

File

November 18th, 1921.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Stapley-Byne,
Monte Esquinza, 6,
Madrid, Spain.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Byne:

Enclosed is a copy of a cablegram we sent you today at Mr. Hearst's request. He was in Mexico when he received my expurged copy of your first letter and wrote me as follows:

"I note that the letter from Mildred Stapley Byne says that a number of cornices from San Guessa Missions with carved pins, etc. have been sold, and the finest remaining one, the Casa Valle Santotio, has also been sold and awaits the end of the war to be taken down and boxed.

Inasmuch as this lady says that she and her husband have gone into the antique business, maybe she could trace this cornice and if found try to buy it for us. Also, please correspond with the lady and ask her to act as agent for us. We will want a tremendous lot of stuff for the big house, bath house, etc. and probably we could do much better from her than from the average antiquary."

Under the circumstances I had probably best tell you a little more of what he is doing here. So far we have received from him, to incorporate in the new buildings, some twelve or thirteen carloads of antiques. Brought from the ends of the earth and from prehistoric down to late Empire in period, the majority, however, being of Spanish origin.

They comprise vast quantities of tables, beds, armoires, secretares, all kinds of cabinets, polychrome church statuary, columns, door frames, carved doors in all stages of repair and disrepair, over-altars, reliquaries, lanterns, iron grille doors, window grilles, votive candlesticks, torcheres, all kinds of chairs in quantity, six or seven well heads (only one of these Spanish), marble and wood columns and door trims, a few good wooden carved ceilings, one very nice gilt and polychrome ceiling hexagonal in shape, one very fine rejere about 18' wide and 17' high, a marble sanctuary arch from the entrance to some choir, and pictures,--most of these of early type painted on wood, with a few good canvases; a number of Donatellos, lots of Della Robbias. I don't see myself where we are ever going to use

(over)

half suitably, but I find that the idea is to try things out and if they are not satisfactory, discard them for the next thing that comes that promises better. There is interest and charm coming gradually into play.

I did not show Mr. Hearst your second letter in regard to the collection, or say anything to him about it, as I thought it would be much better -- as he likes to take things up personally -- to let you write yourself and tell him that you had received our cable in regard to the frieze and ceilings, and that you just happened to have at this time this unusual collection, which you were offering to the Metropolitan Museum and which he might be interested in. I doubt very much, knowing the very large sums that have gone into the things already bought, his wanting to take the collection as a whole; but one never can tell and he may have other uses for it which he has not spoken to me of -- in New York or elsewhere. In any case I think you will find you will have a very appreciative and interested client. He has been so thoroughly the victim of some of his dealers that he will, on his side, greatly appreciate real knowledge and fair treatment.

The sketch and photograph of the Sanguesa cornice finally arrived and am very much obliged to you for it. The collection of photographs which Mr. Byne wrote had been mailed have not yet been received.

Sincerely yours,

JM-L

III/04/08/02