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NEWS FROM THE NEW HAMPSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 17, 2016

Photographs Available

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"White Mountains in the Parlor: The Art of Bringing Nature Indoors" Art Exhibition Opening at the New Hampshire Historical Society

CONCORD, NH--The New Hampshire Historical Society announces the opening of a new long-term exhibition featuring paintings from its extensive collections of White Mountain art. Displayed in the Governor John McLane Gallery at the Society's Concord headquarters, the exhibition opens to the public Friday, November 18, 2016.

Since the early 1900s, the New Hampshire Historical Society has amassed one of the most wide-ranging collections of objects, archives, and photographs related to the White Mountains in existence, including landscape paintings depicting the natural beauty, history, and local character of the region. The new exhibition "**White Mountains in the Parlor: The Art of Bringing Nature Indoors**" features 36 of these paintings by artists such as Benjamin Champney, Albert Bierstadt, Edward Hill, and Thomas Hill. The works are displayed salon-style as they would have been in Victorian homes during the 19th century.

The dramatic vistas of New Hampshire's White Mountains have long captured the imaginations of Americans. Even as early as the 1820s, tourists began trekking to the White Mountains, intent on experiencing the beauty and grandeur of nature, just as industrialization and urbanization were civilizing the landscape in the rest of the East. In the wilds of northern New Hampshire people could touch upon the natural wonders that so inspired the American spirit of exploration on a vast continent.

With the beauty of the White Mountains before them, it's hardly surprising that the area became a mecca for artists, photographers, writers, and entrepreneurs

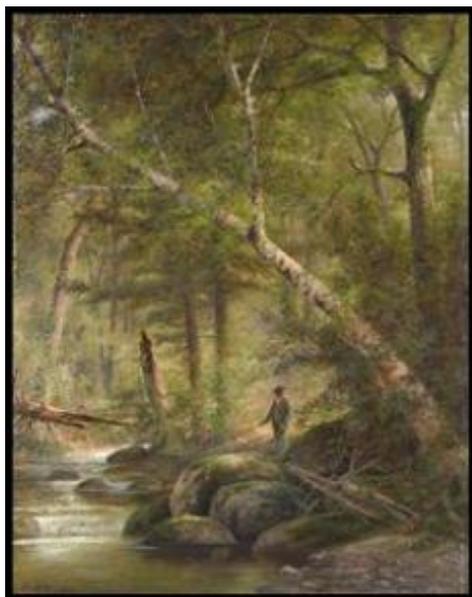
as well as tourists. Thousands came, traveling by coach and later rail, to venture into the mountains. Wealthy summer tourists seeking to bring home a piece of the mountains bought souvenirs, mostly paintings, to decorate drawing rooms in New York and Boston, allowing them to bring nature indoors. In the winter months, they toured art galleries, eager to acquire paintings of White Mountain scenery and recapture the majesty of nature in their parlors and salons.



"In the Notch," by John White Allen Scott (1815-1907), 1857. New Hampshire Historical Society, bequest of Ellen D. Hill.

For the artists themselves, the White Mountains became their muse. American and European artists ventured into the mountains each summer and fall. Rambling through the notches, rivers, and meadows they made detailed sketches of scenes created by the changing play of light and atmosphere, developing new techniques for capturing the grandeur of the wilderness and redefining the relationship between man and the environment. Back in their city studios they created beautiful and inspiring interpretations of the White Mountains for the enjoyment of eager customers.

Some artists, like Benjamin Champney, eventually established seasonal homes and studios in the White Mountains so they could experience seemingly endless sources of inspiration. The work they produced complemented similar developments among painters of the Hudson River School, many of whom drew on their time in the White Mountains to inform their own work on New York's tamer landscapes.



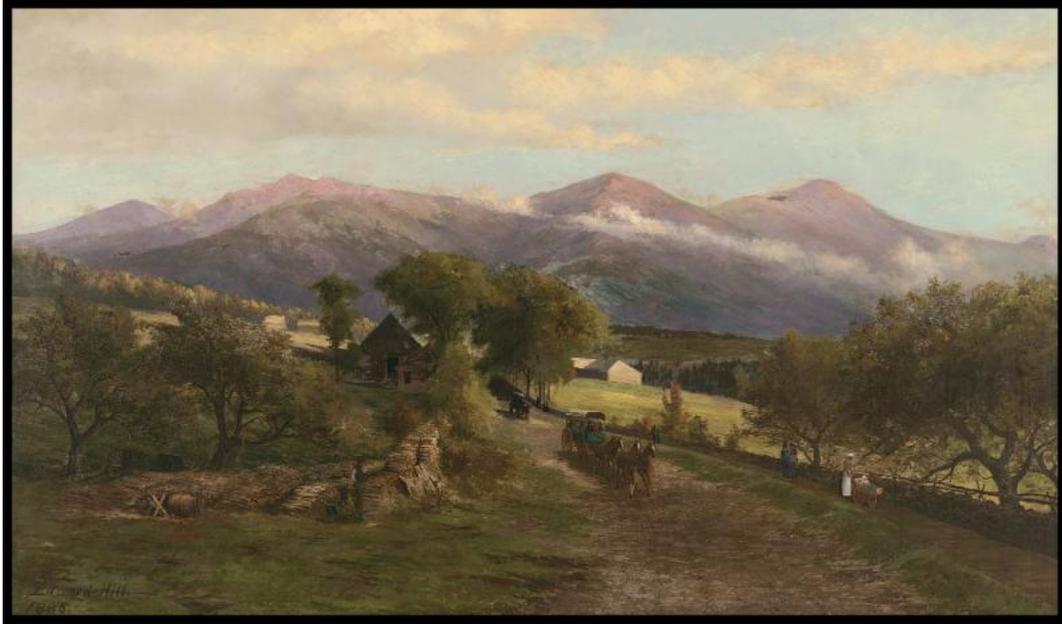
"Woodland Scene in the Notch," by Edward Hill, 1878. New Hampshire Historical Society, gift of Edward K. Robinson.

"White Mountains in the Parlor" is on view in the Governor John McLane Galley at the Society's 30 Park Street headquarters in Concord. The creation of the new gallery was part of the final phase of the Society's *Connections through Time* capital campaign. Lead donors Andy and Linda McLane supported the project in memory of Andy's great-grandfather, John McLane (1852-1911), governor of New Hampshire at the turn of the 20th century. Additional support was provided by Kurt and Elaine Swenson, Catherine and Joel Bedor, an anonymous donor, and a number of other contributors.

The exhibition, along with the Society's other current exhibitions **"Discovering New Hampshire"** and **"Revealing Relationships: Portraits of New Hampshire Family and Friends,"** is open to the public Tuesday to Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$7 per person. Active duty military personnel, full-time students, and children under the age of 18 are admitted for free. Members of the New Hampshire Historical Society are admitted at no charge.

Founded in 1823 the New Hampshire Historical Society is an independent, nonprofit

organization dedicated to saving, preserving, and sharing New Hampshire history. The Society serves thousands of children and adults each year through its exhibitions, research library, educational programs, and award-winning publications. The Society is not a state-funded agency. All of its programs and services are made possible by membership dues and contributions. For more information about the Society and the benefits of membership, visit nhhistory.org or call 603-228-6688.



"Presidential Range," by Edward Hill (1843-1923), 1886.
New Hampshire Historical Society, gift of The W. N. Banks Foundation.