



HAWTHORNE Fine Art

JOHN WILLARD RAUGHT (1857–1931)

John Willard Raught was born in Dunmore, Pennsylvania, in 1857. Though he spent much of his career painting family portraits, pastoral landscapes, and the coal industry in Northeastern Pennsylvania, Raught also studied abroad for a time, where he produced a number of paintings depicting the French countryside at Oise and Auvers.

After studying at the National Academy of Design and exhibiting at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Raught traveled to Paris to further his training at the Académie Julian. While there, he studied with the figure painters Gustave Boulanger (1824 – 1888) and Jules Lefebvre (1836 – 1911). Despite his classical training with these masters, however, Raught gravitated more towards landscape painting, and was inspired by the impressionistic styles of his Parisian contemporaries. Raught spent much of his time developing his own impressionistic style just outside of Paris, where he painted the landscapes of Auvers and Oise. In 1889, Raught exhibited at the Paris Salon.

After completing his studies, Raught returned to Pennsylvania. As an early proponent of Impressionism in America, Raught worked *en plein air* to capture the atmospheric light effects of the Pennsylvania countryside. Raught's landscape paintings were exhibited at the Boston Art Club and the National Academy of Design, as well as at the Chicago World's Fair in 1892-3, and at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.

Of a 1915 exhibition at the Century Club, one critic commented that Raught's works, “breathe a feeling of intimacy with nature at first hand and reflect the serene and kindly character of the artist.”¹ A visitor to the same exhibition noted the particular quality of Raught's works, describing them as paintings which,...when placed on the wall of a home make no insistent appeal for attention, but their presence is felt half unconsciously, like that of old and sympathetic friends whose real value can only be comprehended after long acquaintance.”²

¹ Quoted in “Public Cordially Invited to See Beautiful Pictures Displayed in the Rooms of the Century Club,” *Scranton Times Tribune*, 1915, from “Column Extra – John Willard Raught,” *The Times-Tribune.com*

² Ibid.