

Nature, Nation, and Conflict: Thomas Cole's
View Across Frenchman's Bay from Mt. Desert Island, After a Squall,
1845

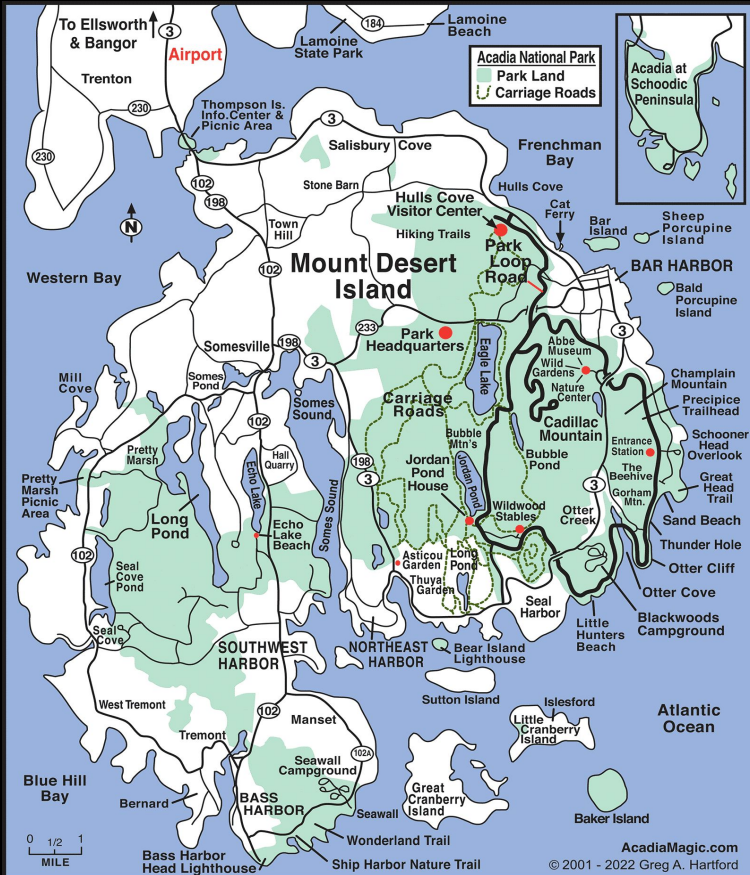


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Thomas Cole, *Islands in Frenchman's Bay from Mt Desert*, 1844, pencil on paper,
28.4 x 43.0 cm, Cole Sketchbook,
The Art Museum, Princeton University, gift of Frank Jewett Mather, Jr.





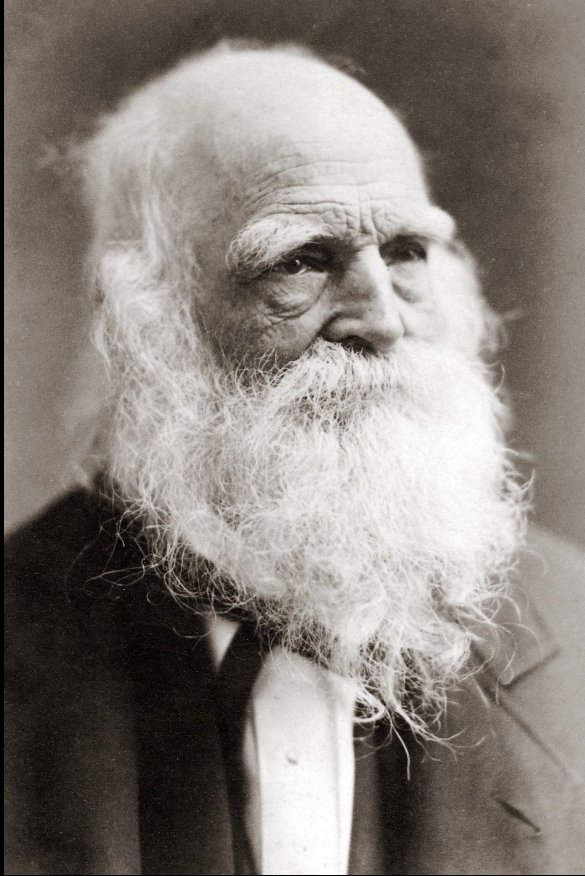
Acadia National Park, Maine



Théophile Hamel, *Samuel de Champlain*,
1870, oil on canvas
after the one by Ducornet, based on a portrait
of Michel Particelli d'Emery (d. 1650) by
Balthasar Moncornet (d. 1668),





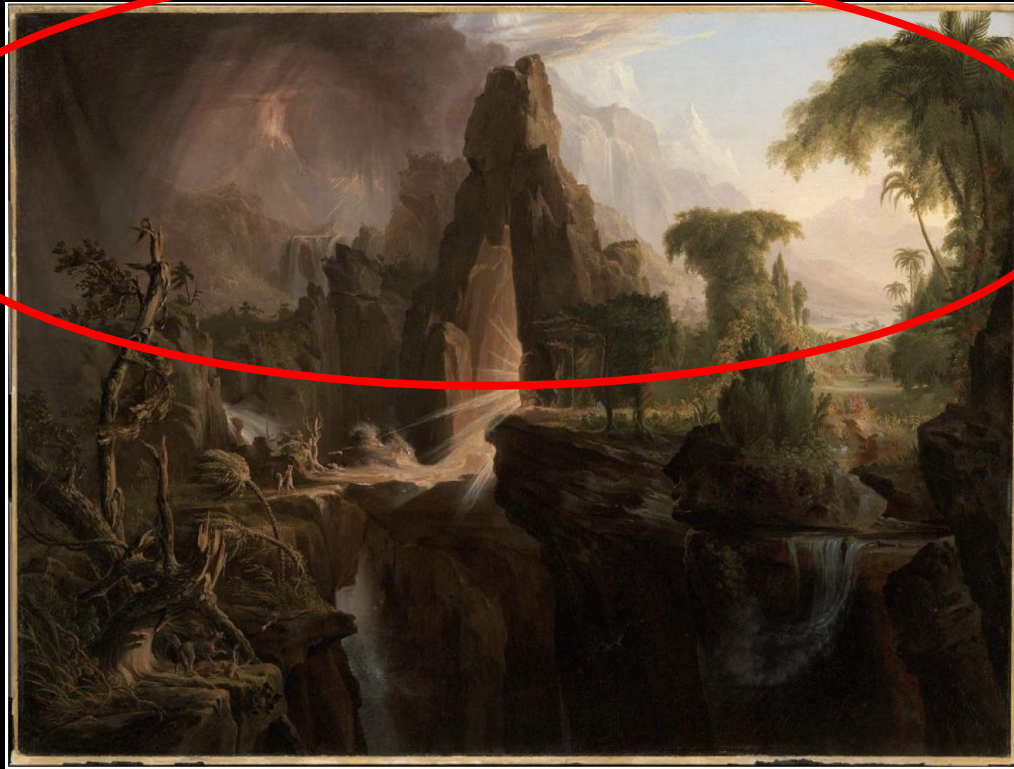


William Cullen Bryant, poet

“After a Tempest” (1824)

“The clash of arms and pools of blood,”
against which *“the earth has stood aghast.”*





Thomas Cole, *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden*, 1828,
oil on canvas, 39 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 54 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 47.1188,
Gift of Martha C. Karolik for the M. and M. Karolik Collection of American Paintings, 1815-1865



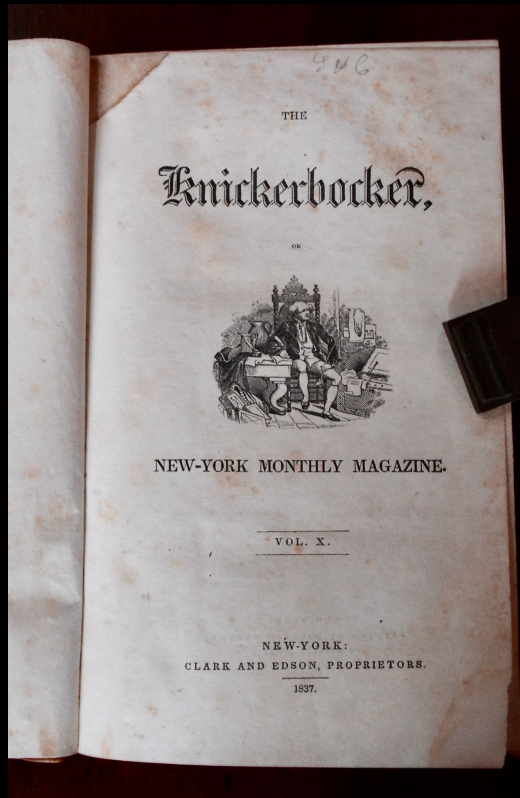




Thomas Cole, *The Voyage of Life: Childhood*, 1842, oil on canvas,
52 7/8 x 76 7/8 in., National Gallery of Art, 1971.16.1







New York, Great Fire in December of 1835



Thomas Cole, *The Course of Empire: The Savage State*, 1834,
oil on canvas, 39 1/4 × 63 1/4 in.,
on loan to The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Thomas Cole, *The Voyage of Life: Childhood*, 1842,
oil on canvas, 52 7/8 x 76 7/8 in.,
National Gallery of Art, 1971.16.1

ESSAY ON
AMERICAN
SCENERY

THOMAS COLE

THE
AMERICAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

JANUARY, 1836.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN LYCEUM.*

ESSAY ON AMERICAN SCENERY. — BY THOMAS COLE.

THE Essay, which is here offered, is a mere sketch of an almost illimitable subject — American Scenery ; and in selecting the theme the writer placed more confidence in its overflowing richness, than in his own capacity for treating it in a manner worthy of its vastness and importance.

It is a subject that to every American ought to be of surpassing interest ; for, whether he beholds the Hudson mingling waters with the Atlantic — explores the central wilds of this vast continent, or stands on the margin of the distant Oregon, he is still in the midst of American scenery — it is his own land ; its beauty, its magnificence, its sublimity — all are his ; and how undeserving of such a birthright, if he can turn towards it an unobserving eye, an unaffected heart !

Before entering into the proposed subject, in which I shall treat more particularly of the scenery of the Northern and Eastern States, I shall be excused for saying a few words on the advantages of cultivating a taste for scenery, and for exclaiming against the apathy with which the beauties of external nature are regarded by the great mass, even of our refined community.

It is generally admitted that the liberal arts tend to soften our manners ; but they do more — they carry with them the power to mend our hearts.

Poetry and Painting sublime and purify thought, by grasping the past, the present, and the future — they give the mind a foretaste of its immortality, and thus prepare it for performing an exalted part amid the realities of life. And *rural nature* is full of the same quickening spirit — it is, in fact, the exhaustless mine from which the poet and the painter have brought such wondrous treasures — an unfailling fountain of intel-

* An abstract of the last proceedings of this Institution will be found in the "Monthly Commentary," at the end of the number.

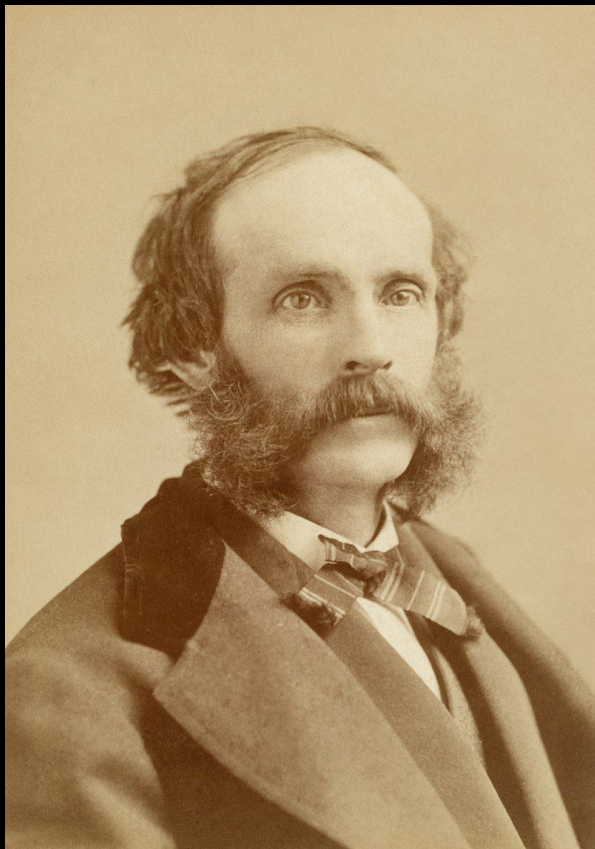




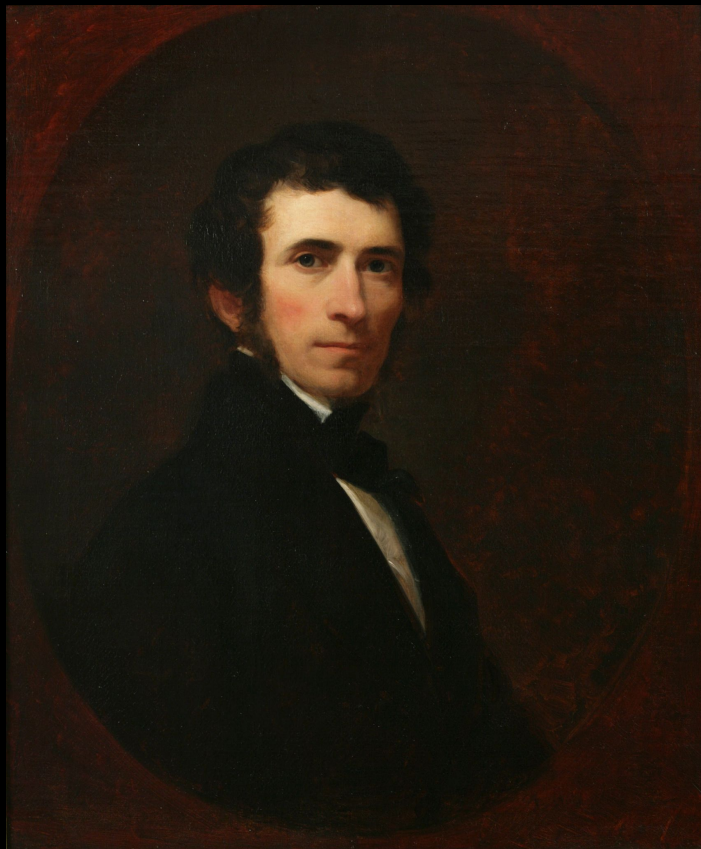
Thomas Cole,
*A View of the Mountain Pass Called the Notch of
the White Mountains (Crawford Notch)*, 1839,
oil on canvas, 40 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 61 $\frac{5}{16}$ in.,
National Gallery of Art, 1967.8.1



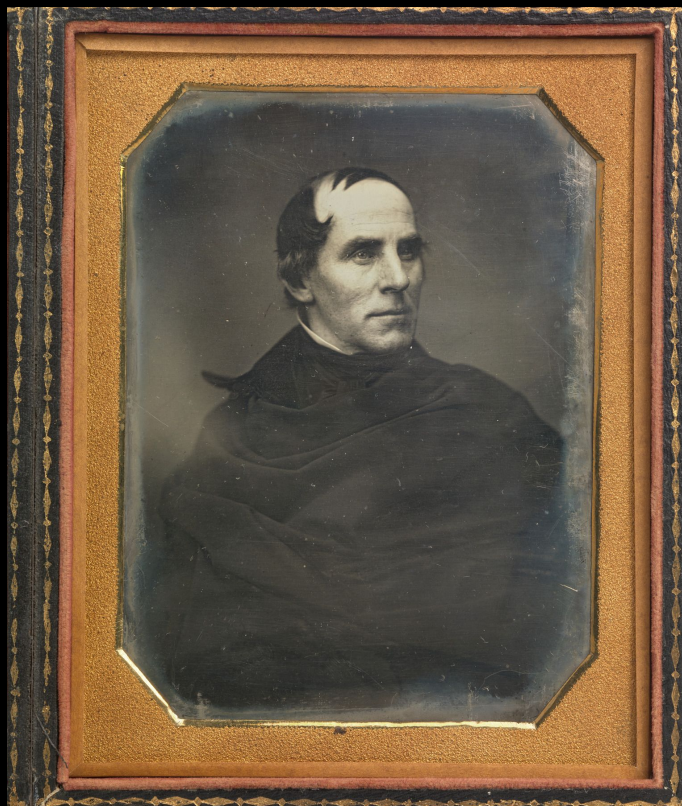
Frederic Edwin Church, *Niagara*, 1857,
oil on canvas, 40 × 90 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.,
National Gallery of Art, 2014.79.10



Napoleon Sarony,
Frederic Edwin Church, 1868,
albumen silver print of a photograph



Asher Brown Durand,
Self-Portrait, 1835,
oil on canvas



Mathew B. Brady, *Thomas Cole*, 1845,
half-plate daguerreotype on silver-coated copper plate,
6 x 9 3/4 x 3/8 in., National Portrait Gallery



Thomas Cole, *The Course of Empire: The Savage State*, 1834,
oil on canvas, 39 1/4 x 63 1/4 in., New-York Historical Society,
1858.1, Gift of the New-York Gallery of the Fine Arts



Thomas Cole, *View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton,
Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm—The Oxbow*,
1836, oil on canvas, 51 1/2 x 76 in., The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, 08.228



Thomas Cole, *View Across Frenchman's Bay from Mt. Desert Island, After a Squall*, 1845, oil on canvas, 38 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 62 $\frac{5}{8}$ in., Cincinnati Art Museum, 1925.569, Gift of Alice Scarborough, purchased by patron William Woolsey

Thank you!

Special thanks to: Dr. Theresa Leininger-Miller, Lauren Turner, Ella Morris, and all of the staff at the University of Cincinnati DAAP Library

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- “The Age of the Common Man | The American Experience in the Classroom,” museum website, *Smithsonian American Art Museum*.
<https://americanexperience.si.edu/historical-eras/colonization-revolution-and-new-nation/pair-daniel-lamotte-independence-squire-jack-porter/>. 9 October 2023.
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