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Goelet Family Papers

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8-6-1894

### Letter from John R. Johnson to John Yale

John R. Johnson

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Newport

P. I.

Aug 6<sup>th</sup> 94

M<sup>rs</sup> John Gale

Dear Sir

I am instructed by M<sup>rs</sup> J. H. Bowditch to send on the accompanying plans and specifications, of proposed greenhouses, which have met with his approval; for M<sup>rs</sup> Colets consideration. The range if erected complete will be one of the finest, if not the finest in the country.

While there may be larger ranges, yet, in point of equipment, embodying all the most modern improvements in construction, it would stand preeminently in the front rank.

The houses are so arranged and constructed, that almost anything of commercial or decorative value might be grown in them



and are abundantly able to provide for the decorating of the Newport mansion and grounds with plants and flowers, in the season, and likewise to furnish elaborately the conservatory at the New York Residence, and the house itself with plants and flowers during the winter season. <sup>In</sup> The arrangement of the houses <sup>is</sup> <sup>probable</sup> the prospective requirements have been taken into consideration as well as present needs. As an instance the two greenhouses may be either utilized for the growing of a general line of greenhouse flowering plants, or they may be turned into convenient, and suitable houses for growing summer and winter flowering orchids, or again the small greenhouse might be used for forcing vegetables and fruit during winter and early spring. melons, tomatoes, strawberries

string beans, etc, The palm house would provide for the storing and growing of the plants used in outside and inside decoration, and it could be made an extremely pleasing feature by artistic arrangement, both during summer and winter. The show house as arranged for on the plan of Lord & Burnham Co would be very useful in winter besides giving a tone to the general appearance, in summer this could be used as an aquatic house, and for tropical rockwork.

The vinery as arranged would be capable of supplying grapes from June until Christmas. The peach and nectarines houses would supply peaches & nectarines as long <sup>as</sup> ~~as possible~~ their season lasts. The rose house divided as it is in two divisions would



provide for the successful growing of both summer and winter flowering roses. Or like the greenhouses could be used at once for other plants without any inconvenience or additional expense. The range would be capable if properly handled, of providing for the elaborate and artistic decoration, of the house and grounds, with plants and flowers, during the whole year, and for the raising of early vegetables and fruit. There are on the grounds at the present time quite a number of plants which it will be necessary to store during winter for instance the 20 *Laurus Nobilis* these are elegant plants, perfect in every respect, and not being

hardy, they must suffer terribly during winter without a suitable place to store them in. And other plants, which if some glass were built might be ~~saved~~ and propagated thus saving the need of purchasing every year. If Mr. Golet should not consider to build the range complete this fall, the houses shown on either plan and marked store, greenhouse, and propagating house would be the most useful, and with the potting shed would form the foundation for further addition. It would be cheaper though to build the whole range at once.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Lord & Burnham, and Mess<sup>rs</sup> Hitchings & Co the two most prominent horticultural builders



have submitted plans and specifications of the range, and its cost completed. Either of the firms do excellent work. as far as construction goes, the one is just as good as the other. It might be as well to point out to Mr Coelet that Lord & Burnhams plan gives considerable more area of glass at a less cost of \$890.<sup>00</sup>. The masonry estimate is correspondingly higher. but this is somewhat offset by their engaging to do all excavating of foundations and cellars and the removal entirely from of the place of all the surplus material excavated, which is in itself a very considerable item. This, with the extra mason work entailed consequent upon the increased area of glass would account for the extra cost. The figures on the mason

work are approximate. And the representatives of both firms stated that while the cost would not exceed their estimate it might possibly be lower if the matter was given out for competition.

I have sent on plans per U.S. X, trusting that you will be able to get them off by Wednesday's steamer. Enclosed please find Mr Bowditch's letter also specifications from Lord & Burnham and Hitchings and Co, with correspondence

Trusting every thing will reach you alright

I beg to remain

Yours Respectfully  
John P. Johnson

P.S.. There is only one fault with Lord & Burnhams plan otherwise it is an excellent plan and that



is they have made the peach house too high however they say they could arrange that by making the house one foot or so narrower and reducing it in height in proportion, thus preserving the same lines.

"Would you think it advisable to ask Mr. Boelet to cable providing he considers to accept either of the plans so as to save time"

J. R. Johnson