



Mary B. Mellen

Title

Moonlight Fishing Scene (Halfway Rock)

Medium

Oil on canvas mounted on Masonite

Date

1854

Dimensions

18 x 26 3/16 in. (45.7 x 66.5 cm)

Accession number

80.3.19

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Credit Line

Gift of Amanda K. Berls, 1980

Web Description

For a long time, Mary Mellen was only known as a “copyist,” due to the fact that she painted versions of acclaimed artist Fitz Henry Lane’s marine paintings. She and Lane worked side-by-side, with styles so similar that it is difficult to tell the work of one artist from the other. Mellen improved her skills in this informal apprenticeship with Lane. In this painting, the moonlight seen through the parting clouds illuminates Halfway Rock in Maine’s Casco Bay and its lighthouse, which is curiously dark. The scene appears particularly dangerous as a fishing boat is precariously close to the rocky ledge.