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Archives of American Art

Jacques Seligmann & Co. records, General Correspondence: Ford, Edsel B., 1924-1940

Extracted on Sep-28-2022 08:16:33

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GS

RS:KP

December 5th, 1934.

Dear Mrs. Ford,

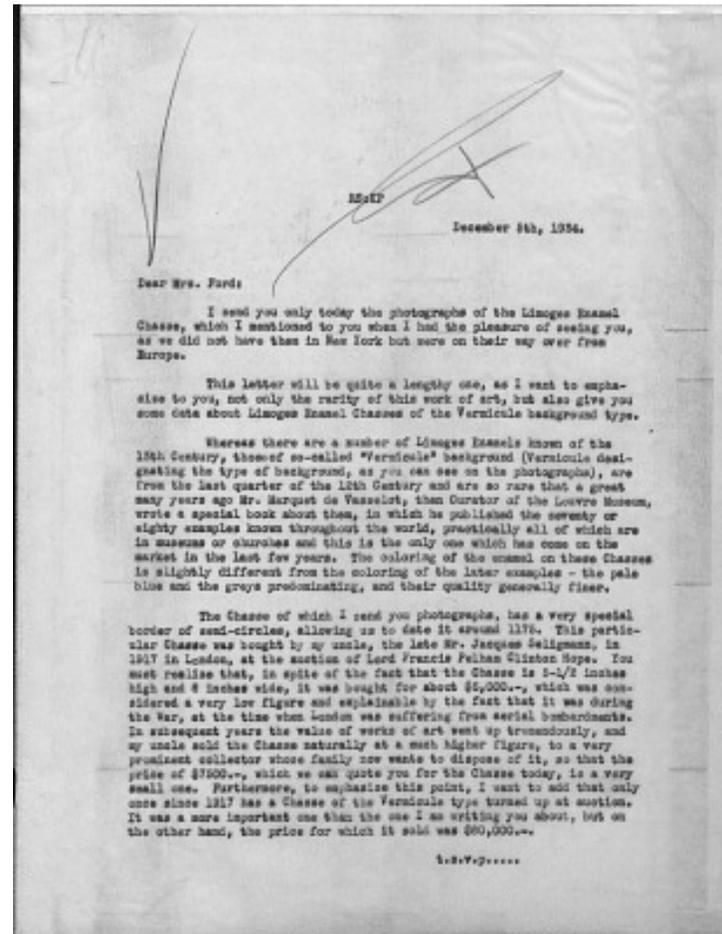
I send you only today the photographs of the Limoges Enamel Chasse, which I mentioned to you when I had the pleasure of seeing you, as we did not have them in New York but were on their way over from Europe.

This letter will be quite a lengthy one, as I want to emphasize to you, not only the rarity of this work of art, but also give you some data about Limoges Enamel Chasses of the Vermicule background type.

Whereas there are a number of Limoges Enamels known of the 15th Century, those of so-called "Vermicule" background (Vermicule designating the type of background, as you can see on the photographs), are from the last quarter of the 12th century and are so rare that a great many years ago Mr. Marquet de Vasselot, then Curator of the Louvre Museum, wrote a special book about them, in which he published the seventy or eighty examples known throughout the world, practically all of which are in museums or churches and this is the only one which has come on the market in the last few years. The coloring of the enamel on the Chasses is slightly different from the coloring of the later examples - the pale blue and the greys predominating, and their quality generally finer.

The Chasse of which I send you photographs, has a very special border of semi-circles, allowing us to date it around 1175. This particular Chasse was bought by my uncle, the late Mr. Jacques Seligmann, in 1917 in London, at the auction of Lord Francis Pelham Clinton Hope. You must realize that, in spite of the fact that the Chasse is 5-1/2 inches high and 6 inches wide, it was bought for about \$5,000.-, which was considered a very low figure and explainable by the fact that it was during the War, at the time when London was suffering from aerial bombardments. In subsequent years the value of works of art went up tremendously, and my uncle sold the Chasse naturally at a much higher figure, to a very prominent collector whose family now wants to dispose of it, so that the price of \$7500.-, which we can quote you for the Chasse today, is a very small one. Furthermore, to emphasize this point, I want to add that only once since 1917 has a Chasse of the Vermicule type turned up at auction. It was a more important one than the one I am writing you about, but on the other hand, the price for which it sold was \$60,000.-.

t.s.v.p.....



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