

December 31, 1919.

Dear Miss Morgan:

I have just received the location sketches of the houses and am very much delighted with them. There are two sketches, the one with the round tiled tops to the towers-- which we can call Sketch X-- and the other one with the pointed tops to the towers-- which we can call Sketch Y.

I like the appearance of my little cottage in Sketch X the better, where the gabled roof faces the bay; and this is in accordance with the plans, as I understand it.

In the other sketch-- called Y-- the roof slants towards the bay and the gables are on the side. I do not like this as much.

I suppose the details, however, of these cottages are not meant to be exact but are simply to give an impression with relation to their location.

I would judge that we have placed them almost exactly right. They are certainly exceedingly pretty from the point of view that the sketch is made from; and I think they will be thoroughly satisfactory from the hill-top and from the terrace of the main building.

The cottages are twelve feet below this terrace, and will be sixteen or seventeen feet below the eye-line of anyone standing on the terrace.

I think this is the very lowest point at which they could be placed, and if they were lower they would entirely lose all architectural effect from the hill-top. Indeed, as I figure, the middle cottage--C-- will not appear in the picture from the terrace at all, unless merely a glimpse of the red roof.

I think the cottages when decorated are going to be very attractive and we will not be at all reluctant to have them seen.

I suppose that the question of location being now settled, the question of detail ornamentation should be taken up.

I have thought a great deal over whether to make this whole group of buildings Baroc, in the Eighteenth Century style, or Renaissance.

It is quite a problem. I started out with the Baroc idea in mind, as nearly all the Spanish architecture in America is of that character; and the plaster surfaces that we associate

all Spanish architecture in California with are a modification of that style, as I understand it.

If we should decide on this style, I would at least want to depart from the very crude and rude examples of it that we have in our early California Spanish architecture.

The Mission at Santa Barbara is doubtless the highest example of this California architecture, and yet it is very bare and almost clumsy to my mind.

The best things that I have seen in this Spanish Baroc are at the San Diego Exposition, and if this is to be the style on which this group of buildings is to be built, I would advise sending photographers and architectural draughtsmen down to the San Diego Exposition to get pictures and drawings of exteriors and interiors and of details, so as to have a lot of stuff at our disposal and for our guidance.

I understand that the San Diego Exposition stuff is largely reproductions from the best examples in Mexico and South America, and that we could not go to a better source to get the most agreeable specimens of this style.

This style at its best is sufficiently satisfactory, though in our early California architecture it seems to me too primitive, and in many of the examples I have seen in Mexico so elaborate as to be objectionable.

Between these two extremes, however, there are good examples and I think the San Diego Exposition affords the best.

I would like you to see also, if you care to, a picture called SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE by Allan Dwan, which is largely taken at the San Diego Exposition and which gives some glimpses of it, particularly the church building with the tiled tower and the blue tiled dome, which are very attractive.

The alternative is to build this group of buildings in the Renaissance style of Southern Spain. We picked out the towers of the Church of Ronda. I suppose they are Renaissance or else transitional, and they have some Gothic feeling; but a Renaissance decoration, particularly that of the very southern part of Spain, would harmonize well with them.

The Renaissance of Northern Spain seems to me very hard, while the Renaissance of Southern Spain is much softer and more graceful.

We get very beautiful decoration both for the central building and for the cottages out of this Southern Spain Renaissance style, and I think that would, in the main, be the best period for interior decoration.

The trouble would be, I suppose, that it has no historic association with California, or rather with the Spanish architecture in California.

I would very much like to have your views on what we should do in regard to this group of buildings, what style of architecture we should select. I think the Renaissance decoration can be adapted to the smooth plaster surfaces. I think it is so in the Church of Ronda and in certain cities in the South of Spain and in the Balaeric Islands. They call it pateresque. Do they not? I am not very sure about my architecture.

I will telegraph Stanton to see what he can get in the way of pictures and details of the San Diego Exposition; and I have sent you many pictures, although you probably have better in your library, of the things that appeal to me in the Renaissance style.

In writing me your opinion, can you give me some sketches to make the matter clear?

I am disposed to like the Renaissance the better, and I think that you have indicated in the sketches that you sent me, a disposition to adopt the Moorish cornice and the tiled frieze, and a general Renaissance treatment. To my mind the effect is very good indeed.

I think, too, the pointed towers are much better than the rounded ones, and that if we wanted to get tiled towers we should get much taller and more effective ones, something like the ones shown in the moving picture I referred you to, instead of coming so closely to the mission at Santa Barbara.

I think the bells in the pointed towers are very interesting and would be a noted feature of this architectural group. But after all, would it not be better to do something a little different than other people are doing out in California as long as we do not do anything incongruous?

Therefore, as you see, I am inclined to a pretty harmonious Renaissance treatment all through for the main building and the cottages as well; but as I said in my telegram, I do not want you to do anything you do not like.

Now, as regards some things that I have an opportunity to buy:

There is a big grill door that I mentioned in a former note, about ten feet high. Would that be a good thing either for the outer door to the main entrance or for the inner door of the lobby entering into the assembly room?

And the window grills or rejas-- shall I buy these three old ones or would we better make our own and have them just the size and style that we want? Is there anything particular that you would like me to hunt for in old material?

JW

Sincerely yours,

J. V. R. Hearst