Frank E. Schoonover Catalogue Raisonné Collection

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the
Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, Delaware Art Museum

Acquisition Information
Gift of the Frank E. Schoonover Fund, Inc., 2009

Extent
34 linear feet

Processed
Rachael DiEleuterio, 2010

Contents
Research materials, periodicals, exhibition files, sales catalogs, tear sheets, negatives, proofs, and administrative files relating to the Frank E. Schoonover Catalogue Raisonné

Access Restrictions
Series IV is restricted

Contact Information
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Frank E. Schoonover Catalogue Raisonné Collection, Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, Delaware Art Museum

Related Materials
Frank E. Schoonover Manuscript Collection
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Biography of Frank E. Schoonover

Frank Earle Schoonover was born on August 19th, 1877 in Oxford, NJ, son of Colonel John Schoonover and Elizabeth LaBarre Schoonover. After graduating with honors from the Trenton Model School in 1896, he briefly considered the Presbyterian ministry. However, a Philadelphia Inquirer advertisement for illustration classes steered him to Drexel Institute, where he was accepted into Howard Pyle’s class for aspiring illustrators. Fellow students included Stanley Arthurs, Jessie Wilcox Smith, Elizabeth Shippen Green, and Thornton Oakley. In both 1898 and '99, Pyle took note of Schoonover's incipient talents, offering him one of only ten scholarships at his Chadds Ford summer school. By early 1900 the uniquely trained and confident young artist had moved to Wilmington, continuing his studies with Pyle at the mentor’s studios on Franklin Street, launching his career with a commission of four illustrations in the book, A Jersey Boy in the Revolution. Thus began a very successful and prolific artistic career spanning over sixty years, and encompassing approximately 2,200 illustrations for over 130 books and many of the popular magazines and periodicals of the day; Saturday Evening Post, Harpers, Scribners, Outing, American Boy Magazine, Ladies Home Journal, and Colliers, among others. In addition, he completed over three hundred landscapes of the Brandywine and Delaware river valleys primarily after the mid-1930’s, by which time The Golden Age of American Illustration had essentially ended. After 1906, Schoonover's studio at 1616 N. Rodney Street was the epicenter of this artistic activity. His travels, however, took him to lands far away; Hudson and James Bay (Winter 1903-04), Montana (1905), Europe (1907), the The Canadian frontier again (Summer 1911), New Orleans (1911), Cuba (1936). From these travels, Schoonover gleaned sketches, diaries, and photographs that were the inspiration for many of his paintings of the North American Frontier. He also published several magazine stories recounting these trips, including; 'The Edge of the Wilderness', and 'The Haunts of Jean Lafitte'. His canvases were filled with dramatic images of trappers, Indians, cowboys, and pirates, breaker boys, coal miners, and women in the Pennsylvania Silk Mills. Writers including Jack London, Zane Grey, James Gilbert Parker, Henry Van Dyke, and George Marsh relished the Schoonover illustrations in their books.

Schoonover married Martha Culberston in 1911, then ended the decade with a series of fourteen powerful World War One paintings, published in the Ladies Home Journal as The Souvenir Pictures of the Great War. Of his book illustration during the teens, the most notable are those found in the two Burroughs books, Princess of Mars and Gods of Mars. Fifty-three years later he would receive the Edgar Rice Burroughs Bibliophile's National Award. Throughout the twenties, his book illustration prospered, highlighted by covers for the Harper's Children's classics, notably; Kidnapped, Robinson Crusoe, Heidi, Hans Brinker, and Swiss Family Robinson.

His other significant contribution to the artistic community was the formation of the Wilmington
Sketch Club with fellow illustrator Gayle Hoskins. This later evolved into the Delaware Art Museum of which Schoonover was one of the original founders. Even throughout the thirties, commissions continued for publications like American Boy Magazine, Youths Companion, and Country Gentleman. Schoonover also designed a magnificent series of stained glass windows for Immanuel church, and completed his only mural in 1936 for the H. Fletcher Brown School. Another impressive commission involved two large Pirate compositions for Ireenee du Pont's Cuba estate, Xanadu. They remain there to this day.

As the 1930s closed, and having witnessed the twilight of his illustrative career, Schoonover dedicated his artistic efforts to the landscape of his youth, especially Pike County, where he spent so many summers at the family Bushkill house. He painted actively until the late sixties. By that time he had been honored by a retrospective at the Delaware Art Museum, and been conferred an Honorary Masters of Art Degree by the University of Delaware. He also found time to conduct art classes at his studio for almost thirty years. By the time of his death in 1972, the Delaware Press had acknowledged him as "The Dean of Delaware Artists".

Subsequently, his son, Cortlandt, authored two books celebrating his father's important contribution to the annuals of American art and illustration; The Edge of the Wilderness, 1974, and Frank E. Schoonover, Illustrator, North American Frontier, 1976. Perhaps the greatest tribute to Schoonover occurred during his first foray into the frozen Canadian north in 1903. The Ojibways he encountered proudly gave him the Indian name; "Miss-a-nog-a-neegan," the picture making man and made him a blood brother of the tribe.

Source: Schoonover Fund (http://schoonoverfund.com/about-fes.html)

**Organization of the Collection**

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American Art Review, February 2006
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American Artist, November 1964
American Book Collector, October 1966
American History, December 1996
American History Illustrated, November 1973
American Realism and the Industrial Age
Art and Antiques, May-June 1981
Arizona Highways, November 1980
Books from Watson-Guptill, Fall/Winter 1976
The Brandywine Bugle
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County Lines, December 1979
Dateline Delaware, September-October 1960
Delaware County Scene, September-October 1972
Delaware History, Fall/Winter 1998-1999 Spring /Summer 1999
Delaware Engagement Calendar, 1969
Delaware Stays in the Union
Delaware Today, October 1970
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The Diary of a Slave Girl, Ruby Jo
The Du Pont Magazine, April 1928
The Du Pont Magazine, May 1928
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Frontier Legacy
The Gateway to Bookland, 1928-1929
The Graphic Arts, January 1912
Harper and Brothers Holiday Books, Christmas 1901
Harper’s Magazine, Centennial Issue 1850-1950, October 1950
Historic Delaware, Longwood Open Air Theatre, June 20-22 1935
The Hunt, Spring 2003
Illustrating and Cartooning
Illustration Collectors Newsletter, 1977
Illustration Collectors Newsletter, 1979
The Vaderboncoeur Collection of Images, March 2002
The International Studio, December 1916
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Life in the Finger Lakes, Winter 2005

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Main Line Today, August 2003
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Military Heritage, August 1999
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My Brandywine Valley
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Heroes in the Fight for Beauty: The Muralists of the Hudson Valley Court House
National Geographic, June 1987
The National Museum of American Illustration: The Grand Tour
Oinonen Book Auction, October 16, 1984
The Princeton University Library Chronicle, November 1941
Realms of Fantasy, June 1996
RP&S Calendar of Events, January-February-March 1983
Rare Books XIV
Scribner’s Magazine, January 1937
Sporting Classics, May-June 2001
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University of Nebraska Press, Spring/Summer 1988
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American Illustration from the Collection of Charles Martignette, Selby Gallery, March 4 – April 9, 2005
The American Magazine 1890 – 1940, Delaware Art Museum, Fall 1979
The Art of American Illustration, Brandywine River Museum, September 11 – November 21, 1976
Art of the Illustrator, Kelly Collection of American Illustration, June 2 – November 20, 1997
Art in Progress: The Evolution of a Collection and Shaping Our Future, Delaware Art Museum, September 7 – October 20, 2001
Artists of the Brandywine: Howard Pyle and his Students, Greenville County Museum of Art, January 7 – February 25, 1979
The Best of American Illustration: Selections from the Delaware Art Museum, Delaware Art Museum, 1985
Childhood Enchantments: British and American Illustrations for Children 1880 – 1940, Museum of Cartoon Art, April 2 – June 25, 1989
Drexel’s Great School of American Illustration: Violet Oakley and Her Contemporaries, Drexel University Museum, November 15, 1984 – May 31, 1985
Exhibition of Paintings & Drawings by Frank E. Schoonover, Montrose Galleries,
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Frank E. Schoonover at Drexel: Illustration and the Academic Tradition 1892 – 1903,
Drexel University Museum, February 14 – June 8, 1986

Four Decades: The Hotel DuPont Collection, Delaware Art Museum, 1982


Howard Pyle and His Students: Works from the Kelly Collection of American
Illustration, McGraw - Page Library, Randolph – Macon College, October 7 – December
9, 1995

Howard Pyle Illustrators of the Brandywine School: From the Collection of the Free
Library of Philadelphia, Federal Reserve Board, Marriner S. Eccles Building,
October 10, 2006 – March 30, 2007

In Tradition: Works by Brandywine Artists, University of Delaware, April 20 - July 20, 2007

Nostalgic Journey: American Illustration from the Collection of the Delaware Art
Museum, Delaware Art Museum, 1994

The Popular West: American Illustrators 1900 - 1940, Phoenix Art Museum, April 2 –
May 30, 1982

Stories to Tell: Masterworks from the Kelly Collection of American Illustration, Dahesh
Museum of Art, February 14 – May 21, 2006


Visions of the West, Dallas Museum of Art, September 20 – November 30, 1986

Where the West Begins, Diamond M Museum of Fine Art

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Series XII. Biographical Material (to be delivered)

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