

Description of event:

The event that I attended was the Joshua Shaw: A Paradise of Riches at the Greenville County Art Museum on September 20, 2008. At this exhibit, many pictures were painted by Joshua Shaw that he had painted between the years 1776-1860. At this exhibit, I viewed every painting that Joshua Shaw had painted that was at the museum.

How does this exhibit fit into our American Literature Class?

Although Joshua Shaw was born in England, in 1817 he immigrated to Philadelphia. Joshua Shaw painted many paintings of mountains, bridges, and people. The one thing that was evident at the museum was that Shaw mainly painted pictures of stuff that he had encountered. The one painting that really showed me that Joshua Shaw fit into this American Literature class was his painting titled: A scene in Virginia, which he painted in 1820. In this picture, it showed a few Indians that he had encountered near the North Carolina and Virginia border. The one thing that caught my eye on the card besides this painting stated that:

“Near the border of North Carolina and Virginia, Shaw encountered a group of Native Americans. He engaged in broken conversation with the eldest, who carried A hatchet beneath his worn blanket. Shaw recounted: After looking at it I returned it to him in silence reflecting upon the wonderful changes which a few years had produced and the very different result would have terminated such an accidental meeting had it taken place 50 years ago. The Indian...said that the hatchet had been long buried and all the wrongs done to his nation by the white man, forgotten how different was this from the general history of the fierce red men of the wilderness.”

This painting showed how much of a difference America was at the time, then what America was like many years before this painting was painted. For example, in our American Literature book we have read stories about Mary Rowlandson who was captured by the Indians. However, when Shaw came upon the Indians he did not have anything to fear about, because the Indians and the white man had learned how to get along over the years. In other words, if Shaw would have been born about hundred years earlier and he would have came close to the Indians in America then he would have ended up in captivity just like Mary Rowlandson was in captivity.

In other words, this painting is associated with American Literature because it shows what America was like after the white man got used to the Indians.