



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

DUBOIS FENELON HASBROUCK

b. Pine Hill, New York, 1860; d. Stamford, New York, 1917

The career of the minor landscapist DuBois Fenelon Hasbrouck has received little attention. So little, in fact, that his death date is usually given as 1934 or 1924, and he is listed variously as D. F. Hasbrouck, DuBois Fenelon Hasbrouck, and DuBois F. Hasbrouck. Although he exhibited his work occasionally from the mid-1880s to the early years of the twentieth century, information about his life and art is scant.ⁱ

Hasbrouck was the fourth of eight children born to Josiah and Mary Hasbrouck, who raised their family on a farm in Pine Hill, New York, an isolated rural area thirty miles from New Paltz. Theirs was a working farm, but to make ends meet they took in summer guests, one of whom, in 1876, was the successful painter John George Brown. The sixteen-year-old Hasbrouck was reportedly enthralled by Brown and after observing the artist at work, was prompted to try his own hand at painting a scene. Hasbrouck's maiden effort was rewarded with encouragement from Brown, who suggested that he consider a career in the arts.

Despite his growing desire to become an artist and his assiduous program of self-instruction, Hasbrouck's parents insisted that he continue with his farm work or take a job that would guarantee a secure livelihood. Undaunted, he continued to paint and had the good fortune to sell some of his work to another summer guest, the Reverend Howard Crosby, in 1878. It was through Crosby that Hasbrouck was able to go to New York City for three months to study art at the Cooper Union, a stint that would be his only formal training. Hasbrouck seems to have returned to Pine Hill after leaving Cooper Union, but by 1885 he had moved to New York, where he lived at 54 Lexington Avenue. That year he debuted as an exhibitor at the National Academy of Design, where he would intermittently contribute his canvases to the annual shows until 1894. Like many landscape specialists Hasbrouck spent his summers sketching in the scenic Catskills near his parents' farm. He met his future wife, Ada Cook over the course of one of those summers. Twelve years his elder, Ada Cook was the daughter of a wealthy Newark, New Jersey businessman, and was at the time they met a married woman with three children, the oldest of whom was nineteen. The couple married in 1888 and until 1893 Hasbrouck seems to have made concerted efforts to establish himself by showing his paintings at the Brooklyn Art Association, the Art Institute of Chicago, as well as at the National Academy of Design, where his asking prices ranged from eighty-five to five-hundred dollars. At one point the noted collector William T. Evans owned a watercolor by Hasbrouck titled *Wooded Landscape*, but that seems to be the only instance when the product of his brush entered the higher reaches of the art world.ⁱⁱ



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In 1893 he left New York and moved to upstate Stamford, which was a summer resort in the Catskill region. From that time onward, he seems to have ceased submitting his work for display, and was content to cater mainly to the summer tourist trade. He was hospitalized for a mental breakdown in 1901, but resumed painting shortly thereafter. He was institutionalized in the Middletown sanitarium in 1907. Around 1915 he suffered a stroke from which he made a partial recovery, but died of a second stroke in 1917.

Provenance: The American Art Collection of Susan Weis Mindel and Dr. Joel S. Mindel.

ⁱ The only reliable source focusing on the artist that has been located thus far is a short, anonymously written article in the *Hasbrouck Family Association Journal*, September, 2005.

ⁱⁱ For Evans's collection, see William H. Truettner, "William T. Evans, Collector of American Paintings," *American Art Journal*, vol. 3, no. 2 (Autumn 1971): 50-79.