



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

DeWitt Clinton Boutelle (1820–1884)

Born along the Hudson River in Troy, New York, itinerant painter DeWitt Clinton Boutelle was named after famed New York governor DeWitt Clinton (1769–1828), who played a vital role in the completion of the Erie Canal. Boutelle was active as a portrait and landscape painter in New York City by 1846, when he began exhibiting at the National Academy of Design and the American Art Union to much success. He was elected an associate member at the National Academy in 1851, and continued to exhibit there annually until 1874. The American Art Union purchased seventy-one of his works, more than from any other artist. During his lifetime, Boutelle's paintings were also featured in exhibitions at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (where he became a member in 1862), the Boston Athenaeum, the Washington Art Association, and the Brooklyn Art Association.

It is not known whether Boutelle received formal artistic training, but his paintings bear the influence of Thomas Cole and Asher Durand. Boutelle's great admiration for Cole even prompted him to complete a full size copy of the latter's *Voyage of Life*. Like these two foundational Hudson River School painters, Boutelle found much inspiration in the picturesque vistas of New York's Hudson River Valley, as well as in such natural wonders as Niagara Falls and New Hampshire's White Mountains, which he painted with meticulous realism and embedded with moral, religious, and poetic meanings.

After moving between New York City, Baskingridge, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, Boutelle ultimately settled in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, joining a group of local landscape painters there at the invitation of wealthy industrialist and art collector, Samuel Wetherill. Boutelle died in Bethlehem in 1884. Today, Boutelle's works can be found in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC; the Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester; the Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA; the Newark Museum; the Milwaukee Art Museum; and the Seattle Art Museum; among others.