

JOHN BENNETT fine paintings

Fallow deer bucks; Red deer stag

Sold



REF: 365904

Height: 16.002 cm (6.3")

Width: 23.622 cm (9.3")

Framed Height: 34.29 cm (13.5")

Framed Width: 41.91 cm (16.5")

Description

SAMUEL HOWITT circa 1765 – 1822 English School Fallow deer bucks; Red deer stag Oil on card laid on panel, signed, a pair 6.3 x 9.3 cms 21/2 x 35/8 ins Overall framed size 13.5 x 16.5 cms 5¼ x 6½ ins

Samuel Howitt was born in 1756, probably at Staining, the fifth of six children. They were an old Nottinghamshire family who were squires at Chigwell in Essex and financially well off for several generations. His family were Quakers and he was reputed to have an adventurous spirit and light-hearted character and enthusiastically took part in many sporting activities and entertained well, basically living on the inherited family fortune.

He sketched mainly for pleasure and, although he moved in artistic circles, he had no formal training even though some of his friends were eminent artists, including George Morland, John Raphael Smith and Thomas Rowlandson. The last was his brother-in-law for he married Elizabeth Rowlandson in 1779 and they lived at Chigwell for some time. J C Wood writes of this friendship that "...he (Howitt) set up as drawing-master in London where he became a court card in Rowlandson's pack."

Eventually he ran out of money and had to move to London to find a job. He obtained the position of drawing master at Dr Goodenoughs Academy in Ealing through the help of his friend the renowned riding master, Henry Angelo. This association did not work out very well as Samuel Howitt frequently failed to appear to meet his commitments at the Academy and his employment ceased. He seems to have been unreliable also in his domestic affairs and his marriage to Elizabeth did not last long as his passion for fishing excursions proved too much for her to tolerate. However, it appears that their parting was comparatively amicable as he left her well provided for in his will when he eventually died in 1822 at Somerstown in London.

Like his friends Morland and Rowlandson, who were heavy drinkers and gamblers, he also had a tremendous artistic output despite his lifestyle. He is primarily known as a watercolourist and print maker but also worked in oils. He was an excellent etcher and his large number of sporting prints, many of which were in large sets, included the famous Ormes Collection

Howitt began exhibiting at the Incorporated Society of Artists in 1783 before graduating to the Society of Artists where he showed three works and the Royal Academy where he exhibited ten times up until 1815. He took inspiration for his depiction of animals by studying them at the Tower of London Menagerie enabling him to produce exotic subjects such as Lion and Leopard now in the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and Battle between a Tiger and a Buffalo. He was a predecessor of Henry Alken in the painting of sporting scenes and animals

Howitt also illustrated books, including The British Sportsman, 1799/1800 which contained 72 plates, Beckfords Thoughts on Hunting and a total of 157 plates for The Old Sporting Magazine. He supplied twenty engravings for Orme's Collection of British Field Sports of 1807 which mainly comprised plates of shooting o...