all
this time, it does seem long.
I have nearly 2 1/2 months before I see
you & nearly a month more before
I can call you my own.
Your picture of Elise seeing ~~the~~
off every morning, is certainly very

3
beautiful. When you saw that very
precious darling did you think of
me, but I ~~kindly~~ ^{do} hope you will love
me like that, your brother Arthur is a
man, so much more value, in every
way, & one to command the respect &c
of a true woman, so much more than
your ^{own} Arthur is. However, Beatrice
my sweetest, all the love you lack
for me, I will make up for you.

The report of your nose, being so
well is very pleasing to me, I did feel
so badly about your having to go off to
the W^{est} without me, when he was to
probably hurt you, I really did feel
like I wanted to bear the pain for you.

It was good of Mrs D to go with you
I think I must forgive her for all
her displeasure at me, for taking
you. I shall be very glad indeed
to know all of them.

I am not so busy now although

we have three packing houses at work
I think two weeks more will finish
us all up. so far as shipping goes
& then it will take about one
month, say the month of ~~October~~^{April} to
get all the settlements made & then
early in ~~May~~, I expect to be going
to Richmond. We are having more
time now to get in some tennis, had our
first game at the Greethaus last week
& will likely get several games next
week, besides Baumgardner, is
trying to arrange for a Picnic at
Mr Wilcox's place near here where
we will drive about three miles
out, have tea, tennis, bathing
walking "saying sweet nothings to the
girls." Here all the fellows but me,
you know I pay all my sweets
to you, although Harold will say
to Gussie that I need watching
when I am with ~~the~~ the girls,
but its a base slander, I am just
as good as can be, would not

Last page

Never kiss a girl, unless I get a chance.

We expect to have in our party,

Wm. Edgar, Frank Shepherd, Gessie

Wm. Starkey, Miss Lilla Dresden, & I hope

Miss Annie Wood, also Mrs. Cousins.

& Cartoo, Bourne, Baumgarten, Hayden

Bradshaw, & one or two more, beside

myself, who will be the chaperone

to keep that Giddy party in

order. Then a few days later, I

am going to get one up, to go to Polu

Springs, as we did last year.

How you would enjoy it & how

I would like to have you!

I am expecting your next letter

to give me news of my letter to Mrs.

Evans. I hope it will not be much

trouble, I certainly ought to love

& appreciate you, for you have

so much to stand for me, & that

by yourself. I appreciate it all my

love, & will prove it sure.

Good bye, with a heart full of love

Your own, & yours only

Arthur