



HAWTHORNE
Fine Art

ALBERT FITCH BELLOWS (1829-1883)

Pair:

Returning from the Mill

&

Pet Lamb, 1859

Oil on canvas attached to board

10 x 8 inches

Signed lower left

Signed and dated 1859, lower left

Albert Fitch Bellows was born in Milford, Massachusetts in 1829 to an old New England Family. Best known as New England's preeminent watercolor artist, he also produced landscapes and genre scenes painted in oil. During his twenties, he studied architecture and later became principal of the New England School of Design in Boston from 1850 to 1856 before traveling to Europe. Bellows went to France, England and Belgium, where he entered the Royal Academy of Antwerp and became an honorary member of the Royal Society of Painters of Belgium. Upon his return to America in 1858, Bellows settled in New York City and was soon elected as Associate of the National Academy of Design, before becoming a full Academician in 1861. Bellows rented space in the Studio Building, where he would have been surrounded by the studios of many notable Hudson River School artists. While in New York, he taught at the Cooper Union, and also began etching, eventually joining the New York Etching Club, the Philadelphia Society of Etchers and the esteemed Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers in London. As he turned more toward etching and watercolor in his later years, Bellows kept two studios – one for oil and one for watercolor. In 1868, he wrote an influential treatise, *Water Color Painting: Some Facts and Authorities in Relation to its Durability*, helped to found the American Watercolor Society, and became an honorary member of the Royal Belgian Society of Water-Colorists. Bellows lived in Boston for a period, until a fire destroyed his studio in 1872, prompting his return to New York City. He died in Auburndale, Massachusetts in 1883.¹

¹“Albert Fitch Bellows,” *askART*, accessed Sep. 14, 2017, http://www.askart.com/artist_bio/Albert_Fitch_Bellows/21042/Albert_Fitch_Bellows.aspx.



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During his lifetime, Bellows exhibited at the National Academy of Design, Brooklyn Art Association, Boston Athenaeum, Boston Art Club, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia (1876), and the Paris Universal Exposition (1878). His works are now included in several prominent museum collections, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Brooklyn Art Museum, Cleveland Museum of Art and the New York Historical Society.²

Though best known as a watercolorist, Bellows' early idyllic rural genre scenes executed in oil were quite popular. This pair reflects his skill for incorporating figures and human activities into his pastoral landscapes. In *Pet Lamb*, a young woman and child have just left their home, which is nestled in a clearing in the distance. They pause to feed their pet lamb before a traversing a small wooden bridge spanning a small stream. *Returning from the Mill*, depicts a loaded red wagon atop a bridge, presumably preparing to leave the nearby watermill. The rush of water that turns the mill gives a sense of movement to an otherwise passive scene. The warm colors of the landscape situate the setting as early fall. Bellows' expertise is shown through his skillful paint handling in the reflections on the water and his delicate depiction of trees and foliage. Bellows' prominent depiction of people in many of his landscapes distinguishes him from other Hudson River School artists.

² Ibid.