

*File
Hearst*

May 7, 1920.

Mr. William Randolph Hearst,
137 Riverside Drive,
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Hearst:

Mr. Minott reports tonight that your car is now in Arizona and that there are prospects of its reaching San Luis Obispo next week. As soon as it arrives I will go down and play my imagination upon the material you have sent.

I have just returned from San Simeon, where things are very busy. The houses are up enough to see that they will look from below just as suggested on the small group sketch, and believe they will not disappoint on this score. The courts cannot be dug out until the heavy work is finished as it would hinder moving the trucks, mixers etc. I checked needed grades, tree locations etc., and will send you soon the results.

In house B the "Golden Stair" was limited in width and length by the fine oak which does not show on the plot plan. As a matter of fact it is exactly the width of the original stairway, but on account of the hillside falling away at the foot of the stair, the effect is not altogether satisfactory, so I have taken the liberty of altering the landing at the bottom, extending the platform and widening it. I tried it out on the spot and it accomplished the needed correction.

House C, as you know, has no brackets on the cornice, but the frieze is divided by small stone shields separating the polychrome tile panels, and the soffit has a decoration slightly Moorish in design with "drops" opposite the center of each panel. The first of the tile is out of the kiln and is brilliant in quality. The plant is a tiny one and only a small number of panels can be made in a week.

For Houses A and B you approved stone brackets and suggested there be on these figures of some good types. One of the office men, down last week inspecting, was to have photographed for you the models now cast. One has a little figure with head looking down

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figures with heads looking out. Unfortunately a heavy fog made photographing impossible,- neither could I get them yesterday,- so left the films with orders to snap them as soon as possible for you. The question is, whether to keep the brackets looking down for the higher sides of A and B and use only the ones "looking out" for the court sides, or to mix the two or three brackets all around both houses.

Sunday I will finish and mail you a suggestion for the walls of the hall of house A using for a frieze a portion of one of the exterior castings repeated into a running frieze. In the rough textured travertine it strikes me as a possibly very effective treatment at small expense. It seems to me that the hall is too narrow to use columns on the hall side of the sitting room entrance, but I hope some of those in your shipment will be just right for the sitting room side.

As a temporary expedient, have ordered electric water heaters installed in the basement space of each house and temporary overhead connections to the electric pole, also temporary connections to the present water supply line. The whole question of adequate water and light service will have to be gone into and planned to cover the needs of the completed mountain top as you see it. For the present it was not practical to use the type of tank - less outfits - Mr. Willicombe forwarded the cuts of, as they positively would not work with the present small water line from the reservoir.

There are about seventy men in the camp now, and a pump is used on the line as a temporary expedient.

Yours very truly,