



# HAWTHORNE

## Fine Art

### **ANDREW MELROSE (1836-1901)**

Little is known about the early life of Scottish-born artist Andrew Melrose, though available literature often notes that he was largely self-taught. He is thought to have come to America in 1856, stopping in New York before moving on to Toronto. Within ten years, Melrose, along with his wife, had relocated to the New York area. His first great success came in 1867 when he was commissioned by the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad to commemorate the extension of their line to Council Bluff, Iowa. The following year, the artist began to exhibit at the National Academy of Design, a practice he continued through 1883. During the 1870s, Melrose was represented by the Mathews Gallery in New York, where he showed large landscape work in the style of Frederic Edwin Church, notably *Morning in the Andes* and *Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives*. These paintings are infused with Melrose's highly panoramic imagination and reveal a sophisticated understanding of recessional planes and vanishing perspective. On a visit to England prior to 1880, he established a relationship with the London chromolithography firm of Raphael Tuck & Sons who regularly distributed his prints. Extant views of the Roman Campagna as well as Damascus and Jerusalem suggest that Melrose ventured far from the English shore.

At some point in 1880, Melrose made a Southern excursion to Georgia and the Carolinas and, upon his return, painted his monumental *The Land of the Sky, North Carolina*, which was exhibited to critical acclaim at the National Academy in 1881. *Morning on the French Broad NC, (Old Blockhouse)* is one of three scenes from the artist's time in North Carolina for which there is documentation. The site is most likely Old Fort, in McDowell County, the westernmost post of the colonial era. From Melrose's perspective, the mountains rise to the right while the moldering fort sits on a forested hillside between which the wide expanse of the river flows. The vast sense of scale is heightened by the dim early morning glow, as well as the curvilinearity of the river's reach, broken by a shallow cascade in the middle planar field.

During the last decade of his life, Melrose turned to book illustration, working from a studio in West New York, New Jersey. His paintings can be found in the collections of the White House, New-York Historical Society, Newark Museum of Art and the American Museum of Western Art.

Source:

The Johnson Collection, Spartanburg, South Carolina  
[thejohnsoncollection.org](http://thejohnsoncollection.org)

Biography Courtesy of Askart