County Louth Archaeological and History Society

Drogheda and Boyne Pictures

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Drogheda and Boyne Pictures.

T ACQUIRED these two remarkable pictures at the sale of Colonel George Hamilton Johnstone's magnificent collection of pictures and antiques at Kilmore Abbey, County Armagh, which took place on the 16th June, 1920. Their size is about 40 inches square. They are painted on slate—a rare and unusual thing. The upper corners are circular, and they are framed in heavy carved wood and plaster gilt frames. They are evidently constructed to be placed on brackets or shelves, and not suspended on account of their great weight.

Colonel Johnstone told me he knew very little of their origin. He purchased them from Reddy, a Dublin dealer, many years ago. The paintings have considerable merit as works of art, but more as historical representations, especially the Drogheda one, of scenes now much altered. This latter picture is taken from the south side of the river Boyne looking west, and clearly made before the construction of the Railway Viaduct. The figures, etc., appear to give about a ninety or one hundred years old appearance to the pictures.

The other picture is a fine representation of the Boyne and Slane Castle, one of the most beautiful vistas on that picturesque river.

In the Rev. J. B. Leslie's *Armagh Clergy* there is a reference (p. 249) to a 1710 picture of Drogheda let into a panel in the hall of Beaulieu House, where it is stated that St. Peter's church seems to be in ruins. This church was rebuilt in 1748 in the style shown in the present picture.

Dr. Bradley of Drogheda tells me that he believes these two pictures were originally panels in the Saloon of the first Drogheda paddle steamer, the *Colleen Bawn*, which was eventually sold in Glasgow to be broken up. Some one in Drogheda bought them and brought them to Drogheda where they were again offered for sale about 1900. This may have been the time the Dublin dealer acquired them. The Drogheda buyer believed they are painted by a man named Anderson.

I trust the reproductions of these pictures may bring a fuller light on their origin and also upon the artist who painted them.

It is my intention to present these pictures to the Town of Drogheda when it has a suitable and proper place to care them, meantime I am placing them in trust of the Louth Archæological Society, to be kept at Dundelgan in trust for the Mayor and Corporation of Drogheda. My main object in acquiring these pictures was to prevent their passing into alien hands or being taken out of our country altogether, as their proper home is on the banks of the Boyne.

FRANCIS JOSEPH BIGGER.

SLANE CASTLE AND THE BOYNE.

(From the originals in the possession of Francis Joseph Bigler, Helfaut.)

DROGHEDA.

(From the originals in the possession of Francis Joseph Bigger, Belfast.)