"...illustrated by Darley"

"...illustrated by Darley"

May 4 - June 18, 1978

Delaware Art Museum
2301 Kentmere Parkway
Wilmington, Delaware 19806

An Exhibition of Original Drawings
by the American Book Illustrator
Felix Octavius Carr Darley (1822-1888)

1858 Artists' Reception Series at the Dodsworth Building, New York City in January
Young Men's Association of Troy (New York) exhibition in March
Member on the Committee of Arrangements for the National Academy of Design
National Academy of Design exhibition "Sketch of Scipio" for J. Fenimore Cooper's *Deerslayer*, submitted by Darley in June
Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts exhibition, bank note designs submitted by Darley in June

1859 Married Jane Colburn of Cambridge, Massachusetts and moved to Claymont, Delaware in September
Auction Sales under the auspices of Messrs. H. H. Leeds & Co., in March "Cattle Grove" by Darley, offered for sale in April
Young Men's Association of Troy (New York) exhibition in April
National Academy of Design exhibition, five designs for Cooper stories submitted by Darley in May

1860 Allston Association exhibition, Baltimore, "Pastoral Scene" submitted by Darley in January and March

1861 Brooklyn Art Association, "Revolutionary War Incident" submitted by Darley in December
National Academy of Design exhibition, six designs for Cooper Stories and seven designs for Dickens novels submitted by Darley

1862 Goupil's Gallery, New York City, exhibition of Darley's drawings for Prince Napoleon, "Emigrants attacked by Indians", "Village Blacksmith" [94] "Unwilling Laborer," "The Repose" [96]
National Academy of Design exhibition, "Portrait of Paul P. Duggans, N.A." submitted by Darley

1864 Brooklyn Art Association, "Leap Frog" submitted by Darley in March
Boston Athenaeum Exhibition at the Athenaeum Gallery

1865 National Academy of Design, "Dahlgren's Cavalry Charge at Fredericksburg" and "Foraging Party" submitted by Darley

1866 Sails to Europe for thirteen months

1867 Paris Exposition, "Dahlgren's Cavalry Charge at Fredericksburg" submitted by Darley

1868 Boston Athenaeum Exhibition at the Athenaeum Gallery

1869 National Academy of Design, "The March to the Sea" submitted by Darley

1870 Brooklyn Art Association, "Indian Raid on Emigrant Encampment" submitted by Darley in November

1872 Brooklyn Art Association, "Italian Contadini" submitted by Darley in September

1874 National Academy of Design, "The Ovens - Mt. Desert" [135] and "Bald Porcupine Island, Mt. Desert" submitted by Darley

1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, "Street Scene in Rome" and "Puritans Barricading Their Houses Against the Indians" submitted by Darley

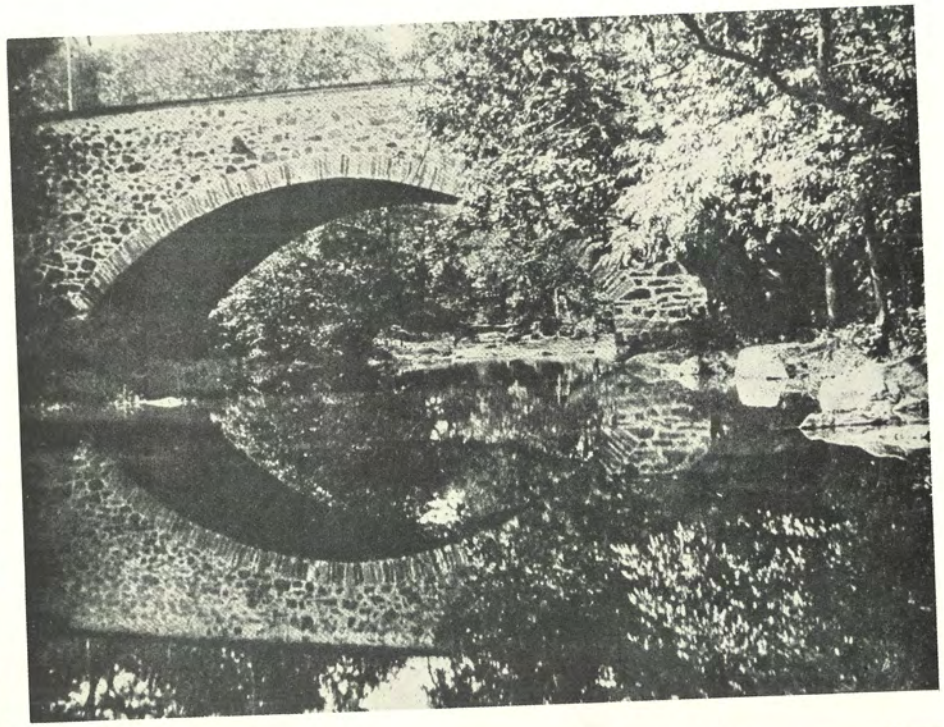
1879 Brooklyn Art Association, "Schoolboy" and "Cow", submitted by Darley in April
Artists' Fund Sale, "Farmyard Scene" submitted by Darley in February
American Watercolor Society, animal drawing submitted by Darley in March

1885 Darley elected as Honorary Member of the Salmagundi Sketch Club

1888 Darley died on March 23

1900 Metropolitan Museum of Art, exhibition of sixty original drawings by Felix O. C. Darley (1822-1888).

a



b

c

[a] Looking down Darley Road toward Philadelphia Pike (Photograph taken 1910)

[b] Darley Home - corner Philadelphia Pike and Darley Road (Photograph taken before 1916)

[c] Danzenbaker's cows around old quarry hole (Photograph 1900)

[d] Naaman's Creek Bridge on Philadelphia Pike (Photograph taken early 1900s)

[e] Original Railroad Bridge over Naaman's Creek - west of Philadelphia Pike. Rocks on left known as 'Tramps Washbowl'. (Photograph taken early 1900s)

Photographs are from the Schiek Collection, Claymont, Delaware

d

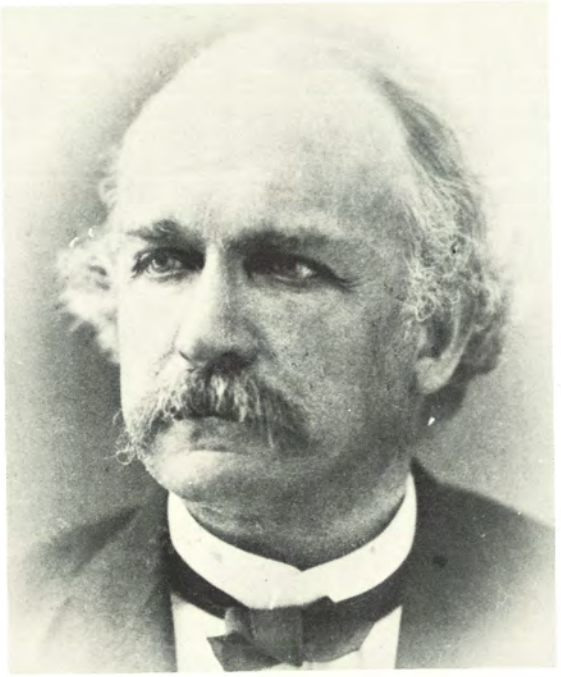
e

[f] Darley Home - corner Philadelphia Pike and Darley Road (Photograph taken before 1916)

[g] Felix O. C. Darley's front parlor in home, "Wren's Nest."

[h] Felix O. C. Darley's studio in home, "Wren's Nest."

h



i

l

k

j

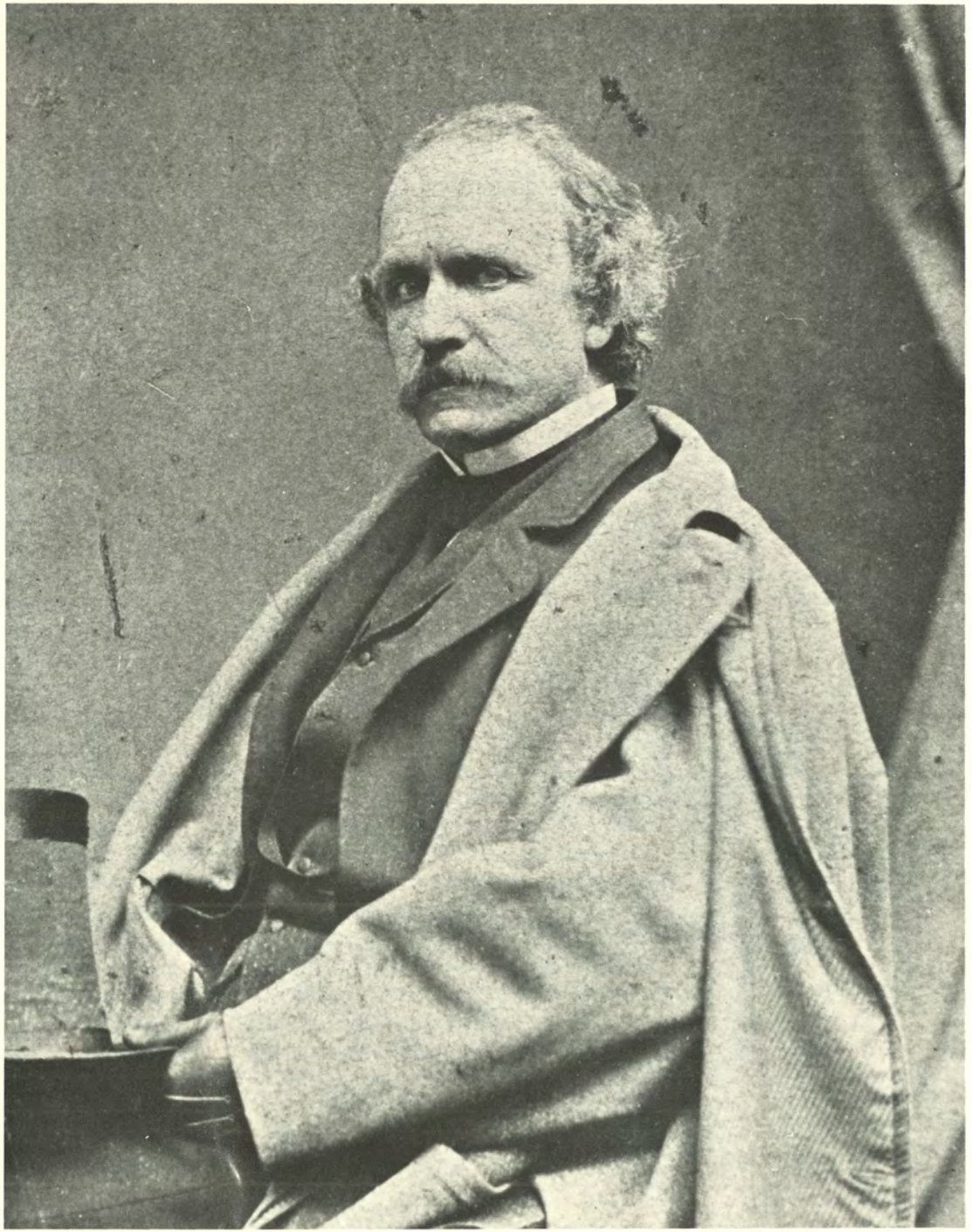
[i] Felix O. C. Darley (Photograph taken in Claymont, Delaware, 1880s)

[j] Church of the Ascension, Claymont, Delaware - northeast corner Philadelphia Pike and Church Lane (Photograph taken 1860)

[k] Mrs. Jane Darley (Jenny Colburn), "Jenny Wren" (9 February 1829 - 29 November 1916)

[l] Claymont Penn Railroad Station before 1901, Philadelphia Pike - south of Naaman's Creek. Mr. Habbart (left) drove for Mrs. Jane Darley.

[m] Felix O. C. Darley (23 June 1822-22 March 1888). (Photograph taken in Boston, Massachusettes, 1866)



l

j

m

French character; of a light walking Gentleman, he played with ease and vivacity . . . a manly, well proportioned person and a handsome face, though not warmly attached to the acting profession." Darley's parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles all had been associated with the theatrical profession in New York and Boston, but they all moved to Philadelphia after William Burke Wood (1797-1861), the husband of Juliana Westray, became manager of the Chestnut Street Theater in Philadelphia in 1809.

Two of Darley's elder brothers, John Clarendon and Edmund H., were portrait painters who exhibited from time to time at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Darley's eldest brother, William Henry Westray Darley, was a music professor and was married to Jane Sully, a painter and the daughter of the eminent portraitist, Thomas Sully (1783-1872). Little is known of Darley's elder brother Alfred or of the sisters Julia and Ellen who were both school teachers.[3]

The dynamics shaping Darley's early Philadelphia years may be reflected in his later experiences in Claymont, Delaware. Incidents in Darley's Claymont home, where he spent his last twenty-eight years, are recalled by his neighbor, Mrs. Anne P. Titzel:

> In the Darley House, besides Mr. and Mrs. F.O.C. Darley, lived Miss Ellen Darley, Miss Julia Darley, Edmund and Alfred Darley. A friend, Miss Helena O'Farrell had a school in the house. They had a wonderful dramatic club, and gave old English plays, well acted. The house was well suited to it, with wide halls, and double doors giving on the parlors which could be used for the stage. The Darleys were remarkably democratic for their time, and had all the servants in to see them act, and to hear good dinner conversation, which might improve their minds.
>
> They presented "Our Boys" and "Ici on Parle Francais" . . . the Darleys had a craze for giving monologues with homespun philosophy, country store wit, and country store dialogue.
>
> Another craze was for tableaux, given like the plays for the benefit of the Ascension Church at Claymont. Felix Darley would arrange the stage set and backgrounds; his sisters made costumes. Mrs. Darley, a perfectionist and purist, tried to make the plays as well acted and well presented as possible, . . . to the delighted audience of all Claymont.
>
> Later on, after the Darley actors were dispensed and there was no more theater, the Parrish children had trunks of costumes to play with, royal robes of crimson and purple, crowns . . .[4]

From the late 1820s through the late 1830s, Philadelphia was the major center of book and newspaper publication in America. The city's presses issued many publications that were reprints from English and Continental periodicals, books, and annuals. This plagiaristic practice was possible because there were no international copyright laws in America until 1891. In most cases, the original designs or illustrations were either simply re-engraved on new copper plates or were transferred into the same printing process in which the copy or text was being prepared. As a result as late as 1851 American illustration still was considered to be inferior to European illustration — with the exception of Darley's work which combined a recognizably American point of view with an acceptably sophisticated style of drawing.[5] On this combination rested his popular success in the mid 1840s; and on this is based the claim that Darley be considered the first true illustrator of the American spirit.

Contemporary accounts written by Tuckerman,[6] Stoddard,[7] and Trumble[8] maintain that Darley was self-taught, that he spoke of never having been without his "designing disease,"[9] and that he began drawing at so young an age he had to use a chair as a surface upon which to draw before he was tall enough to use a table top. Although Darley did not receive formal art academy training, he familiarized himself with some of the academic study practices, such as copying figures from Old Master engravings, etchings, and lithographs [125, 145, 146] and keeping in his files folio plates of the human anatomy [127, 128]. His initial concern for anatomical correctness engendered a lifelong pursuit and discipline in the study of human and animal form. Actors' reference books, including books on costume and manuals of physiognomy and rhetoric, also served as texts for the young artist. He doubtlessly frequented the theatrical productions in which his family was involved; these stagings showed him the importance of visually expressing facial and bodily actions in portraying subtle nuances of mood or emotion.

[137] Pencil and black ink wash drawing, "PreRaphaelite picture." Inscribed and signed by the artist. Sheet size: 5-11/16x8-7/8 inches.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. & M. Karolik Collection

[138] Pencil and black ink line drawing, "The Jug Club - ye secret black and midnight hags, what is it ye do?" Inscribed by the artist. Sheet size: 7-1/2x8 inches.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. & M. Karolik Collection

[139] Pencil drawing, "Exterior Decoration of the Astor House." Sheet size: 6-3/4x8-7/8 inches.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. & M. Karolik Collection

[140] Pencil and black ink line drawing of a painter riding a hobby horse. Sheet size: 8-1/8x9-13/16 inches.
Prints Division, the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

[141] Autograph letter signed, Cambridge, Oct. 28, 1867 / Monday, to Martin Heade. Sheet size: 7-7/8x10-3/8 inches.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. & M. Karolik Collection

[142] Pencil and watercolor sketch, "Bellport - L.I. / 1871." Inscribed by the artist. Sheet size: 9-1/4x13-7/8 inches.

[143] Pencil and sepia toned drawing, "Wren's Nest, Claymont, Delaware / September 1859." Inscribed and signed by the artist. Sheet size: 7x8-1/2 inches.
James W. Baily

[144] Watercolor drawing, "Kenilworth Abbey, England." Inscribed by the artist. Sheet size: 9-3/4x13-5/8 inches.
James W. Baily

143

144