



Mount Washington

The Crown Of New England

By Rick Russack

At Currier Museum of Art

“View in the White Mountains” by Thomas Cole (1801–1848), 1827. Oil on canvas, 25-3/8 by 35-3/16 inches. Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art.

MANCHESTER, N.H. — New Hampshire’s highest peak, Mount Washington, inspired painters from Albert Bierstadt and Thomas Cole to Winslow Homer and George Inness. The origins of the summit’s enduring appeal, along with the mountain’s representation in art and history, is the subject of an exhibition at the Currier Museum of Art from October 1 through January 16, 2017.

The first white man to ascend Mount Washington, in 1642, was Darby Field. The historical record does not reflect significant activity on the mountain over the next 150 years. By the late Eighteenth Century, however, some intrepid travelers were journeying to the area. By the end of the century, teamsters were hauling loads from inland towns



“Thomas Cole Sketching in the White Mountains” by Henry Cheever Pratt (1803–1880), circa 1828. Oil on canvas, 31¾ by 24 inches. Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art.



and villages to Portland, Maine, using a very primitive road through the notch of the White Mountains. That notch is now known as Crawford Notch, named for Abel Crawford and his son, Ethan Allen Crawford. The New Hampshire innkeepers were instrumental in the development of Mount Washington and environs. Ethan Allen Crawford established the first trail up the mountain and became the mountain's first guide. Scientists and painters were among the mountain's earliest visitors. Botanists...

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Platter transfer printed with scene titled "White Mountain N. Hampshire, U.S.," after print by Thomas Cole and Fenner, Sears & Co., manufactured by William Adams & Sons, circa 1831. Earthenware.
New Hampshire Historical Society.

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