



HAWTHORNE  
Fine Art

**THOMAS DOUGHTY (1793-1856)**

*Shap Monastery*, ca. 1845-6

Oil on panel

7 x 5 ½ in

Initialed lower left, signed and inscribed with title on verso

**THOMAS DOUGHTY (1793-1856)**

*Valley of the Rhine*, ca. 1845-6

Oil on panel

7 x 5 1/2in

Initialed at lower center, signed and inscribed with title on verso

**PROVENANCE:** Private collection ca. 1960; to the Estate of John M. Kauffmann, Yarmouth, ME

Thomas Doughty, a native of Philadelphia, is well-recognized as one of the first American artists to make his name as a landscape painter. Doughty began his career in dry goods, first apprenticing with a local tanner before establishing his own leather business in partnership with his older brother. In 1816, despite having no formal artistic training, he exhibited a landscape painting at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Several years later, in 1820, Doughty left his tanning business in order to pursue landscape painting in earnest, quickly establishing himself as a singular talent. He showed again at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1822, after which he exhibited annually over the course of the following decade. During this time, he was also elected to the Pennsylvania Academy as a full member (1824), and as an honorary member of the National Academy of Design (1827). Doughty further exhibited his landscapes at the American Academy of Fine Art in New York, at Peale's Baltimore Museum in Maryland, as well as at the Boston Museum and Boston Athenaeum in Massachusetts.

Sometime between 1826 and 1828, Doughty relocated to Boston, MA, where he taught drawing, before moving back to Philadelphia in 1830. Doughty returned again to Boston in 1832, and would remain there for five years, before leaving in 1837 to travel in England for a year, after which he returned to New York. In 1845 he set off once again for England, Ireland, and France for another year-long stint, before returning to New York City where he remained until his death in 1856. Throughout his career, Doughty supplemented his income by converting his landscapes into engravings for publication.



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The two present paintings—*Shap Monastery* and *Valley of the Rhine*—were likely painted during Doughty's second trip abroad, in 1845.

The first, *Shap Monastery*, depicts monastic ruins in Westmoreland, England, traditionally known as Heppie Monastery or Shap Abbey. The site, which is situated on the western bank of the River Lowther, was built at the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup> century by a Premonstratensian order of monks.

Originally called Hepp, the name of the site shifted over time to reflect the neighboring village of Shap. While the Abbey closed in 1540 and was subsequently demolished, the tower has remained standing for centuries and was no doubt an irresistible subject for a landscape painter such as Doughty.

With no record of travel to Germany, Doughty must have painted *Valley of the Rhine* when he encountered the Alpine river on the Franco-German border. The structure in the image likely depicts the Château du Girsberg, a 13th-century castle now reduced to keep ruins, which precariously overlooks the river valley at an altitude of 528 meters. The castle was abandoned in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, since which time it has been reduced to the ruins visible in Doughty's rendering. Château du Girsberg is flanked by two similar castles in the Vosges Mountains: the Château de Saint-Ulrich and Château du Haut-Ribeaupierre, both of which were built around the same time. It is possible that Doughty visited all three castles and borrowed architectural details from each to compose the unique architecture that dominates *Valley of the Rhine*.

Together, the two paintings illustrate a compelling diptych. Though the locations and subject matter (a monastic building in the English countryside, juxtaposed against an abandoned castle perched at the base of the Vosges mountains) could not be more different, Doughty's symmetrical treatment of color, tone and line suggests their formal and inherent sympathies. Were it not for the differing backdrops—the English waterway on the left, and the French valley on the right—one might even say that the structures are cobbled-together continuations of one another. Doughty's characteristic manner and fine attention to detail are paramount in his rendering of these sublime architectural feats, as can be seen in the meticulous rendering of foliage against stone against hazy atmospheric effects. Ultimately, the two paintings are a collage-like representation of Doughty's travels, as well as a true representation of his mature style.