



# JOSEPH TUBBY

1821 – 1896

ARTIST: RONDOUT, NEW YORK

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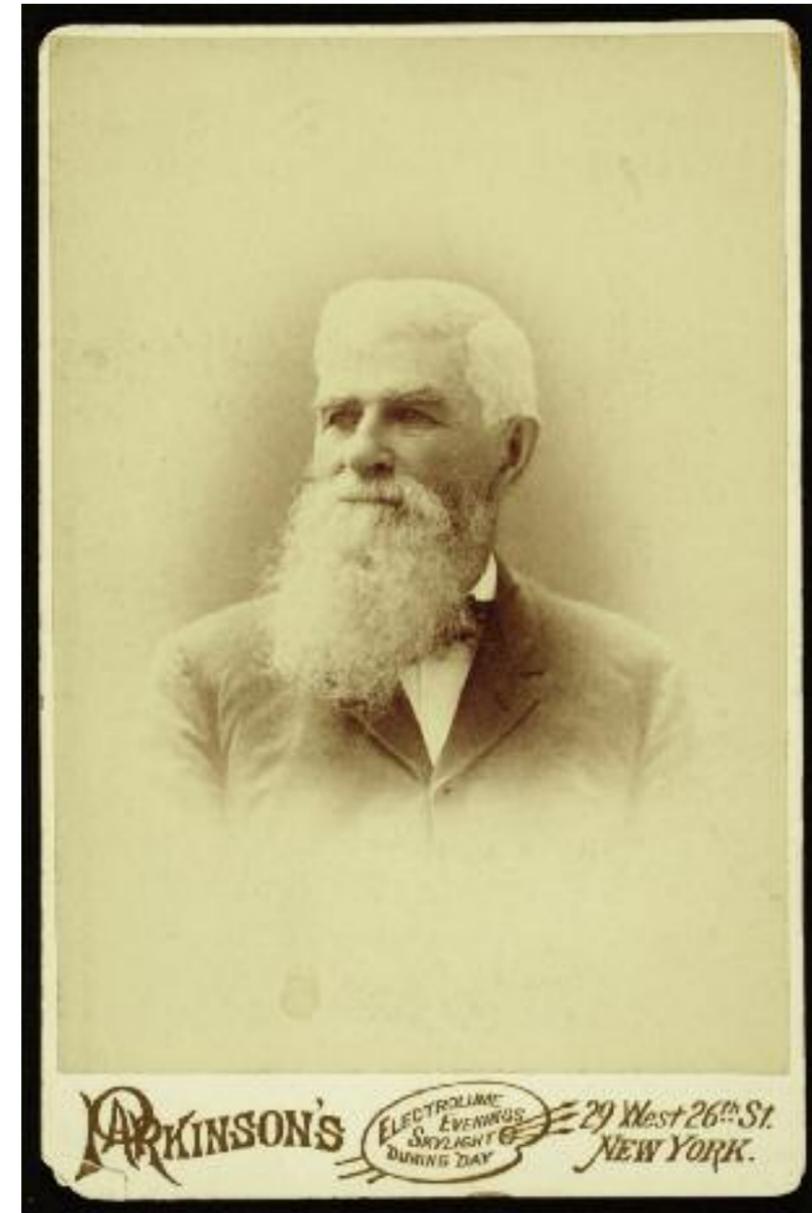
May – October, 2008

Sanford A. Levy

Published by  
The Friends of Historic Kingston

For the exhibition  
*JOSEPH TUBBY Artist: Rondout, New York*  
Friends of Historic Kingston Museum Gallery  
May – October 2008  
Sanford A. Levy, Curator

**Cover: “Hussy Hill Near Rondout, N. York”**  
Oil on canvas, 18" x 30"  
Courtesy of Sanford Levy



Photograph of Joseph Tubby, Plate 1

Courtesy of the Joseph Tubby Papers, Archives of American Art,  
Smithsonian Institution



View from West Chestnut Street, Plate 2

Oil on canvas, 32" x 48"

Originally gifted by Mr. and Mrs. G.V.D. Hutton in 1963 with an attached press release from that year from the Hudson River Pilot: "...it shows the spot now occupied by the college in its temporary quarters as it appeared in the last half of the last century, before Ulster Academy (more lately known as Kingston Public School #2) was built. In the painting over the rolling ridge crowned with giant pine trees, which is now the corner of West Chestnut Street and Montrepose Avenue, are glimpsed the steeples of the churches now housing the congregations of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran and the First Emmanuel churches and the Hudson River beyond."

On loan from SUNY Ulster County Community College's Permanent Fine Art Collection

## *Friends of Historic Kingston*

Since 1965, the Friends of Historic Kingston, a volunteer membership organization, has worked to preserve and promote the city's exceptional collection of historic and architecturally significant sites. We seek to present this local history to the public through exhibitions, walking tours and related programs.

The organization is headquartered at an historic property on the corner of Main and Wall Streets in the heart of the Stockade National Historic District. We maintain two museums on the site, formerly the home of Fred J. Johnston, a nationally noted antiques dealer and preservationist.

This year the Friends of Historic Kingston Museum Gallery proudly features the work of the artist Joseph Tubby of Rondout, Kingston, New York (1821-1896) whose vision preserved the nineteenth century landscape of our valley. Fifty five years ago there was a retrospective of his work at the Senate House and we are pleased to showcase his skill once again.

The exhibition was organized in collaboration with guest curator Sanford Levy of Jenkinstown Antiques. We are grateful to the owners of the paintings for sharing these landscapes that draw us into another

time and place. The works of Joseph Tubby record the views that continue to inspire today, and that we are charged to preserve for future generations.

Jane Kellar, Director

May, 2008





Shipyards at Rondout, Plate 3

Oil on board, 10 1/8" x 7 1/8"

Shows Tubby family farm on left side.

Courtesy of New York State Office of Parks, Recreation,  
and Historic Preservation



View of Rondout Creek, Plate 4

Oil on board, 10 1/8" x 7 1/8"

Shows Tubby family property.

Courtesy of New York State Office of Parks, Recreation,  
and Historic Preservation

## Introduction

Mid-nineteenth century New York State was a fine place to be involved in the arts. There was a new focus on exhibitions in museums, galleries and artists' studios which prompted more reviews in the press and a larger cultural exchange between artists and the public. A growing number of artists also traveled outside of the cities to sketch and paint. The work of Thomas Cole, Frederic Church and others inspired many painters to capture the beautiful scenery of the Hudson River Valley. Philosophical views of nature and a wish to depict the landscape in a natural way fueled these artists' creations. Simultaneously, the Industrial Revolution contributed to the advent of a larger wealthy class with more prestigious homes including elegant interiors. Artists sought to ply their trade and offer their pictures to a public that, with this new wealth, grew increasingly eager for their work.

By the early twentieth century these landscape views had fallen out of fashion, and many were relegated to attics or remained unnoticed in older homes. The mid-twentieth century saw a renewed interest and enthusiasm for these works – the terms “Hudson River School” and “the first American paintings” became widely accepted. Studies of these nineteenth-century works began, and countless exhibition catalogues and books were published to illuminate our understanding of these Hudson River School artists, giving their work a more pronounced place in the art world.

One of the aspiring artists of this time was Joseph Tubby, an English immigrant who painted in the Rondout area of Ulster County, New York. In 1953, wishing to bring Tubby's forgotten art to light, a group of Ulster County residents organized a show of his work at the Senate House Museum in Kingston, New York. Relying on local oral traditions and on Tubby's daughter Gertrude's reminiscences, a basic biography of Tubby was established. With no specialized education or training, Tubby managed to participate in the blossoming art scene in the Rondout. Despite his working class background, and demands of family, finances, and other employment, it is clear that Tubby's lifelong passion was painting. We are lucky to have these pictures that capture the beauty of the Rondout and Esopus Creeks, the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains, and chronicle the growth of the area's towns and commerce.

Now from our early twenty-first century perspective we can continue this scholarship. It is my hope that more of Tubby's paintings will be discovered in museums and private collections. Then a full-scale retrospective of his paintings would enable future generations to appreciate how Tubby's work preserved a visual record of the area. As we gaze upon his wonderful pictures, we realize his passion serves us well.

Sanford Levy  
March 2008



Joseph Tubby was born in Tottenham, England, on August 25, 1821. He was the second of four sons of John Tubby and Mary Green, Quakers who emigrated to America in 1832. After a short stay in New York City, when Joseph was an adolescent, his father established himself in Rondout as a building contractor.<sup>1</sup> Due to the opening of the Delaware and Hudson Canal in 1828, the area was developing at this time and attracted craftsmen from all fields.

Located just east of the old Dutch village of Kingston, the village of Rondout was situated at the confluence of the Rondout Creek and the Hudson River. It remained a quiet hamlet until the late 1820's. James McEntee and his brother Charles came to the area in 1826. Children of Irish immigrants who had settled in western New York in 1794, they were some of the first to foresee future prospects in the area, and were able to accumulate substantial wealth and property. James managed the construction of the Delaware and Hudson Canal which linked the Pennsylvania coal fields to the Hudson River and ports north and south. This influenced major economic changes in the Rondout. Hotels, boarding houses, taverns and related business brought in money and a more bustling social and commercial life. Growth in the industries of bluestone, cement, brick, and ship building, required a larger work force, and homes of every size were built. The largest population recorded circa 1840 was fifteen hundred people, but by 1855 the town had over six thousand residents and had grown larger than rival Kingston itself.<sup>2</sup>

In the mid-nineteenth century, life flourished on the Rondout. Paralleling the growth of many commercial

establishments, the Rondout became a social and cultural crossroads. James McEntee's son, Jervis, who was to become one of the most accomplished Hudson River School painters, was born there in 1828 and befriended Joseph Tubby as a young man. Jervis' first cousin, Julia Dillon, who later became a successful floral painter, was born in 1834 and also became immersed in the budding artistic and cultural life of the area. They all would have known and been influenced by John Vanderlyn of Kingston (1775-1852) whose paintings won awards in Europe and America. The vibrant, open atmosphere and natural beauty of the area attracted creative thinkers and artists. The poet Henry Abbey published several poems inspired by the Hudson River, the Catskill Mountains and life on the Rondout. And John Burroughs, the famous naturalist and author, lived at his home, Riverby, some miles south.<sup>3</sup>

Social reformers, authors, artists, and tradesmen interacted in Kingston and Rondout. Joseph's older brother, John, joined his father in the building trade, while Joseph began to study art, sketching and familiarizing himself with the local art scene. From Gertrude Tubby's reminiscences of her father we learn that he took art lessons with "someone named Black" and that he was "accustomed to take long walks, always with a notebook in his pocket, recording notes and making quick sketches."<sup>4</sup>

While in his twenties, in the early days of his sketching and painting, Tubby began to embrace the ideas of a natural landscape. It is likely that Tubby had been looking at some of John Vanderlyn's<sup>5</sup> early sketches of Kingston, and we can begin to see that influence.



View of Kingston on Esopus from Oxbow, Plate 5

Oil on board, 15" x 20"

Courtesy of New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

Dominated by sky melding with ground and little human interference, these open space landscapes were what many artists of the time chose to depict. Tubby sought similar views and worked at capturing detail. From scenes in the Rondout, through the Catskill, Shawangunk and Adirondack Mountains, Tubby followed the trends in art during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. This is evident in his local scenes dating from the 1850's, from the collections of the New York Historical Society, and at the Senate House Museum in Kingston, NY (plates 3, 4 and 5). It is during this time that Tubby really began to develop his style. Many other Hudson River and Catskill enthusiasts came to sketch views during trips throughout the area. Obviously inspired by popular taste, he began to produce landscape views of the places he knew well, and they exemplify this idea of natural landscape.

In his *Hudson River from Ponckhockie* (plate 6), the landscape around the river suggests the developing commerce, but it is the mountains and river that are the focus of the picture. Similarly, his *Hussey Hill and Hudson River from Calicoon Hook* (plate 13) portrays the strength of the landscape. Human influences are still not the major focus. We are lucky to be able to compare these works to Jervis McEntee's *View of the Hudson from Fair View* (plate 8) which also demonstrates the idea of natural setting as key.

While his constant sketching provided details and ideas for compositions, it was Tubby's instinctive artistic ability that strongly contributed to his accomplishments. Although he painted some portraits,<sup>6</sup> it was in the local scenery that he found his inspiration, and he strove to connect his love of the area with his sense of

place and passion for painting. The hills along the Rondout, the nearby Catskills, and the Hudson River were the subjects of his paintings time and time again. Hussey Hill appears in every season and from different vantage points in many of his paintings. We find views from what later became West Chestnut Street near Tubby Row, and also from Montrepose Cemetery, a place Tubby referred to as "the sweetest spot on earth"<sup>7</sup> (plates 10, 11, 12 and 13). These views of Hussey Hill are where we see Tubby bring to life in oil what sketching and the current artistic philosophies taught him. In *Hussey Hill near Rondout, N. York* (plate 9) we view the countryside as idyllic. Church steeples are not the focus, but something that existed as part of the landscape. His familiarity with this view is apparent, as he also depicts it in autumn and in summer, with the fresh greenery of the season. In these paintings Tubby demonstrates his fine talent of creating an atmosphere through landscape.

During the mid nineteenth century, the art community in New York City was also flourishing. While Jervis McEntee was studying there with Frederic Church he came into contact with men like Sanford Gifford, Eastman Johnson, John Frederick Kensett and others. McEntee's wealth provided him with the ability to study and paint in New York City, as well as on the Rondout and in the Catskills. Certainly he instilled Tubby with creative inspiration and possibility, and when McEntee exhibited at the National Academy for the first time in 1850, one could understand Tubby's desire to do the same. He began to share studio space with McEntee and the artist Frank Carpenter,<sup>8</sup> who described Tubby as a "raw-boned angular fellow, but inspired."<sup>9</sup> It seems that



Hudson River from Ponckhockie, Plate 6

Oil on canvas, 18" x 30"

Signed on front: "J. Tubby"

On reverse in artist's script:

"Hudson River from Ponckhockie, J. Tubby"

Also bears the old Cordts family label:

"View of Hudson River from Kingston Point"

Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. John Cordts,  
Colorado Springs, CO.



Farm above the Rondout, Plate 7

Oil on canvas, 30" x 18"

Courtesy of Elliot and Anita Kirshman, Woodstock, NY

in the 1850's, Tubby, now in his thirties, was doing exactly what he had dreamed of. There are no known oil paintings by Tubby dated prior to the 1850's, so it is likely that this period marks his real beginnings as a committed artist. We can assume that his friendship with McEntee provided inspiration and observation of technique and composition, which he started to bring to his own work. He began to complete his first finished canvases and to show his paintings.

With these influences it was a very exciting time for Tubby, and in 1851 he too exhibited at the National Academy and furthered his dreams of artistic achievement.<sup>10</sup> The *Rondout Courier*<sup>11</sup> of May 1851 noted this show with the comment "...among the four hundred pictures in the catalogue are two by Joseph Tubby of Rondout. One is a view of a *Mill on the Platte Kill*, the other *Aughnawaus Pass*. The latter has been purchased by James Forsyth of Kingston. Forsyth (1819 - 1855), a lawyer, politician and judge, built his home, which was designed by the famous architect Richard Upjohn, on Albany Avenue. Forsyth considered himself a man of superior taste, his home being filled with "delicately carved marbles, rich carpets, mirrors, paintings and furniture."<sup>12</sup>

One of the highlights of this period was a sketching trip that Tubby took with Jervis McEntee. Large portions of Tubby's diary writings at this time are devoted to this trip, and he wrote to his friend Robert Gosman<sup>13</sup> about this experience in a letter from the Adirondack Iron Works dated August, 1851. "Friend Gosman, I owe you an apology for my neglect in not writing you before now, but our friend Jervis has kept you pretty well posted up concerning our movements in this region

remote." Among those named in this letter are Mitchell, "the Indian," Kuffer, "our guide," Professor Benedict from Burlington Vermont, "who was well acquainted with this part of the country," the Cheneys, and "a man named Henderson who met an untimely death." He makes notations of their visit to "Racket" Lake and Long Lake, and mentions "...we were so anxious to get here we did not stop to sketch, but while at the lake we made two sketches, one of which was the falls on the Racket River and another a study of rocks." With more notations of sketching with McEntee he adds "...before leaving we are intending to make sketches of the Indian Pass and pay a visit to Mount Marcy or the Tahawus, as the Indians call it, and I think is far a best name for it." In closing he adds, "We shall be home in about a month ... and we will have a long yarn to spin. Your friend, Joseph Tubby."<sup>14</sup>

In the 1850's, while McEntee was establishing his pattern of traveling and working from his studio in Rondout during the spring, summer and fall, and returning to the Tenth Street Studio, New York, to exhibit and paint in the winter, Tubby followed a similar schedule, although only shared studio space in New York is noted in his papers. It seemed a life well suited to Tubby. While on one of these sketching trips, Tubby wrote to a family member "we are as happy as the days are long and having a glorious trip,"<sup>15</sup> conveying his enthusiasm for such journeys and the creative spirit they embodied.

Tubby continued to exhibit at the National Academy throughout this period. Each entry lists his address as Rondout, Ulster County, NY, and the titles shown reflect views he repeated throughout his life. In 1852 he



View of the Hudson from Fair View, Plate 8  
By Jervis McEntee

Oil on canvas, 25" x 50"  
Signed with the monogram of Jervis McEntee and dated 1858  
Descended in the Absolem Anderson, Dr. Richard Elting and the Lawton families of Kingston and Rondout, NY. Family lore says the boat in the painting is the Mary Powell.  
Courtesy of Bill Lawton



Hussy Hill near Rondout, N. York, Plate 9  
Oil on canvas, 18" x 30"  
On reverse in artist's hand: "Joseph Tubby, artist, Hussy Hill near Rondout N.York"  
Courtesy of Sanford Levy



View from Rondout to Hussey Hill, Plate 10

Oil on canvas, 9" x 12" circa 1880  
Courtesy of Yourij Donskoj



Foot of Hussey Hill with Fenced Pasture,  
Plate 11

Oil on canvas, 10" x 15" circa 1880  
Courtesy of Bob and Claudia Haneberg,  
East Lyme, CT



Hussey Hill from Wiltwyck, Plate 12

Oil on paper on original inscribed mat, 3" x 5"  
Inscribed by the artist: "To Ella, from her friend J. Tubby,  
Hussey Hill from Wiltwyck"  
Courtesy of Robert A. Slater



Hussey Hill and Hudson River from Calicoon Hook, Plate 13

Oil on canvas, 24" x 36"  
Descended in the Absolem Anderson, Dr. Richard Elting  
and the Lawton families of Kingston and Rondout, NY  
Courtesy of Bill Lawton

exhibited two Adirondack landscapes. In 1854 he showed *View from Mount Repose* and *View on the Hudson near Rondout*, and in 1856, *View near Rondout* and *Trout Stream in the Catskills* (plate 14). In 1859 he showed only one picture, *Elm Trees, Kingston Valley*. His last listing from this time at the National Academy is in 1860, when he showed *Autumn* and *Winter*.<sup>16</sup>

Prior to his marriage in 1858, Tubby devoted much of his time to pursuing a career in painting. He remained involved with McEntee in Rondout, Manhattan, and on sketching trips, while continuing to gain the benefits of McEntee's experience, acquaintances and knowledge. These years of traveling and exhibiting always brought Tubby back to the Rondout. At the age of thirty-seven, he married Ella Hopkins, daughter of the minister of the Wurts Street Baptist Church in Rondout. (Four years earlier, Ella had been the recipient of a gift from Tubby, a small painting titled *Hussey Hill from Wiltwyck* (plate 12), inscribed "To Ella, from her friend J. Tubby," probably one of the first of several views he was to paint of this scene.<sup>17</sup>)

They had six children, most of whom eventually moved away from the area. Their son, Ralph, married and moved to Long Island. Of their three other sons, Charlie, a banker in New York, died of tuberculosis, while William became an architect, and Josiah a painter.<sup>18</sup> Their daughter, Ellen, married and moved to Connecticut, and Tubby's youngest child, Gertrude, became an interior designer in Montclair, New Jersey. Later in life Gertrude was responsible for writing about her father and seeing that some of his papers were given to the Smithsonian Institution. In the 1953 exhibition of Tubby's work at the Senate House in Kingston many



paintings owned by Gertrude Tubby were on display, and she is credited with providing most of the corresponding published information.<sup>19</sup>

Throughout his life Tubby often needed to supplement his income with his skills in wallpapering, decorative painting and house painting. Notations included in the Tubby papers indicate that he was also doing this work in Brooklyn, Manhattan and Westchester. Travelling by steamboat was common at the time, and no doubt he commuted on some regular basis between these areas. After his marriage, although continuing to exhibit, sketch and paint, Tubby became more involved with his father's and brother's construction business. In 1870 one of the family's largest investments was "Tubby Row," a group of brick homes made distinctive by their continuous mansard roof. Advertisements for the homes cited white marble fireplaces, pale parquet floors and a view of the Rondout Creek. The homes featured decorated cast iron lintels, tall French windows,



Trout Stream in the Catskills, Plate 14

Oil on canvas, 11" x 15"

Signed: "Joseph Tubby"

Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. John Cordts, Colorado Springs, CO.



Stony Clove, Catskill Mountains, Plate 15

Oil on canvas, 11" x 15"

On reverse in artist's hand: "Stony Clove, Catskill Mountains by Joseph Tubby"

Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. John Cordts, Colorado Springs, CO.



Winter – Snow in the Catskills, Plate 16

Oil on canvas, 20" x 30"

Signed: "JT/75", marked "L. Schalls, NY" original frame

Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. John Cordts, Colorado Springs, CO



Autumn in the Catskills, Plate 17

Oil on canvas, 24" x 36"

Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. John Cordts, Colorado Springs, CO

and individual stoops by each doorway. Tubby lent his craft of decorative painting and wallpapering to this endeavor, however it is noted that, in the end, the project was a financial failure.<sup>20</sup>



As early as 1858, in Boyd’s directory of Kingston and the Rondout, Tubby was advertising that he did “house sign and ornamental painting” and boasted “imitation of wood and marble done in a superior fashion.”<sup>21</sup> No doubt the skills that he had developed as a landscape painter were not enough to pay the bills for his wife and family. For several years he occupied space in the Masonic Hall Building in Rondout, and in 1860 it is mentioned in the *Rondout Courier* that he had moved to the first floor of the Rondout Courier Building on Garden Street, with this notation: “Mr. Tubby is a workman of artistic ability, skill

and experience. All articles used in painting and varnishing are kept for sale at his shop. He executes jobs in a fine style and is a good man to deal with.”<sup>22</sup>



Tubby continued to paint and occasionally exhibit for the next twenty years. Traveling between New York City and the Rondout and working as a house, sign and decorative painter, he kept busy trying to support his family. His passion for capturing landscapes endured, and he did participate in a few shows. Exhibition records of the Pennsylvania Academy<sup>23</sup> state that Tubby exhibited there in 1883, showing a painting titled *From Crosby Seat: Lake Mohonk* for the price of \$130.00. It is noted that at that time his address was listed as 25 Ferry Street, New York, indicating his continued travel back and forth from Ulster County.

Another painting from the 1880’s, *Sunset at Lake Mohonk* (plate 18), has a label that lists his address as 87 Gold Street. The Gold Street address also appears in the National Academy of Design listing<sup>24</sup> of 1884 when Tubby exhibited *In the Clove*, offering it for \$80.00. Tubby’s “calling card” from this period gave his studio address as 60 Madison Street, with a residence at 61 Quincy Street. On this card he offers “lessons given in landscape painting and sketching from nature,” with the “terms” being two hours for one dollar. He continued to work on landscapes and views surrounding the Rondout area. Tubby’s son, Ralph, wrote in a letter to his Aunt Carrie Hopkins in 1876 “...Papa is painting another large picture, a view of Hussey Hill from the back of the cemetery. It makes a very pretty picture.”<sup>25</sup>

By this time Tubby had mastered the attributes of style and feeling he had worked to perfect. He brought to life some beautiful views in the Catskills. In *Winter – Snow in the Catskills* (plate 16) and *Autumn in the Catskills* (plate 17) we see his ability to capture a scene in a vibrant and exciting way. Here color and tone enhance the actual landscape he chose. It is clear in the paintings



Sunset at Lake Mohonk, Plate 18

Oil on canvas, 18" x 30"

Signed: “J. Tubby 1883”

On stretcher – Exhibition label in artist’s hand: “Sunset at Lake Mohonk Joseph Tubby 87 Gold Street NYC”

Courtesy of Mohonk Mountain House

of the 1880's that he mastered the art of luminescence as well. In *Sunset at Lake Mohonk* (plate 18) and *Star Lake* (plate 20) he demonstrates this skill while still depicting a specific view.

In the last fifteen years of his life Tubby spent the majority of his time with relatives, staying with his brother in Mt. Vernon, NY, and his children in Manhattan, Brooklyn and New Jersey. In this period a press release in a Kingston paper declared: "Fine Paintings, six landscapes in oil by Joseph Tubby, formerly of this city presently spending time with his brother from Mount Vernon, are being shown in an exhibition in the private office of Crosby-Sahler & Co. These are the finest Mr. Tubby has produced." Their titles included: *The Line of the Stony Clove and Catskill Mountain Railroad*, an area between Phoenicia and Hunter, NY, where he and McEntee often painted; *Trees in Mount Vernon* Westchester County, where his brother lived; and *Winter*, which was reviewed as "...although giving the beholder a chilling sensation it is also pleasing." The picture that is said to have received the best reviews was *View of the Esopus Valley with Hussey Hill*.<sup>26</sup>

This improvement in style and quality is easily visible from his paintings dated in the 1870's and 80's. Tubby had clearly mastered the technique of landscape detail and natural setting. This is the period when Tubby chronicled for us the beauty and development along the Hudson, Esopus and Rondout. We get the feeling of the area, the winding streets, church steeples, boat docks, farms and houses that dot the natural landscape. Tubby revisited his favorite spots in every season and left us with these specific pictures of a time gone by. Perhaps the finest of these views is *View from West Chestnut Street*

(plate 2), which was given to Ulster County Community College by Mr. and Mrs. G.V.D. Hutton in 1963 with the hope of establishing an art collection for the college. A press release from that year explains how the painting depicts the spot formerly occupied by the college, with a view of the corner of West Chestnut Street and Montrepose Avenue and its houses, church steeples and waterways that are still visible today.<sup>27</sup>

This is the time when Tubby, having finally mastered his technique and focusing on the places he was most familiar with, probably started to feel the influence of changing artistic tastes. Exhibitions at the National Academy were moving towards more Impressionist art, and Tubby most likely began to feel slightly out of touch with current art trends. Locally, in the Rondout and Ulster County, people still enjoyed these familiar scenes. In *View of Ponckhockie from Steep Rocks, Cordts Residence in Distance* (plate 19), Tubby seems to be holding on to these traditions in his paintings and might have had more success selling them to local people.

Despite difficult financial times, Tubby still pursued his passion for painting, continuing to produce the landscapes that he loved. His friendship with McEntee was important to him even late in life. Among Tubby's papers is a letter from McEntee dated 1888, signed in closing "...always your friend."<sup>28</sup> In McEntee's diary entries there are several mentions of Tubby and their family connections.<sup>29</sup> In November of 1880 McEntee notes that a "son of Joe Tubby wants to talk to (Calvert) Vaux"<sup>30</sup> about studying architecture." A few days later he notes that it is William Tubby that he arranged for Vaux to speak with. (William did later become an architect in New York.) Later in the month he mentions "a visit by Julia Dillon and Joe Tubby."



View of Ponckhockie from Steep Rocks, Cordts Residence in Distance, Plate 19

Oil on canvas, 11" x 16"

Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. William Davenport, Stone Ridge, NY

Two very interesting diary entries in 1881 and 1882 reveal McEntee's reaction to Tubby's wish to further his own painting career. McEntee was struggling financially at the time and often noted his unhappiness about not selling more pictures himself. This gives us some insight into his thoughts on the subject:

11/30/81 "A note from Joe T. who wants to have a talk with me. I am afraid from what I've heard that he is going to try to get a living by painting pictures. This is simply madness, but how can I tell him so?"

1/3/82 "J.T. came Saturday by appt. Wants to get room in some studio in the city. Advised him to paint in Mt. Vernon where he is. I asked him if he didn't think it pretty late in life to set up as an artist. He is sixty, but he didn't seem to think it a difficult enterprise.....where angels fear to tread." <sup>31</sup>

Despite McEntee's reservations about his friend's true prospects as an artist, from the 1860's to the early 1880's Tubby painted many of the local scenes we prize today. Tubby also continued to teach painting in New York and painted on the New Jersey shore. In his seascape, *Atlantic Off New Jersey Shores* (plate 21), we observe the wonderful sky and clouds that Tubby had perfected combined with boats sailing in the distance; an ocean view that he was probably less familiar with, but where we can see him still connecting to his natural surroundings.

As a mature painter Tubby remained true to his developed style and philosophies of landscape painting. His son Josiah painted in an Impressionist style, departing from the manner of the nineteenth century. It is interesting to note that comments on Joseph Tubby's later career often claim him to be painting "in a style close to that of George Inness's own late manner."<sup>32</sup> However, it is more likely that these are the paintings that his son, Josiah, created and exhibited at the end of the nineteenth century and into the first half of the twentieth century.

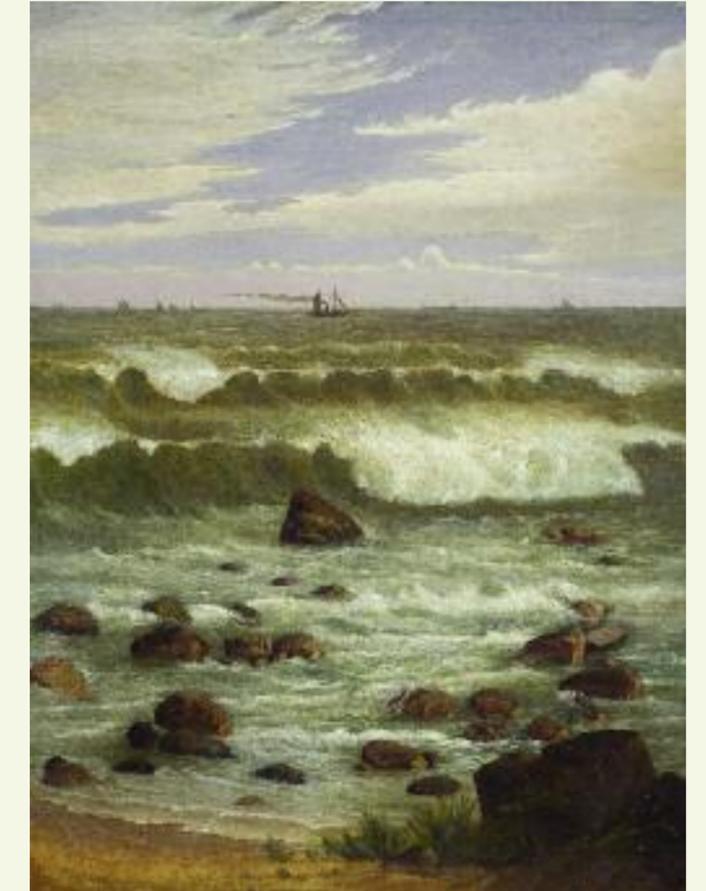
Tubby spent most of the last ten years of his life in Montclair, New Jersey with his daughter Gertrude. After several years of illness, he died in 1896, and is buried on the hills above the Rondout in Montrepose Cemetery.



Star Lake, Plate 20

Oil on canvas

Courtesy of The Adirondack Museum, Blue Mountain Lake, NY



Atlantic off New Jersey Shores, Plate 21

Oil on canvas, 20" x 26"

Label on reverse: "Raydon Gallery, Madison Avenue, New York. Artist: Tubby Joseph 1821-96"

Courtesy of Sanford Levy

# The Kingston Daily Freeman

CITY OF KINGSTON, N. Y., FRIDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 11, 1953.

## Showing Includes 30 Paintings by Former Resident

An exhibition of approximately 30 paintings by Joseph Tubby, Kingston artist of the 19th Century, opened to the public today at the Senate House Museum.

The paintings, most of them landscapes, were secured on loan from numerous sources after an appeal for information was published in The Freeman on Oct. 1. They are of interest to the historically minded as well as those interested in art, in that most of the landscapes were done in or near Kingston between 1851 and 1860.

Joseph Tubby was born in Tottenham, Middlesex County, England, in 1821. The family emigrated to America in 1832 and after a short time in New York the father established himself in Kingston as a building contractor. Joseph and an older brother joined him in the trade, later specializing in painting and decorating to augment the scanty living he made as

an artist.

### Married Minister's Daughter

Tubby was particularly interested in landscape work, although he also did a few portraits. When he was 37, he married Ella Hopkins, daughter of the minister of the Wurts Street Baptist Church. They had six children, the youngest of whom, Miss Gertrude O. Tubby, resides in Montclair, N. J., and from whom most of the information concerning her father was obtained. She also lent six paintings and a photograph for the exhibit.

Tubby once rented a studio in New York with his intimate friend, Jervis McEntee, another well-known Hudson River School painter. In the summer of 1851, the two artists took a two-month walking and camping tour of the Adirondacks.

The artist was most active between 1851 and 1860, during which period he exhibited six different times in the National Academy of Design. Much of his work was commissioned and is in private collections. There are a few in the Smith College Museum of Art and the New York State Historical Society.

### Buried in Local Cemetery

Tubby spent the last seven years of his life in Brooklyn and New Jersey, dying in Montclair August 6, 1896. He was buried in Montrepose Cemetery, Kingston.

The present exhibit is the result of the efforts of a local group that started with five paintings and knew only that they were signed with the name, Tubby.

The paintings that formed the nucleus of the exhibit included one showing the lower section of the city and owned by Mrs. G. V. D. Hutton; two owned by Mrs. John N. Cordts and two small studies that were on display at the Senate House Museum.

After it was reported in The Freeman Oct. 1 that information was sought about Tubby and the loan of additional works was being solicited, several persons volunteered information which provided contacts that ultimately led the local group to Tubby's daughter, who lent several paintings, provided the details of his life, and sent also a picture of the artist and an ingenious set of folding cutlery which Tubby carried on his trip to the



A self-portrait of the Tottenham, Middlesex County, England native, who died in 1896.

Adirondacks.

### Others Loan Paintings

Others who lent paintings for the exhibit, which will be open for a limited time only, include Mrs. Cordts, the Smith College Museum of Art, Mr. and Mrs. Hutton, Miss Jane Van Etten, Mrs. Alva S. Staples, Mrs. Gordon Reel, Mrs. Ida Reardon, Mrs. E. C. Chadbourne, Mr. and Mrs. Tony Staples.

## Other Known Paintings

### New York Historical Society, New York, NY\*

1. *Hudson River from Kingston, New York*, oil on board, c.1855-1858
2. *Rondout from Kingston, New York*, oil on cardboard, c.1870
3. *Napanoch in Shawangunk Mountains*, New York, 1859
4. *Mountain Stream, Jewett, New York*, oil on canvas, 1884
5. *Fall Scene in the Catskills, New York*, oil on cardboard

### Smith College, Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, MA\*

1. *Sunset in the Shawangunks*, oil, c. 1885
2. *Autumn Foliage, Summit, NJ*, oil
3. *Kaaterskill Mountains, Near Kingston, NY*, oil, c.1880
4. *Huzzey Hill, Kingston, New York*, oil, c.1880
5. *Three Landscapes*
6. *Quonochontaug, RI*, oil, c.1880-89

### Montclair Art Museum, Montclair, NJ\*

1. *Farm Buildings*, oil on canvas

### Senate House Historic Site, Kingston NY\*\*

1. *Tubby's Land and Farm*, oil on board (D)
2. *Tubby's First Farmhouse and Barn*, oil on canvas (B)
3. *Village of Kingston on the Esopus*, oil on board, (A) c.1850-1853
4. *View of Kingston from West Pierpont Street*, oil on canvas
5. *Sketch: Trees in Meadow*, oil on canvas (C)
6. *Unfinished Sketch: Tree on River Shore*, oil on board
7. *Waterscape: Storm with Boats*, oil on paperboard

### From the 1953 Senate House Exhibition (present location unknown)

1. *Site of Brooklyn Museum, End of Franklyn Avenue*, 1883
2. *Portrait of Mary Green Tubby, Artist's Mother*, 1883
3. *J. Tubby Self Portrait*, 1842

\* Smithsonian Institution Research Information System (SIRIS) – Art Inventories Catalogue

\*\* Senate House Historic Site, Kingston NY; NY State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation



A



B



C



D

## Exhibitions

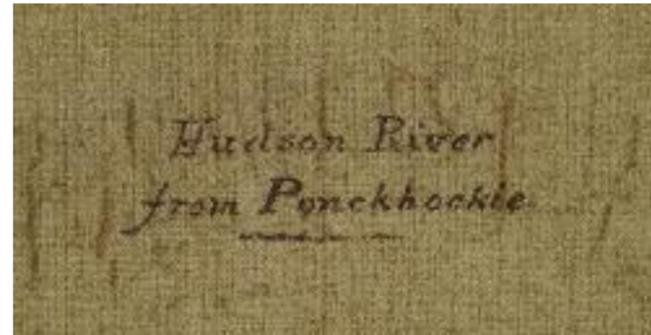
National Academy of Design, New York: 1851, 1852,  
1854, 1856, 1859, 1860, 1884  
Crosby-Sahler & Co., Mt. Vernon, NY: 1880

Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts: 1883  
Senate House Museum, Kingston, NY: 1953

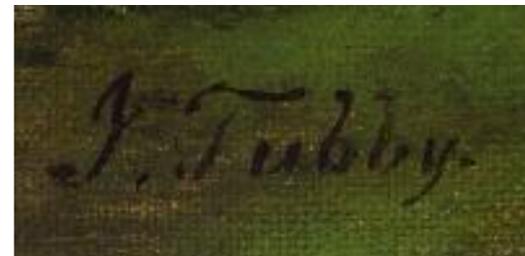
## Notes on Signature

Joseph Tubby did not use a consistent signature during his career. Many paintings are signed and titled on the reverse side of the image, often on attached paper labels, or in notations on the stretcher or the

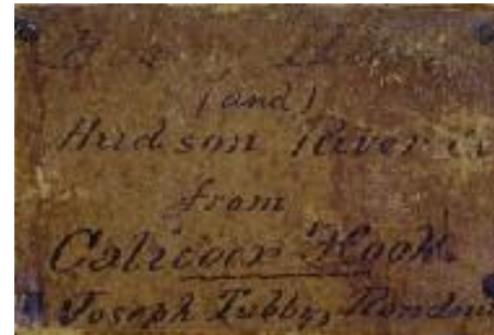
back of the canvas. When he did sign the front of a painting, it is usually signed “J. Tubby” with a date next to the signature. Some Tubby paintings have also been attributed to him through family history.



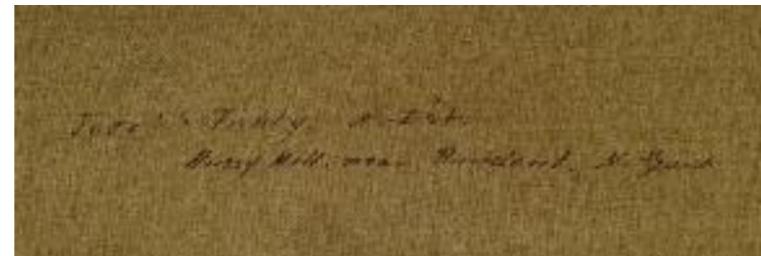
Title on reverse of painting, See Plate 6



Signature from front of painting, See Plate 6



Title and signature on reverse of painting, See Plate 13



Signature and title on reverse of painting, See Plate 9

## Notes

1. *Exhibition of Paintings by Joseph Tubby, 1821-1896*, (Senate House Museum, Kingston, NY, December 1953). This text was compiled from the notes of Gertrude Tubby and Mrs. Matilda Stock Cordts to accompany the 1953 Senate House Museum exhibition of Tubby's work.
2. Bob Steuding, *Rondout: A Hudson River Port*, (Purple Mountain Press, Fleischmanns, NY, 1995) 55
3. Steuding 126
4. *Exhibition of Paintings by Joseph Tubby, 1821-1896*. "Someone named Black" could possibly have been Thurston W. Black, born in 1810, who exhibited at the National Academy in the 1840's and 50's (from George C. Groce and David H. Wallace, *The New York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America 1564-1860* (Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1957)
5. Kenneth C. Lindsay, *The Works of John Vanderlyn*, (University Art Gallery, State University of New York at Binghamton, 1970)
6. From the *Exhibition of Paintings by Joseph Tubby, 1821-1896* it is known that a self portrait by Tubby was shown at the 1953 exhibition, but the present location of this painting is unknown. An article about the exhibition with a photograph of the portrait was printed in the *Kingston Daily Freeman*, (December 11, 1953).
7. Steuding 128
8. *Joseph Tubby Papers*, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm reels D9 and 3832
9. *Who Was Who in American Art, 1564-1975*, Vol. 1, ed. Peter H. Falk, (Sound View Press, Madison, CT, 1999) 576. Francis Bicknell Carpenter (1830-1900), portrait painter, member ANA, NA 1853, exhibited NAD 1861-98, Brooklyn AA, PAFA. Many noted persons sat for him.
10. *National Academy of Design Exhibition Record, 1826-1860*, Vol. 2, comp. Mary Bartlett Cowdrey, (New York Historical Society, NY, 1943) 167
11. *Rondout Courier*, Kingston, NY
12. William Rhoads, *Kingston, New York: The Architectural Guide*, (Black Dome Press, Hensonville, NY, in association with the Friends of Historic Kingston, 2003) 64
13. Robert Gosman, son of Reverend Dr. John Gosman, pastor of the Old Dutch Church in 1808, wrote a biography of the painter John Vanderlyn, ("Biographical Sketches of John Vanderlyn," unpub. manuscript in the R. R. Hoes Collection, Senate House Museum, Kingston, NY) in which he says Vanderlyn "honored me with his confidence during the last five years of his life."
14. *Joseph Tubby Papers*
15. *Joseph Tubby Papers*
16. *National Academy of Design Exhibition Record, 1826-1860*
17. This small painting was probably one of the first of many views Tubby painted of Hussey Hill. Verso: "Commemorative landscape c.1853-54" and a poem "To Ella, from Kate" dated 1854.

18. *Who Was Who in American Art, 1564-1975*, p. 3345.  
Josiah Thomas Tubby, painter, etcher, 1875-1958,  
Brooklyn, NY, studied Ecole des Beaus Arts, Paris, member  
Ogunquit School, exhibited in Maine.
19. *Exhibition of Paintings by Joseph Tubby, 1821-1896*
20. Steuding 28
21. *Boyd's Kingston and Rondout Directory*, Kingston, NY, 1858.
22. *Rondout Courier*, Kingston, NY.
23. *Annual Exhibition Record, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts*, Vol. 2, ed. Peter H. Falk, 1989
24. *National Academy of Design Exhibition Records, 1861-1900*, comp. and ed. Maria Naylor, (Kennedy Galleries, NY, 1973)
25. *Joseph Tubby Papers*
26. *Joseph Tubby Papers*
27. *Hudson River Pilot*, November 21, 1963, Kingston, NY
28. *Joseph Tubby Papers*
29. *The Diaries of Jervis McEntee*, Jervis McEntee Papers, 1850-1905, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.
30. Steuding 129
31. *The Diaries of Jervis McEntee*
32. *Who Was Who in American Art*, 3344

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# JOSEPH TUBBY

1821 – 1896

ARTIST: RONDOUT, NEW YORK

The Friends of Historic Kingston  
Kingston, New York