

Daniel Katz Gallery

ANTIQUITY TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY



Algernon Cecil Newton (London 1880 - 1968)

Bamburgh Castle, Northumberland

Circa: 1930

Oil on canvas

60 x 90 cm (23 ⁵/₁₆ x 35 ³/₁₆ inches)

1930

Signed and dated at the lower right Algernon Newton '30

A painter of urban scenes and landscapes, Algernon Newton was born in Hampstead, London. He studied at the London School of Art, Kensington and his first one-man show was held at the Leicester Galleries in 1931. Newton began to exhibit regularly at the Royal Academy summer shows in 1923 and he continued to send paintings there for several decades. He once wrote: 'There is beauty to be found in everything, you only have to search for it; a gasometer can make as beautiful a picture as a palace on the Grand Canal, Venice. It simply depends on the artist's vision.' He has worked in Cornwall and in Yorkshire as well as London.

In the 1930s, Shell Mex and BP Ltd commissioned some of Britain's best artists to depict famous sites around the country for their See Britain First on Shell series. Newton, Graham Sutherland and Paul Nash among others portrayed tourists landmarks such as Stonehenge and the town square at Lavenham. This poster campaign is a significant record of how tourism in the British countryside changed as a result of the automobile. Colour lithographs after Newton's painting of Bamburgh Castle were issued in 1931, with the inscription 'SEE BRITAIN FIRST ON SHELL' (Victoria and Albert Museum, London).

Bamburgh castle stands on a basalt outcrop on the edge of the North Sea at Bamburgh, Northumberland. First referred to in 547, Bamburgh castle was rebuilt by the Normans and was an important English outpost. During the War of the Roses in 1464 the castle was destroyed by artillery but restored by subsequent owners including the Bishop of Durham and Victorian industrialist William Armstrong. It is still home to the Armstrong family today.

The Shell BP employee who was gifted the painting in the 1950s had worked for the company for over 40 years.

Provenance

Provenance:

Commissioned for the headquarters of Shell Mex and BP at Shell Mex House, The Strand, London

Gifted to a worker in the 1950s

By descent