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Bernard Hall,

Melbourne

s/suite

PUBLIC LIBRARY, MUSEUMS, AND NATIONAL GALLERY
OF VICTORIA.



L. L. B.

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Melbourne, C. L. 2nd. September, 1923.

Dear Sir,

The Trustees of the National Gallery of Victoria have acquired an oil painting, "The Descent from the Cross", by an unknown artist whom they are desirous of identifying, if possible. The picture was purchased locally from the estate of a gentleman who had acquired by 1850 an extensive collection of works by old masters, especially of the Dutch and Flemish schools. I am enclosing a full description of the picture, and also a photograph.

If you could assist in any way towards identifying the painter the Trustees would be very grateful. I may mention that I am also invoking the assistance of the Directors of the Antwerp Royal Museum and the London National Gallery.

Yours faithfully,

L. Bernard Hall

Enc.

DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY
OF VICTORIA.

The Director,
The Royal Museum of Fine Arts,
Rue de la Régence,
Brussels,
BELGIUM.

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS.

This picture, which has just been purchased for the National Art Gallery (Melbourne) was, we believe, brought to Victoria in 1846, and has been in the same hands until now.

It is painted on panel, 3 feet 4 inches by 2 feet 4 inches, and looks as though it may have been the centrepiece of a triptych. The back of the panel has been planed down (opening up a few worn holes) to about a quarter of an inch, and then very skillfully laid upon a frame-work of small battens. It is, apparently, on two or three panels joined; but the frame-work covers up the joins at the back. It is in very good condition - slightly yellow from oil or varnish, and with a few small cracks and blisters, which are visible in the photograph.

The detail is wonderfully managed in the jewellery and metal work, of which there is a good deal. The hands and feet are the poorest parts of it. The brocade of St. Joseph of Arimathea is a marvellous rendering of pattern and texture. The landscape is given in great detail, even in the distance. The right hand corner has a representation, usual to XV century pictures, of the holy sepulchre with figures.

Of its history or provenance we know nothing. The dress of the kneeling female figure in the foreground is pale green shot with crimson with highlights.

Melbourne, C.I. 2nd September 1931.

L.L.B.

I85

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Yours faithfully.

(s) L. Bernard Hall

Director of the National Gallery of Victoria

The Director
The Royal Museum of Fine Arts,
rue de la Régence,

Brussels
Belgium.

C O P I E.

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