

# SAN MARTIÑO DE BARCIA DE MERA

18th CENTURY

## ABACIAL MANOR HOUSE



Built Circa 1740 by the abbot, Dr. Alberto Barreyro y Bello, successor of his uncle, Dr. Alberto Bello Barreyro, one of the promoters of the Church of San Martiño. This stately house fell victim to a fire in 1890, which possibly explains the loss of the finance record book of this building, completed in 1752.

The mansion house includes other secondary buildings within an important agricultural exploitation at the service of the residents: mill, oven, wine press and blacksmith's shop.

There are also defensive measures in place against thieves, such as the arrow slits on both sides of the cellar doorways or the stone sentry box with a circular floor plan and a viewpoint, located in the corner of the north façade.

The interior of the manor house has a beautiful courtyard from which the interior rooms can be accessed through four different doors, one of them by means of a beautiful small terrace.

It is, without a doubt, one of the most beautiful facades of the Galician Baroque style.



### Holding the earth

Atlas or Atlantes is a character from classical mythology that appears carrying the terrestrial sphere. In Titanomachy, Atlas was the leader of the Titans, who were defeated by the Olympian gods. As punishment, Zeus condemned him to hold the sky above his coasts, represented by the terrestrial sphere.

This example by Barcia de Mera does not appear naked, as is the case of the mythological one, but dressed in a male bourgeois costume typical of the 18th century: a hunting jacket with turned-up cuffs and a pair of tails, a buttoned waistcoat with side pockets, etc.

The promoter's intention was probably to perpetuate the supreme effort that the residents of Barcia de Mera had to endure in order to build the Abacial mansion house and the parish church, which make up an extraordinary monumental ensemble.

The abbot's coat of arms has a mitre with orders of tassels. In the centre there is a coat of arms with five eight-pointed stars

Birds designed as gargoyles, with open beaks, crowned heads and wings half unfurled

A large festoon decorated with four rhombus flanked by two fleurons is located just above the pilasters

The pilasters are supported by a double spiral on each side, the front of which is decorated with ball flowers

Four pinnacles of great height, ending in pinecones, are designed with seven rings of diverse decoration

The cornice has a high, poly-moulded cornice, above which rises a split pediment

The door jamb is profusely moulded, with double lappets at the top and bottom

The shaft of the pilasters has a vertical festoon with a moulded central core

The keystone is shaped like a large flower and is surmounted by a lily. In the centre of the keystone is a scallop shell

