



HAWTHORNE
Fine Art

ELIZABETH H. REMINGTON (1826/7-1917) Hudson

Valley Landscape

Oil on canvas

20 x 30 inches

Signed lower right and Inscribed, NY

Elizabeth H. Remington, a native of New York City, was born on May 24, 1826/7 to Dr. David R. Remington and Esther Rutgers Low. Her father was the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Rye, New York. As an active member of the Buffalo Genealogical Society and the Buffalo Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Remington had a strong interest in genealogy. She compiled and traced her family history back to arrival of her ancestors, John and Elizabeth Remington, in America with their two children around 1635-37. Her grandmother, Experience Granger (wife of Shadrach Remington), was the daughter of Experience King and Abner Granger, who was a prominent lieutenant, serving in many battles during the American Revolutionary War.¹

After receiving a progressive education at Miss Sarah Porter's School, in Farmington, Connecticut, Remington moved back to New York City and studied art at the American Academy of Design, and at the schools of the National Academy of Design and Cooper Institute. In addition to her formal art education, Remington also studied privately under several prominent artists who were also members of the National Academy of Design during the 1860s. She received training in landscape painting under William Holbrook Beard and Alexander Helwig Wyant, and studied figural compositions under John Whetton Ehninger and William Moran.



Elizabeth H. Remington (1826/27–1917), *The Two Kings: Corn and Cotton*, 1876. Oil on canvas, 36 x 26 1/4 inches. Collection of the Rockwell Museum, Corning, NY.



Elizabeth H. Remington (1826/27–1917), *Still Life with Red Poppies and White Daisies*, undated. Oil on paper, 25 3/4 x 15 1/4 inches. Private collection.²

¹ Biographical information from the following sources:

“Elizabeth Remington,” *askART*, accessed Aug. 26, 2017, http://www.askart.com/artist/Elizabeth_H_Remington/129632/Elizabeth_H_Remington.aspx#.

Daughters of the American Revolution, *Lineage Book of the Charter Members of the Daughters of the American Revolution*, vol. 50, p. 260.

² Sold in *Everything but the House* online auction on August 22, 2016.



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After traveling through Europe, Remington eventually opened her own studio on Fourth Avenue near Twenty-Third Street in New York City. Here, she taught painting and gained notoriety for her work in pastels, exhibiting widely and earning numerous medals in the United States and abroad. Remington is most known today for her floral still life subjects, of which *Still Life with Red Poppies and White Daisies* is representative of her style. Notably, Remington produced the work entitled *The Two Kings: Corn and Cotton*, for the 1876 World's Fair in Philadelphia. Going beyond a formal visual study of plant life, Remington's subject holds deeper meaning, as it illustrates the vital crops of the north and south in the United States, and symbolizes a unified country after a devastating Civil War.³ Remington also designed textile fabrics, for which she won several prizes, along with the commission for the tapestry design used in the first train that traveled on the Union Pacific Railroad. For a period in the 1870s, Remington lived in a small cottage with her mother in Niagara, New York, close to the siblings of the famed Hudson River School artist, Albert Bierstadt. The Bierstadt home has been described as a "veritable art gallery,"⁴ filled with the originals of some of the artist's finest paintings, which Remington undoubtedly had studied carefully upon her visits to the home.

Remington was the Corresponding Secretary of the Ladies Art Association of New York City and remained an active and vocal participant in the New York City art world well into her 80s, as evidenced by her 1915 letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, in which she criticizes the Impressionists for "not tak[ing] the time to master the technical part of their work" and for "putting too much stress on beauty, which often degenerates into mere prettiness." Believing the influence of the Impressionists to be "passing" and "negligible," Remington believed that real beauty in art is found through "fidelity and truth."⁴

Remington never married, and died at the age of 91 at the home of her grand nephew, James F. Nuno, in Flushing, Queens, New York.

There is no doubt a marked influence of Hudson River School realism in the subject matter and execution of *Hudson Valley Landscape*. With a practiced hand, Remington illustrates an upstate New York landscape that recalls the idyllic scenes of her Hudson River School contemporaries. In composition, narrative suggestion, and treatment of light effects, Remington's *Hudson Valley Landscape* recalls similar scenes by contemporaries Asher B. Durand and John Frederick Kensett, particularly those executed in the mid-1860s.

³ "Acquisitions of the Month: June 2015," *Apollo Magazine*, July 1, 2015. Accessed August 28, 2017, <https://www.apollo-magazine.com/acquisitions-of-the-month-june-2015/>. ⁴ "Artists at Niagara," *St. Louis Dispatch*, August 27, 1875.

⁴ Elizabeth Remington, "The War's Effect on Art: We Shall See Beneath the Surface and Have a Better Sense of Values," *New York Times*, Oct. 6, 1915.



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Asher Brown Durand (1796–1886), *Summer Afternoon*, 1865. Oil on canvas, 22 1/2 x 35 inches. Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



John Frederick Kensett (1816-1872), *On the Thames, Near Windsor*, 1868. Oil on canvas, 22 x 34 inches. Collection of the Maryland State Archives, Annapolis.

Durand's *Summer Afternoon* and Kensett's *On the Thames* not only reflect similarities with Remington's *Hudson Valley Landscape* in tonality, subject matter, and composition, but they are also of comparable size to Remington's canvas. In the foreground of Remington's composition, the glassy surface of the water gives way to a plush field of grass and pasture, where a group of cows grazes lazily in the sun. At the bend in the river, partially shaded by the cool branches of a tree, a lone fisherman casts a rod into the still waters, while in the distance the smoke billowing out of a farm building implies chore work being done elsewhere. In its simultaneous realism and evocation of idyllic wistfulness, Remington's *Hudson Valley Landscape* suggests an artistic career much richer than the historical record currently suggests.