

**SMUGGLING CHARGE
BARES ANGELO GEM**

Incoming Art Treasure Reputed to Have Belonged to Russian Duke

Dates Are Mixed, But Otherwise Picture Causes Stir. Statesbury May Purchase

Special to The Inquirer.
NEW YORK, Jan. 29.—Considerable excitement prevailed on the French Line pier today following the arrival, one day late because of stormy weather, of La Savoie, from Havre, when Deputy Surveyor John O'Connor heard from what he considered a good authority that one of the liner's passengers was attempting to smuggle a painting of the Madonna and Child by Michael Angelo, the Italian master. Investigation disclosed that Dimitri Nimidoff, a tourist agent, formerly employed by the French Line, had confided a brief case to the care of a matron on the pier and had not declared the contents of the case. The receptacle was seized and opened. In it was a painting of the Virgin and Child about a foot square. Nimidoff disclaimed intentions of trying to smuggle it. He said it was a work of art more than 100 years old and entitled to entry free of duty.

Plans Offer to Statesbury
He got it, he said, from a Grand Duke of the Romanoff family whom he met in Paris, but neglected to tell in what cafe the Duke is employed. Nimidoff said he was going to exhibit the picture at the Waldorf-Astoria and show it to E. T. Statesbury, of Philadelphia, and a New York banker named Clark and sell it to one of them for \$300,000.

Deputy Surveyor O'Connor, who has a reputation along the waterfront as an art connoisseur, identified the picture as a genuine Michael Angelo, seized it and sent it to the Property Division for valuation. The only thing that appeared to be wrong with the picture in the judgment of observers who are not connoisseurs, is that it bears the date 1600 whereas Michael Angelo died in 1564; however, that is a mere detail.

Different From Others
The "Madonna and Child" seemed to differ from the majestic mural paintings of Michael Angelo and to show characteristics of that school of Italian painting which followed Giulio Romano, a disciple of Raphael, and removed from the period of Buona Rotoli by almost a hundred years. The Madonna is in the exaggerated Italian style of the period that marked the end of the Renaissance.

When the alleged Michael Angelo had been seized, Nimidoff voluntarily surrendered another small painting, oval in shape, said by Nimidoff to be a Velasquez.

La Savoie had a rough passage, especially from Wednesday to Saturday of last week. During the Saturday evening concert Maurice Dumensil, the eminent Paris physician, was held in his seat by three stewards while he played the piano and Lola Rieder, a singer, in the middle of a selection, was thrown across the saloon by the force of a wave which struck the ship. The same wave was the cause of L. H. Price, a Philadelphia architect, coming ashore with a black eye arising from a collision with a stanchion.

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