

"Little Foxes"

SAMUEL JOHN CARTER R.O.I.

Sold



REF: 366776

Height: 60.8 cm (23.9")

Width: 50.7 cm (20")

Framed Height: 86 cm (33.9")

Framed Width: 76 cm (29.9")

## Description

SAMUEL JOHN CARTER R.O.I. English School 1835-1892 "Little Foxes" Oil on canvas, signed and dated '73 60.8 x 50.7 cms 24 x 20 ins Overall framed size 86 x 76 cms 337/8 x 30 ins Exhibited Royal Academy 1874 no. 50

S J Carter's father was the gamekeeper and agent for the local squire Robert Hamond of the Manor House at Dunham near Swaffham, Norfolk and Samuel was born in the Keeper's Cottage in 1835. His talent for art was noticed by the eminent Norwich School painter John Sell Cotman who oversaw the Swaffham drawing school and at the age of ten, Samuel was awarded first prize. He is believed to have had further training in Norwich before then going on to the Royal Academy School in London.

He quickly established a name for himself in London, exhibiting his first picture at the Royal Academy, The Chase, as a twenty year old. He was living in Chelsea at this time and for the rest of his life sent paintings for the London exhibitions from addresses in King's Rd, Chelsea, Pimlico and Ecclestone Sq. and at 10 Rich Square in West Brompton where he remained until his death in 1892. However he evidently kept a close association with his home town of Swaffham as he owned a small cottage on the outskirts on the road leading to Sporle. Some of his eleven children were born there his sisters Catherine and Fanny looked after it while they lived in it. Carter and his family would visit for holiday which the artist would use as a base while he undertook commission work from the local gentry and landowners. He would depict their hunters and prized stock as well as pets and sometimes family groups. This address was used for exhibits between 1866 and 1868.

The house at 10 Rich Square, where he lived with his wife Martha Joyce who also came from Swaffham originally whom he had married in 1858, had a garden in which there was a menagerie of small animals which were kept in large pens. He would sit in the garden and study and sketch them to use in his paintings

His reputation was built mostly on his portrayal of animals which can display a Victorian sentimentality, something he shared with the renowned Sir Edwin Landseer and in fact, Carter is said to have worked in collaboration with Landseer on at least one occasion. Family tradition has it that their ancestor produced the original drawings for the lions that form the base of Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square. A particular feature of his paintings is the way he emphasised the softness and warmth that emanated from his subjects and W Shaw Sparrow, the eminent historian and critic of sporting paintings, said of his work that he "...marked a phase in the transition towards benevolence to animals". The landscapes in his paintings are well painted and noticeable in the way that lightness and depth are depicted which augments the pleasing nature of the composition and John Ruskin commented in a complimentary manner on two of his exhibits at the RA show in 1875: "Altogether enjoyable to me; and I am prepared to maintain (as a true lover of dogs young and old) ... that this picture is exemplary in its choice of a ...