

# Alma Mater: The Hudson River School

*A Puzzle Poem by Dennis J. Hannan*

Identify the artists and the paintings.

Every lazy autumn day  
I live again my memories  
of that Hudson River School  
where my friend Irving slept  
5 while we his classmates  
gave no heed or heart  
to our French schoolmarm  
whose itinerant authority we dared not guy  
as she droned on and on  
10 in tone more sere  
than the yellow leaves  
that carpeted the lawn of our old church.

Indian summer's October leaves  
whose crisp dry sound would curry  
15 favor of my shuffling feet  
as I walked the path to the village  
home with Stuart  
doughty fellow with coal black hair  
son of the local cooper  
20 sharing a Bartlett pear  
I'd saved from lunch

We were cousins  
kindred spirits  
each vying for a homer in the Sunday game  
25 Coats fingered from our shoulders  
in the uncertain heat of afternoon

we gaze down across the now brown fields  
above the shimmer of the easy ripples  
on the Hudson far below  
30 to where the distant Kaatskil silhouetted wall  
shadows in us beneath the slanting sun  
imagined bateaus of French and Indians  
we'd read about  
come paddling coolly toward us  
35 leaving their silent silver wakes

We should warn the settlers  
but our chores await  
and there's a chance of storm  
portended by a distant thunder clap  
40 so with quickening steps  
reluctantly  
we hurry home

## Key

- 1 "Autumn" (1868), Jervis McEntee (1828-1891)
- 4 Washington Irving (1783-1859)
- 6 Martin Johnson Heade (1819-1904)
- 7 Henry French (b. 1704)
- 8 Francis Guy (1760-1820)
- 12 Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900)
- 13 "Indian Summer," Jervis McEntee (1828-1891)
- 13 "October," George Inness (1825-1894)
- 16 "The Path to the Village" (1882), J. Francis Murphy (1853-1921)
- 17 Robert L. Stuart, wealthy collector of John Frederick Kensett (1816-1872)
- 18 Thomas Doughty (1793-1856)
- 18 Thomas Cole (1801-1848)
- 19 George Copper and James Fenimore Cooper, whose *Last of the Mohicans* (1826) inspired David Johnson's (1827-1908) "Harbor Island, Lake George" (1871)
- 20 William Henry Bartlett (1809-1854)
- 22 Abraham M. Cozzens (1811-1868)
- 23 "Kindred Spirits," Asher B. Durand (1796-1886)
- 24 Winslow Homer (1836-1910)
- 27 John George Brown (1831-1913)
- 29 "On the Hudson, Nyack" (1871), Francis A Silva (1835-1886)
- 30 William Guy Wall (1792-after 1864)
- 31 George Inness (1825-1894)
- 34 "Cooley Homestead, Greenwood Lake 1866, home of Judge Isaac Cooley," painted by his son-in-law, Jasper Cropsey (1823-1900)
- 35 Francis Augustus Silva (1835-1866)
- 39 Clinton W. Clapp (1831-1915), born in the Town of Wappinger; some paintings hang in the Grinnell Library.