



George Cope

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Title

Trout in the Brandywine

Medium

Oil on canvas

Date

1904

Catalogue Number

79.18.2

Credit Line

Gift of Mrs. S. Hallock du Pont, 1979

Web Description

George Cope was born in 1855 near West Chester, Pennsylvania, and spent most of his life in the Chester County area. He originally trained with German landscape artist Hermann Herzog, who lived in Philadelphia from the 1860s, and in his early career Cope painted several landscapes of the countryside close to his home in Chester County, as well as in his travels to the Poconos and New York lake regions with Herzog, and in the western U.S. during his travels across America. The beautiful Chester County countryside abounded with fish and game during Cope's life, when hunting and fishing were popular pursuits for both urban and rural men alike. This subject matter appealed to the men's taste in art, and these paintings became fitting decorations for their offices and studies. Sporting scenes, such as the one in this image, thus became a popular theme for Cope's paintings. "Trout in the Brandywine" is an action scene in which a trout thrashes about in the river with a fishing hook, attached to the end of a fishing line, stuck in its mouth. Two sets of ripples collide on the surface of the water—one created by the trout's whipping tail, and the other by the trembling fishing line. The trout lurches onto its side, revealing its spots and the soft white flesh of its belly. Its energy is balanced by the waterfall in the background, while the rest of the river appears calm and peaceful.