



Andrew Wyeth, James Loper

Title

James Loper

Medium

Tempera on Masonite panel

Date

1952

Dimensions

44 × 21 1/2 in. (111.8 × 54.6 cm)

Catalogue Number

71.5.2

Copyright

© 2024 Wyeth Foundation for American Art / Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY

Credit Line

Gift of Harry G. Haskell, Jr., 1971

Web Description

Andrew Wyeth did not hire models, but preferred to paint people he knew. His ability to capture a person's character is evident in this painting of James Loper. Wyeth commented, "He's one of the people I grew up with in Chadds Ford. His belt was a horse's harness, and his shoes were cut out to get air. Here he is with that scythe,

staring off into the distance...." The subject, with his head sinking into his shoulders and eyes turned upward, is defined by his stance and facial expression. A sharp scythe hangs over him, increasing the feeling of uneasiness in the painting. Loper's tattered clothing is matched by the worn, splintered boards of the fence and the cracking wood of the tool handle. The picture conveys the impression of both people and things that are old and worn, seemingly hanging on by a thread, yet still functional.