



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

JOHN WILLIAM CASILEAR (1811–1893)

John William Casilear was born in New York City, where he lived and worked throughout his life, with the exception of frequent summers spent upstate and in Vermont, and two European sojourns in 1840-1843 and 1857-1858. At the age of fifteen, Casilear began studying with master engraver Peter Maverick, and subsequently supported himself through work as a banknote engraver. At the same time, he pursued his passion for landscape painting, persuading Asher B. Durand to take him on as a pupil and assistant in 1831. Casilear's works reflect his teacher's preference for precisely rendered, modest views of nature, and disdain for the overly dramatic.

In 1833, Casilear began exhibiting his engravings and paintings at the National Academy of Design, and was elected as an Academician in 1851. By this time, he had achieved enough success with his paintings to abandon engraving. He is now regarded as a leader among the Hudson River School Luminist painters, who were particularly concerned with the subtle play of light and air on the landscape. His works are in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.