



HAWTHORNE Fine Art

ABIGAIL TYLER OAKES (1823-1898)

View of the Connecticut River Valley, 1854

Oil on canvas

17 ¾ x 24 inches

Signed and dated, lower center

Though few details of her early life are available, it is known that Abigail Tyler Oakes moved to New York City from Charlestown, Massachusetts in her early twenties, where she married and began a family. Throughout her life Oakes resided alternatively in Boston and New York, traveling abroad intermittently to London, England and Havre, France, where she may have pursued artistic training. Oakes exhibited during her lifetime at the National Academy of Design and at the Brooklyn Art Association, where she was also a member.

Though her level of artistic training is unclear, Oakes' *View of the Connecticut River Valley* implies the deep influence of her Hudson River School predecessors and contemporaries. Using deceptively simple compositional devices, the scene allows for a variety of depth and visual diversity, with the foreground characterized by extreme detail and the furthest reaches articulated in atmospheric effects. In the foreground a small group of grazing cattle are flanked by lush vegetation, and mountain peaks break through in the distance to command and direct the viewer's eye over the hint of a city along a winding river bank. Though her works are rare, Oakes' skill is wholly condensed, making her paintings weighty in their representation of her skill with the brush.