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Archivist—Miss M. Macdonald, M.A.

24th March, 1976.

*Dear Mr. [unclear]*

Alas and alack your letter has come a year too late for us.

Owing to the Capital Transfer Tax which has landed us in quite colossal financial problems, these Gardens which from well over forty years ago has had ~~large~~ parties going round them throughout the summer ~~weeks~~ <sup>land</sup> have now had to be closed because we have not got the staff to keep the Gardens going, as since Christmas we have had to dismiss all bar one gardener who is being kept on just to keep the weeds from encroaching on the House. So ~~all~~ the <sup>Christian</sup> ~~parties~~ for whom the Openings existed have had to take this place off their books.

As if to round it all off, and in complete harmony with that policy, the storm on the night of the 2nd January was devastating in these Gardens and you would hardly know them again; all the big important trees have gone including our lovely cedars, and the bare mess that they caused will not be cleared for some months yet.

Of course it is not merely the Gardens which are bearing

the brunt of this, the same position is happening not only on the Estate but as to the House, and we are now living in just one corner with a vastly reduced staff, and consequently a great reduction in heating expense, and furthermore there are having to be enormous Sales of the things in the House, although this will only be a fringe issue this year and the big Sales will be next year.

Of course you can come and see, but what you will see is dereliction and these beautiful Gardens made so very lovely by the contribution of Providence over the lie of the land with its different contours, added to by the dedication and ingenuity of past generations and by past Head Gardeners, and now it is all over and one only has photographs to remind one - the whole things fits like a glove.

Incidentally there is quite a bit of historical documentation as we are a MSS. Trust here, and anyhow at present this still goes on.

W S  
Hammou  
J. E. Evesham

Of course you can still come  
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