Howard Pyle
Teacher of Illustration

The pages of history are filled with men and events nearly forgotten today but bright with fame and luster yesterday. Such a man is Howard Pyle. Less than half a century ago he was one of the most popular illustrators in what has often been called “America’s Golden Age of Illustration.” His books written for children were widely read and some of them were considered minor classics. Although a few of his works are reprinted from time to time, the fame of Howard Pyle has diminished. Occasionally a painting or drawing of his will appear, or one of his stories will crop out in some new anthology of old classics, but few people know, or care, about the accomplishments of the artist. Howard Pyle deserves much better of posterity.

When Howard Pyle died on November 9, 1911, at Florence, Italy, America lost one of its outstanding creative artists. The next year Henry Mills Alden remarked in Harper’s that “We shall not see his like again.”1 These words applied to a man who was more than an artist, for, with his passing, a great and inspired teacher was lost to the world.

In a sense, his untimely death did not mark the end for Howard Pyle. He had given to a group of young men and women a sound kernel of truth, a core of solid and abiding knowledge, that flourished throughout the years and returned rich dividends in many fields of art. There are, still living, nearly a score of artists—illustrators and mural, portrait, and landscape painters—who acknowledge Howard Pyle as their master. They have, in varying degrees, continued the principles that he taught them at Drexel, Wilmington, and Chadd’s Ford.

It is not the purpose of this account to record the careers of the students after leaving the tutelage of Pyle, but to recall, as best an

outsider may, the teaching career of Howard Pyle which began in 1894 and lasted until he went abroad in 1910. The methods he employed, particularly at Wilmington, were radically new and different at the time and are worthy of consideration by all who are interested in the story of American illustration.

Howard Pyle was born on March 5, 1853, in Wilmington, Delaware. He was educated there at the old Friend's School and in Clarkson Taylor's School. Later he studied art for three years in Philadelphia and at the Art Students League in New York City.

In 1876 he sent a short essay about the Virginia coast island of Chincoteague and a poem entitled "The Magic Pill," both accompanied by sketches, to *Scribner's Monthly.* The success of this early venture rekindled within him the desire he had long had to be an illustrator. In October, 1876, he went to New York, where he lived temporarily, returning to Wilmington only when his reputation had been established.

From that date until his death, a period of thirty-five years, Howard Pyle wrote thirty-four books, illustrating most of them; illustrated more than one hundred sixty volumes by other authors; and had approximately 2,200 drawings and paintings reproduced in periodicals. His output was prodigious, but quantity alone did not hold him in the first rank of American illustrators. There was an amazingly high standard of quality maintained in his work, and many of his pictures are held in high regard today. Several of his books, notably *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood,* *The Wonder Clock,* *Pepper and Salt,* *Otto of The Silver Hand,* and the four volumes of the Arthurian cycle, have been continuous good sellers and are often conceded to be modern classics.

Throughout this busy life Howard Pyle remained in America, rejecting, as so many others had not, the call of Europe. Around 1905 he decided to turn a large portion of his attention to mural decoration, and five years later he found that travel and study in Italy would be desirable. But his years of ceaseless toil had taken a heavy

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3 For a complete list of Howard Pyle's work, the reader is referred to Willard S. Morse and Gertrude Brincklé, comps., *Howard Pyle, A Record of His Illustrations and Writings* (Wilmington, Del., 1921).
toll, and he died within a year after going abroad. There was a touch of irony in the fact that this artist who had struggled all of his life to develop a native American art should die in a foreign land, far from the shores of the Middle Atlantic states that he loved so dearly.

At the apex of a career which brought him more orders than he could possibly fill, and when he was at the height of his earning power, Pyle determined to devote a portion of his time to teaching. After eighteen years of practical experience he felt that he had reached the point where he had something to give to the more advanced student. He was generally conceded to be one of the foremost illustrators in the country, and had been approached for advice by youthful aspirants on more than one occasion. He could contribute much to the would-be artist. Furthermore, as one of his students, William J. Aylward, stated years later in a letter: "... Mr. Pyle—as told by himself—saw so many illustrators peter out after a brilliant debut in the magazines and realizing that cleverness without sound training was the cause, offered his services."

In addition, Pyle was discontented with the cramping influence of the art schools of the period. He himself was largely self-taught. In his growth through practical experience he had developed many unorthodox views. The prevailing idea in art schools at that time tended toward imitative drawing and painting. The student was taught how to draw in charcoal from the nude figure and was set the task of copying plaster casts over and over again. Pyle considered such training essential, but insufficient. It would produce skilled artisans, not creative artists. Gradually he evolved a training

4 It is interesting to read what Henry Seidel Canby had to say about Pyle's financial standing in his autobiographical reminiscences of Wilmington in the 1890's: "We had one real artist, Howard Pyle, and he by some irony of circumstance, happened to be the first illustrator of his time in the English-speaking world, and the author of one of the few books of authentic romance published in America in his day; yet it was not for these reasons that he ranked with the local bankers, but because he belonged to a respectable Quaker family, held ultra-conservative Republican opinions, and was known (or rather discovered, because at first his position was doubtful) to earn an income which was considered fantastic in our town considering what he did for a living." Henry Seidel Canby, The Age of Confidence (New York, 1934), 234.

5 Letter from William J. Aylward to the writer, Nov. 10, 1946.

6 "Howard Pyle's ideas of instruction were far removed from the usual long months and often years spent in life class work. 'The human family having worn cloths [sic] for generations, their cloths [sic] were a part of them, it was like taking the feathers off a bird before you draw or paint it.' " Letter from Cornelia Greenough to the writer, Feb. 19, 1947.
method which would prepare students to paint living pictures rather than, as he wrote, "dead, inert matter in which there is not one single little spark of real life."\(^7\)

A third reason for teaching was one that pervaded his lifelong thinking. He believed that if an artist could be a successful illustrator, satisfying the demanding requirements of art editor and public, he could become proficient in other art fields if he desired. But Howard Pyle always considered himself an illustrator. "Today I often find that the word illustrator is regarded with contempt by a few who claim a higher position as being painters. Such an attitude I cannot respect. The world today wants illustration, and I, as an illustrator, believe that by nobly satisfying their wants there can be created from them another and vital art."\(^8\) Some years after he had begun to teach, he again affirmed his faith in illustration in the concluding lines of an article written for the Bibliophile Society of Boston: "... the only distinctly American Art is to be found in the Art of Illustration."\(^9\) Believing illustration to be a major American art form, it was natural that Pyle wished to train young people to become proficient at it. Through mastery of the techniques of illustration, techniques that envisioned the highest ideals and aspirations of the artist, the blood stream of American design would be fed from new sources.

It was Pyle's intention, after deciding to teach, to become a member of the faculty of an established Philadelphia art school. He could thus continue to live in Wilmington, where he had his studio, and commute to the Quaker City once or twice a week. What followed may best be told in the words of W. J. Aylward\(^10\):

\(^7\) From a letter written by Howard Pyle to Dr. James MacAlister, President of Drexel Institute, Oct. 6, 1896, quoted in Charles D. Abbott, *Howard Pyle, A Chronicle* (New York, 1925), 205.

\(^8\) From an address presented before the Society of American Artists (date not given) as recorded in Homer Saint-Gaudens, *The American Artist and His Times* (New York, 1941), 163.

\(^9\) Howard Pyle, "Concerning the Art of Illustration," *The Bibliophile Society First Year Book* (Boston, 1902), 21. "As one explanation of the high place that he held for an Illustrator Howard Pyle told of meeting on a train a man who was anxious to find out what profession or work in life he had, and he left him still guessing although, among other things he said 'painter.' When asked why he did not answer yes Howard Pyle said, 'I'm not a painter. I'm an Illustrator which means to illumine which is a very great work to accomplish!'" Letter from Cornelia Greenough to the writer, Feb. 19, 1947.

\(^10\) Letter from William J. Aylward to the writer, Apr. 15, 1945. There is reason to believe that Drexel made the first move in asking Pyle to join its faculty. In a letter written by
Significant of the High Art attitude toward illustration is this incident—Mr. Pyle saw gifted men come up and disappear from the magazines and decided to do something about giving art students a firmer foundation to build on by offering his services to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art as Instructor of Illustration. His offer was politely refused, the excuse being that the academy school was for painters and sculptors and a school for the fine arts only.

Pyle made the same offer to the Drexel Institute which promptly accepted and within a short time there began to appear in the magazines new names. . . . This caused a grand exodus from the Penn. Academy to Drexel. Harrison Morris, the Director, wrote in panic to Mr. Pyle asking him to come and name his own salary—Pyle's reply (he told me this) was brief and to the point: "He who will not when he may, when he will he shall have nay."

Drexel Institute of Technology was a young institution at the time the noted illustrator's name was added to its faculty. It had opened the doors for its first class in 1891, and was then in the early stages of curriculum building and revising. It provided an ideal proving ground for the artist to try his ideas.

The Art Department of the Institute had begun its enrollment in March, 1892, under the direction of Mrs. Hannah Carter. It offered two- and four-year fine arts courses and special classes in engineering drawing, architectural drawing, and applied arts. Two years later it became necessary to divide the department into more specialized categories. Renamed the Department of Fine and Applied Arts, "its fundamental divisions had become more clearly defined." The architectural course was enlarged, divisions of design and decoration were established, and the applied arts section was increased to cover a three-year period of study.

Largely responsible for the expansion of the Department of Fine and Applied Arts was Clifford P. Grayson, instructor in oil painting,

Clifford P. Grayson, Director of the Department of Fine and Applied Arts at the time, to Prof. C. L. Altmair of Drexel Institute, Apr. 9, 1940, the following remarks lead one to believe that Drexel approached Pyle: "When Dr. MacAlister asked if I could suggest anyone—I told him we had one of the ablest illustrators of the country practically right in Philadelphia. Howard Pyle, living in Wilmington, would probably be interested in such a class. The Doctor grasped the idea at once. The result was that . . . Pyle came by appointment to the Institute, and after a talk with Dr. MacAlister and me, decided to take charge of a class in Illustration at the Institute." Quoted in Edward D. McDonald and Edward M. Hinton, Drexel Institute of Technology, 1891-1941. A Memorial History (Philadelphia, 1942), 125-126.

11 Ibid., 122.
who had become director in 1893. It was he who urged President James MacAlister to appoint Howard Pyle as instructor of a class in illustration. Grayson believed this innovation would fill a definite need. There was a demand for illustrators, and pictures painted for exhibition purposes, no matter how well conceived, would often be unsaleable. An appointment was made for Pyle to meet MacAlister, and an agreement was soon reached for Pyle to conduct one class a week commencing in October, 1894.

The Catalogue of the Department of Fine and Applied Arts for the academic year 1894-1895 carried the following announcement:

**ILLUSTRATION**

A Course in Practical Illustration in Black and White, under the direction of Mr. Pyle.

The course will begin with a series of lectures illustrated before the class by Mr. Pyle. The lectures will be followed by systematic lessons in Composition and Practical Illustration, including Technique, Drawing from the Costumed Model, the Elaboration of Groups, treatment of Historical and other subjects with reference to their use in Illustrations. The students' work will be carefully examined and criticized by Mr. Pyle.

The class met at two o'clock on Saturday afternoons, and the charge to the student was twelve dollars a term. It was a modest enough fee for the privilege of studying with a man who was nationally known. From the start the class was open only to advanced pupils, and an examination in drawing was required for admission. Among the more than thirty pupils who attended this first class were three young people destined in a decade to become outstanding leaders in illustration: Maxfield Parrish, Jessie Willcox Smith, and Elizabeth Shippen Green (Elliott).

The early success of this course was continued through the 1895-1896 school year, and by October, 1896, Howard Pyle "began to have what amounted to complete control of the entire Art Department." It was then that the School of Illustration was established under his direction. Said the Catalogue of that year:

13 Abbott, 206.
14 Circular of the School of Illustration (1896-1897), Drexel Institute of Art, Science and Industry, 3.
SCHOOL OF ILLUSTRATION

After two years of experiment in conducting a class in Illustration at the Drexel Institute, under the direction of Mr. Howard Pyle, the results have been such as to warrant the Institute in extending considerably the scope of this branch of its work in the Art Department.

The work in Illustration has therefore been reorganized and will be carried on in two parallel lines of study and training.

New demands were made on Pyle's time, for in place of the Saturday afternoon classes there were meetings on Mondays and Fridays. An enlarged curriculum composed of two classes was created. Class I, which met on Monday and Friday from 3 to 5 P.M., consisted of lectures on composition and practical illustration, a logical outgrowth of the earlier Saturday lectures on composition. Class II assembled on the same days from 10 A.M. to 12 noon to study the draped and costumed model. Another life class met to study the draped and costumed model in the Evening School on Mondays and Fridays from 7:30 to 9:30 P.M. Instead of coming to Philadelphia one day a week, it was now necessary to spend two long days at Drexel. In addition to the hours of lecture and criticism, Pyle made arrangements to be in his office for consultation from 9 to 10 A.M. on the days he taught. In line with the more comprehensive schedule, the fee was raised to twenty dollars a semester, although entrance continued to be by examination only.

The following year there was a further subdivision into three classes embracing essentially the same material. Class I was to study from the draped and costumed model; Class II was a class in illustration in which the student was to make a finished picture using the draped model; Class III consisted of critical lectures in practical illustration and was broken into three groups: composition, facial construction, and costume instruction. But, finding that the evening class was taking too much of his time, Pyle eliminated it in the spring of 1897.

Within the framework of these classes, Howard Pyle applied his new principles of instruction. The first of these was to develop in the student the faculty of projection. To be able to live the scene one was depicting was as essential as being able to draw. Projection was the

15 Year Book of the Departments and Courses of Instruction (1897-1898), Drexel Institute of Art, Science and Industry, 24-25.
difference between imitation and creation, between cold and warmth. By the time the pupil had reached the School of Illustration he was supposed to know the primary techniques of draughtsmanship. Pyle taught no technical method at all, according to one of his Drexel students.\(^\text{16}\) Instead, there was concentration on developing a feeling of kinship with the situation that the illustration was bringing to life on the canvas. This was an ability that Pyle possessed to a marked degree. Writing a tribute shortly after Pyle’s death, one of his students, W. H. D. Koerner, said that “Howard Pyle taught, fought, sang, struggled, and sobbed through his work.”\(^\text{17}\) To project himself into his work until imagination merged with reality was one of his primary tenets and a trait that he strove to instill in all who worked with him.

Elizabeth Shippen Green who studied at Drexel summed up the Pyle credo of painting in three rules\(^\text{18}:\)

1. To realize as hard as you possibly can the situation that you are about to depict.
2. To realize as hard as you possibly can.
3. To realize!

This was a far cry from academic procedure with its emphasis on spiral, oval, and triangular design; on perspective and “color layout.” It possessed the warmth and dignity of humanity. It was illustration as practiced by Howard Pyle and handed on to his fortunate pupils. Although not a denial of the time-tested and accepted principles of art, it contained a stern injunction to remember that force and purpose, not technique, were what made an illustration worthy.

Mastery of the techniques of composition was another objective for which he strove. From the first year, the composition class had been the fulcrum of his teaching. “From his own experience Mr. Pyle had learned that those able to present original compositions were better equipped in time of national stress to find publication for their work. Thus his insistence on original composition.”\(^\text{19}\) The composition class followed an invariable routine. “Each one of his pupils

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\(^{16}\) Told by Margareta Hinchman to the writer, Jan. 14, 1947.
\(^{18}\) Told by Elizabeth Shippen Green (Elliott) to the writer, Feb. 4, 1947.
\(^{19}\) Letter from Ethel Franklin Betts (Bains) to the writer, Nov. 30, 1946.
made compositions from original ideas—which were put up one by one, on a screen for criticism." As the pictures were placed before the class, Mary Franklin Garber recalled that

Mr. Pyle would look at them for awhile—and there was always great anticipation in the air while he studied the drawing up for consideration. However flat or dull or insipid it was we knew that some most illuminating remarks would be made when he had "taken in" so to speak the idea that the student wanted to express. Then his remarks would begin. . . .

A threefold purpose was served by this open consideration of compositions. First, the student received expert criticism on his work; second, he was given an excellent opportunity to compare his progress with that of the rest of the class; and last, it provided training in the development of the critical faculty.

The influence of Howard Pyle's personality was as important as the principles he taught. Possessed of enormous vitality, which he passed on to those who studied under him, and motivated by a deep spiritual sincerity, he had an electric effect on his classes. "The most inspiring teacher I ever worked with" was the emphatic statement of Miss Green. Katherine Richardson Wireman remembered the same quality: "When I went to Howard Pyle's class just listening to him made me more observant. He made me more aware of all the details of the landscape and things that I had never seen before. I realized that I had not had my eyes opened." And Maxfield Parrish stated: "It was not so much the actual things he taught us as contacts with his personality that really counted. Somehow, after a talk with him you felt inspired to go out and do great things, and wondered by what magic he did it."

When asked what he owed to Howard Pyle, Parrish replied that it was "Inspiration, perhaps more than anything." In 1923, almost thirty years after studying at Drexel, Jessie Willcox Smith wrote: "It has occurred to me that it was not so much his definite instruction about drawing that has helped me—his telling me to do this so and that so, the light and shade and position so; but

20 Ibid.
21 Letter from Mary Franklin (Garber) to the writer, Jan. 29, 1947.
22 Told by Elizabeth Shippen Green (Elliott) to the writer, Feb. 4, 1947.
23 Told by Katherine Richardson (Wireman) to the writer, Jan. 21, 1947.
24 Letter from Maxfield Parrish to the writer, Mar. 28, 1945.
25 Letter from Maxfield Parrish to the writer, Apr. 9, 1945.
it was his whole spirit, the spirit that he breathed into the field of illustrative art."\textsuperscript{26}

Pyle's spirit was infectious, and his buoyant enthusiasm helped to sustain many a faltering student. In order to accomplish his aims more effectively, he made a serious effort to place himself on the same level as his students.

He used to tell us on those afternoons that he knew nothing about teaching. He put himself right down on the plane with ourselves, and was just one of us, and said, "I have had twenty years of practical experience in Illustration, and I may know a few things that will be helpful to those of you who are beginning," and then he would proceed to pour into us a fund of inspiration and knowledge and experience. We would hear more in one afternoon than we could assimilate in a year.\textsuperscript{27}

Another Drexel student, Wuanita Smith, further explained the effort Pyle made to approach the young people as an equal\textsuperscript{28}:

It was his constant inspiration that made me improve rapidly in his class. Such as "Keep a stiff upper lip" "It is easy to paint. Just like 1, 2, 3, 4." And strange to say I began to find it so by "seeing things clearly in my mind" and just putting them down on canvas. Mr. Pyle encouraged the good comradeship in his class. He was a good leader. No other teacher ever inspired me so.

Howard Pyle was more than a guide to his students, greater than a mentor, and beyond a mere technical adviser. Every member of his class was made to feel that his teacher was personally concerned with his development. "Once in his class everyone was treated equally well and given about the same amount of time in criticism—Mr. Pyle was very kind and felt a deep interest in every student."\textsuperscript{29}

The student, moreover, was impressed with the fact that his goal was important. Only by hard and ceaseless endeavor could he be worthy of the high ideals to which Howard Pyle aspired. There was no room for the get-rich-quick or the hack worker. The two require-


\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Ibid.} 19-20.

\textsuperscript{28} Letter from Wuanita Smith to the writer, Jan. 9, 1947. It is interesting to read a statement by Elizabeth Shippen Green (Elliott) which agrees with Miss Smith concerning the simplicity of Pyle's teachings. In an address given in 1923, Mrs. Elliott said that "He made the very delightful remark that drawing was easy! 'All you have to do is put down things exactly the way they are.'" \textit{Report of the Private View}, 13.

\textsuperscript{29} Letter from John Rennell to the writer, Mar. 2, 1947.
ments demanded of all were concentration of purpose and devotion to art. Howard Pyle was always impatient with half-way measures.\textsuperscript{30}

There was a phenomenal increase in attendance at the School of Illustration from 1894 to 1899. Although this cannot be attributed entirely to Howard Pyle, the success of his early students undoubtedly had much to do with it. Before 1898 many of the first art students to come to Drexel had succeeded in having their illustrations reproduced—Parrish, Smith, Green, Sarah Stilwell, and Clyde Osmer DeLand, to name a few. There is no other way to account for the growth of the School of Illustration, which enrolled thirty-nine in the first term of 1894–1895 and sixty-four in the second semester of 1898–1899, except to say that it was the Pyle influence. This growth was accomplished in a period of contraction in the Art Department, which had started as one of the major divisions of Drexel in 1892 and was finally discontinued in 1905. Enrollment in the department as a whole in October, 1894, was one hundred and seventy-seven; yet in February, 1899, only ninety-seven registered. When Howard Pyle began his teaching at Drexel, illustration had interested only twenty-two per cent of those registered in the Art Department; in the last half of the academic year of 1898–1899, sixty-six per cent had signed up for the course in illustration. Additional inferences may be made from the fact that in 1900, the year Howard Pyle resigned, attendance in the School of Illustration dropped from sixty-four to twenty-eight, less than it had been six years before.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{30} Illustrative of the concentration on study demanded by Howard Pyle is the following incident: "Grace Gebbie came to Pyle at Drexel to learn illustration. Grace was drawing good figures at the time for Campbell Soups. She was told that he would not teach her unless she gave up what she was doing. This disappointed her and made Drexel angry. She did not follow Mr. Pyle’s instruction." Recounted by Katherine Richardson (Wireman) to the writer, Jan. 21, 1947.

\textsuperscript{31} The figures above are taken from the Records of the Drexel Institute of Technology. Among the pupils of Howard Pyle while he was at the institution, the following may be mentioned: Stanley M. Arthurs, Anna Whelan Betts, Ethel Franklin Betts (Bains), Elizabeth F. Bonsall, Bertha C. Day (Bates), Angel de Cora, Clyde O. DeLand, Louis R. Dougherty, Elizabeth S. Green (Elliott), Walter D. Everitt, Richard B. Farley, Mary Franklin (Garber), Cornelia Greenough, Charlotte Harding (Brown), Margaretta Hinchman, Philip Hoyt, Gertrude A. Kay, Winfield S. Lukens, James E. McBurney, Emlen McConnell, Robert L. Mason, Violet Oakley, Maxfield Parrish, Louise Perritt, Elenore Plaisted (Abbott), John Rae, John Rennell, Katherine Richardson (Wireman), Walter Russell, Frank E. Schoonover, Jessie Willcox Smith, Wuanita Smith, Alice B. Stephens, Sarah Stilwell (Weber), Ellen B. Thompson (Pyle), William Francis Wood, and Eugenie Wireman (Dawson).
Despite the apparent success of the School of Illustration, Howard Pyle never seemed to be entirely pleased with the result of his teaching at Drexel. His dissatisfaction crystallized in the fall of 1899, and on February 14, 1900, he submitted his resignation to President MacAlister.\[32\]

1. My time is very valuable, and now that I feel myself quite matured in my art knowledges, I think it both unwise and wrong to expend my time in general teaching. (2) The great majority of a class as large as that which I teach at the Drexel Institute is hopelessly lacking in all possibility of artistic attainment. (3) There are only one or two who can really receive the instruction which I give. (4) To impart this instruction to these two or three who can receive it appears to be unfair to the others who do not receive such particular instruction. (5) This apparent favoritism upon my part must inevitably tend to disrupt the Art School or to make the large majority discontented with the instruction which they receive in contrast with that which the few receive; nor is it possible to assure such discontented pupils that that which I give them is far more abundant and far more practical than that which they could receive from any other Art Institute—the fact remains in their minds that they are not given that which I give to other pupils and that apparently there is favoritism in the Class.\[33\]

The second and third reasons were the most important. In a public institution such as Drexel, the instructor had to accept anyone who wished to study illustration, provided, of course, he met the minimum entrance requirements. But while Pyle had been teaching, orders for his illustrations and writings had continued to pile up. There were more demands than could be met. Under these circumstances, he did not feel justified in using days for teaching that could be better spent in practical application of his art, especially since the results of his teaching did not seem to be worth the time. The preponderance of mediocre students forced him to do one of two things. Either he must continue to give an equal amount of time to all his students, or turn the bulk of his attention to the more talented. The first was unfair to those who could best profit from his advice; the second would be an injustice to the slower group. Moreover, he was a gentle man and was hurt by the fact that many of his women students often wept after

\[32\] Howard Pyle continued to teach in the fall of 1899, but no record has been found of the exact date when he stopped. It may be assumed that his resignation was to take place immediately upon its acceptance in February, 1900.

\[33\] Quoted in Abbott, 213–214. Classes in the School of Illustration had averaged more than thirty for the past three years.
his criticism of their work in the composition class. Never would he intentionally hurt the feelings of a beginner.34

Inherent in this paradox of quantity and quality was the complete negation of all of his principles. Teaching, as well as illustration, was an intensely personal matter. How could he continue to offer close personal supervision, day after day, to a large group of students of varying ability? Obviously, he could not. Nor could he continue to impress his theory of mental projection on unready minds, no matter how willing they might be, unless he devoted full time to his teaching. This he was unwilling to do. Inspiration, too, had its limits and could not accomplish miracles. It was not that Howard Pyle wished to give up teaching; he had decided to concentrate on quality. He planned to open a private school of illustration near his own studio at 1305 Franklin Street, Wilmington, Delaware. There he would select a few young people—“6 to 9,” he said—and give them concentrated individual training.35

Howard Pyle’s Wilmington studio sat some distance back from Franklin Street on a well-kept lawn. It was located in a quiet, restful residential section not far from the center of the city. The studio was commodious, well built, and pleasant. A walk led back from an iron gate to a short flight of steps and the front entrance. The first room one entered was a small reception hall. From there it was but a few feet to the master’s studio. On the right, coming into the chamber, was an old-fashioned brick fireplace, beside which stood “Captain Kidd’s Treasure Chest,” found in many a magazine illustration. Across from the chest was the high-backed bench which decorated more than one colonial picture, and beneath the fireplace mantel, suspended by chains, was the rifle which the reader could find depicted in the hands of an embattled farmer on Lexington Green. Approximately twenty feet from the entrance was a small office. The left rear corner of the building, to the side of this office, was a small room used as a studio by the artist’s sister, Katherine Pyle.

Beside the front walk, well to the left of this building and between it and the street, Howard Pyle constructed, in 1900, his “school hall.” The structure was oblong in shape and lay parallel to the path. It was divided into three separate rooms, each with an individual entrance.

34 Letter from William J. Aylward to the writer, Nov. 10, 1946.
35 From a Howard Pyle letter to Dr. MacAlister, Feb. 14, 1900, quoted in Abbott, 275.
The two buildings were so situated that they somewhat resembled a reversed and disjointed L with the top of the figure closest to the road. The upper part of the L was the working quarters for the students.

There were to be no formal entrance examinations to this school and no course requirements. It was, in effect, a graduate school for selected artists operating without the onus of "credit hours" or degrees. The criteria for admittance were, in the order that its founder placed them, imagination and enthusiasm, artistic ability, and drawing technique. Primarily, Pyle was looking for the individual able to follow his theories of mental projection and composition, theories he had successfully advanced at Drexel.

The first to come to Wilmington were those who followed their instructor from Philadelphia. They came by invitation only, and were among the outstanding men and women of the later years in Drexel. Arriving shortly after the building was completed were Stanley M. Arthurs and Frank E. Schoonover, both destined to remain in Wilmington in close contact with Howard Pyle until he left for Italy (although not as students after the first few years), and Philip Hoyt, James E. McBurney, Ethel Franklin Betts, Sarah Stillwell, and Ellen Thompson.\(^{37}\)

Within a year, all of the studios were filled by carefully chosen students. In the first room, nearest Franklin Street, in early 1902, were Francis Newton, Samuel M. Palmer, James E. McBurney, and Philip R. Goodwin. The middle section was occupied by Clifford Ashley, Ernest J. Cross, Gordon M. McCouch, William J. Aylward, Arthur E. Becher, and Henry Jarvis Peck. Frank E. Schoonover and Stanley M. Arthurs were in the rear studio.\(^{38}\) During part of the first winter (1901-1902) the rear studio was occupied for the first time and only time by two young ladies, Ethel Betts and Dorothy Warren.

New arrivals replenished the busy studios from time to time: Sidney M. Chase, Harvey Dunn, George Harding, Percy V. E. Ivory, Thornton Oakley, Edwin Roscoe Shrader, Harry E. Townsend, Allen Tupper True, Walter Whitehead, and Newell C. Wyeth. The ar-

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36 Letter from Howard Pyle to Edward Penfield, Mar. 17, 1900, quoted in ibid., 216-217.
37 There is no evidence to show that women occupied any of the school studios other than during the winter of 1901-1902 when Ethel F. Betts and Dorothy Warren worked for a time in the rear studio. Letters from Ethel Franklin Betts (Bains), Nov. 30, 1946, and Dorothy Warren (Andrews), Jan. 18, 1947, to the writer.
38 Letter from Henry J. Peck to the writer, Nov. 5, 1946.
rangement of artists in the various chambers was subject to frequent change. In general, assignment was based on the degree of the individual's development. Thornton Oakley remembered that "One of my vivid recollections of those early days down in Wilmington is of our series of studios. There were three. One was for the babies; another was given to the middle stage students; and another studio, the third, was given to two very august grandees or graduates (Schoonover and Arthurs)."

As a student was "graduated or eased out" of the studio, another student was ready, from a long list of applicants, to take his place. No time limit was placed on the occupants. When Howard Pyle decided that a youth was ready for independent work and could not profit from further instruction, it was suggested that he find other quarters. Many students, after finishing their period of training, found studios in Wilmington where they could receive Pyle's advice when needed.

As time passed, the fame of the school soared. A colony of artists grew up in Wilmington composed of those who wished to benefit from Pyle's advice, which he gave willingly to all who earnestly desired it, and of those who wanted to attend the Monday evening composition class. The colony comprised two general groups of students. First, there were the "graduates" who had studied with Pyle at Drexel or, later, at Franklin Street. In this group were Arthurs, Aylward, Becher, Dunn, Peck, Schoonover, True, and Wyeth, and, among the women, E. F. Betts, Stilwell, and Thompson. The second group included those who, while not attached to Pyle as full-time students, were welcomed to his lectures on composition and, in some cases, were invited to use the school studios in the temporary absence of a regular tenant. Many of them were practicing illustrators be-

40 Letter from Henry J. Peck to the writer, Nov. 5, 1946.
fore they arrived at Wilmington. One of these was Frances Rogers, who recalled that

Aside from the few men privileged to work in studios adjoining Mr. Pyle’s, each of us had our own studios in town. We were professional artists, working for publication. . . . His weekly talks were a constant source of inspiration to all of us. When we needed specific advice we carried our canvases to Mr. Pyle’s studio and he was always very generous—willing to take time from his own work in order to help us solve our problems.42

Harold M. Brett, William Harnden Foster, Anton Otto Fischer, and Ernest C. Peixotto, to list but a few, were familiar names to those who followed magazine illustration. Peixotto was typical of many who sought out Howard Pyle for assistance. He had illustrated for some of the best magazines, including Harper’s and The Century, but, feeling that his field was too limited and stylized, he moved to Wilmington to obtain the benefits of the broader vision found there. But—and in this he was not typical—he was too “set” to be helped, although he continued to contribute successfully to a somewhat narrower field.43

Howard Pyle insisted that his students be young when they came to study under him. Their minds then were pliable, their imaginations were active, and they could shake off any stultifying influences of academicism. Probably the youngest of all was Dorothy Warren. According to her own testimony, she was too immature to dedicate herself to the exacting standards maintained by Howard Pyle.

My mother sent some of my drawings to Mr. Pyle and he offered to teach me and to have me live with his family. I went to Wilmington in the Fall of 1901 (I was fourteen the following January), and was no doubt an unsatisfactory pupil from the start. I wanted to draw whatever I chose and to do it quickly, instead of working painstakingly from objects selected by my teacher. Also I was not used to working in the afternoons and wanted to be playing outdoors. Mr. Pyle was very patient with me and even took me into his studio to work for awhile, but by May he was quite through with me and I went home.44

43 Told by Anna Whelan Betts to the writer, Jan. 21, 1947.
44 Letter from Dorothy Warren (Andrews) to the writer, Jan. 18, 1947. Howard Pyle often took students into his home despite the size of his rather large family. Ethel Franklin Betts, who was in Wilmington two winters, wrote, Nov. 30, 1946, that “the second winter I had the privilege of living in his home. Also I lived with the Pyles in the summertime at Chadd’s Ford”; and Thornton Oakley recalled that Ethel Penniwell Brown went with the Pyles to Rehoboth Beach, the family summer home, in the early 1900’s. Letter of Oct. 22, 1946.
The ideal age was between eighteen and twenty-one, although some of the regular students were older. William J. Aylward was twenty-six and had experienced "10 years of drudgery at commercial work" when he began his study in Wilmington. But most were within the desired age limits. Thornton Oakley, George Harding, Harvey Dunn, and N. C. Wyeth were all in their early twenties, and there were others who were younger. Gordon McCouch "joined Pyle . . . when I was about 17." Admission to the school was by application only, and the aspirant was advised to submit examples of his ability. Sketches, drawings, and paintings arrived in Wilmington from art schools throughout the country, and from untutored hopefuls and experienced veterans alike. These served as both application blank and entrance examination. Passing grades were rare. Although hundreds applied, there was room in the school for only a few. Pyle searched the examples for one important quality: purpose. What did the pupil have to say and what could he, with proper guidance, learn to say? It was an exacting test to meet.

There were no tuition charges made to any of the students in Wilmington. Howard Pyle's instruction was free to all the regular group, and his advice was for the asking to any in need of it. So far as is known, Howard Pyle never charged a fellow artist for assistance on a problem. The only expenses to be met in connection with the school were models' fees, art supplies, and a proportionate share of the studio rent. Art materials were not expensive in those days, especially as Pyle made arrangements to have them sold at cost. Students often managed the art supply store. For a year's work, the supplies would

45 Letter from William J. Aylward to the writer, Nov. 3, 1946.
46 Letter from Gordon M. McCouch to the writer, Jan. 1, 1947.
47 "When you apply for admission to the school, don't send me 'samples' of your work, send examples! There are no 'samples' of art," said Howard Pyle to Harvey Dunn at the Chicago Art Institute in the spring of 1904. Told by Harvey Dunn to the writer, Nov. 29, 1946.
48 "In 1903, there were between two and three hundred . . . applications, but only three of the aspirants were admitted." Abbott, 21. "In the first year of the Wilmington School twelve applicants were selected out of five hundred." Told by Thornton Oakley to the writer, Oct. 22, 1946.
49 Told by Thornton Oakley to the writer, Feb. 6, 1947. At one time Walter Whitehead managed the art store. In 1904 two other pupils, Thornton Oakley and Allen True, ran it. Pyle would purchase the supplies from his own pocket, and the students would settle their accounts at the end of the month with Thornton Oakley, who handled the finances. He, in turn, paid Pyle. However, as with most students, there were often overdue accounts. It was the unpleasant task of Oakley to collect payments. True's duty was to keep the stock replenished and notify Pyle when new orders were necessary. Told by Thornton Oakley to the writer, July 16, 1947.
average as little as forty dollars and seldom more than sixty, although there may have been greater individual variations. The studio rent depended upon operating and maintenance expenses, but was always moderate. One student paid $58.75 in rent for the year beginning August 1, 1902, or approximately $4.90 a month.\textsuperscript{50} This was certainly reasonable, and well below the limit that Howard Pyle had thought would be required: "... I think that from seven to ten dollars a month (exclusive of the hire of models) would be all that they would be called upon to pay."\textsuperscript{51}

To lighten the financial burden of the student, professional assignments were given him as soon as he was prepared to handle them. Many young artists made professional debuts before leaving the school. One young man, Allen Tupper True, earned twenty dollars for his illustrations during the period from August, 1902, to August, 1903. The next year his income from this source rose to $223.10, and from August, 1904, to August, 1905, he received $762.50.\textsuperscript{52}

The daily training routine was simple but rigid, keynoted by unremitting toil and effort. Seriousness and concentration were emphasized. Pyle had, in the course of his successful career, cultivated both qualities to a high degree. "The first thing that struck me as a student about Mr. Pyle was his seriousness of purpose; the second was his concentration," wrote George Harding a decade after Pyle's death.\textsuperscript{53} From 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. (a minimum quitting hour), the group was made to devote its full attention to the art of illustration. Mornings were spent in drawing from the draped or costumed model. Long hours were given over to detailed analysis of sculpturesque folds of cloth and the technique of drawing the costumed figure.\textsuperscript{54} In the afternoons the students practiced sketching the construction of the human face and figure without the use of models. Such emotions as love, joy, fear and hate were portrayed. Compositions suitable for illustrative purposes were developed. Above all, the warm human element was injected into the creation. There was no attempt to draw abstract objects, or to lay out circles, squares, or other geometric figures in composition practice. From the very first day of

\textsuperscript{50} Noteboook of Allen Tupper True.
\textsuperscript{51} Letter from Howard Pyle to J. Henry Harper, Jan. 27, 1900, quoted in Abbott, 215.
\textsuperscript{52} Noteboook of Allen Tupper True.
\textsuperscript{54} Told by Harvey Dunn to the writer, Nov. 29, 1946.
training under Pyle, the pupil was taught to depict man in all of his various moods. From this, it was but another step to represent men arranged in such a manner as to compose an effective illustration.

Most of the day found the master hard at work in his room writing and painting for magazines and books. Twice daily he visited the pupils, recalled Henry Peck. “He came in to criticize, never harshly, but usually encouragingly, our efforts each morning before entering his own studio and came in again before going home to lunch.” From 8:30 to 9 A.M., he went from one to the other of the group discussing their work. His object was to see if the student had managed to capture the spirit of the subject. Detail was of only minor interest to him in these critiques. If the essence, the feeling, was there and the arrangement of the elements was good, the details could be worked out. He was always fearful that the artist would lose his sense of proportion in a maze of trifles.

Again at noon Pyle spent a half hour with his students. Here the same object was sought: how well was the essence of the emotion captured and the composition mastered? These were the foundations.

In general the instruction at Wilmington was a continuation and an elaboration of the techniques evolved at Drexel, but placed on a basis of much closer relationship between teacher and pupil. There was the same emphasis on projection and composition. All students were told to “‘dig deep’—be disappointed in what you have to work with [the mediums used] but work hard for your effect.” Now that he had no beginners to train, there was less time given over to principles of drawing than at Drexel. Preferring to leave the training of those just starting to other teachers, he wished to mold the advanced students. Thornton Oakley recalled that “During three years with him he did not mention a word about materials, methods, mediums or techniques.” Harvey Dunn recalled that “Pyle did not tell students how to paint for he did not know how to paint, himself—or so he claimed. We learned nothing about techniques.” In an article written shortly after the death of Pyle, Sidney Chase stated that

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55 Letter from Henry J. Peck to the writer, Nov. 5, 1946.
56 Told by Thornton Oakley to the writer, Oct. 22, 1946.
57 Ibid.
58 Told by Stanley M. Arthurs to the writer, Dec. 27, 1946.
59 Told by Thornton Oakley to the writer, Oct. 22, 1946.
60 Told by Harvey Dunn to the writer, Nov. 29, 1946.
It is easy enough to learn to draw; it is very difficult to learn to think!

Many times has Mr. Pyle told us that, and many more times he has needed to retell it, as this statement expressed his deep conviction of the only way to make vital pictures.

Of course Mr. Pyle knew that, in reality, it is not easy enough to learn to draw. But what he meant to express was that, for us younger art students, the enormous difficulty of putting into a picture the essential qualities of deep feeling, sympathy and sincerity far outweighed the lesser difficulty of accurately learning to draw.  

"His teaching method consisted entirely of endeavoring to instill in his students a love of the beauty of nature and of life although he never used the words ‘nobility’ or ‘beauty.’ He spoke only of the underlying spirituality of the subject. We were told to throw ourselves into the subject that we have chosen heart and soul." Thus Thornton Oakley described the inspirational quality inherent in Pyle’s teaching.

Wilmington had a vast advantage over Drexel. Because the school was smaller and the group more selective, there were more opportunities for personal contact and individual instruction. The weak, unstable drawing of a new member would soon begin to assume coherent design. New meaning would develop in his work as he came to realize the objectives of the master intent on creating art based on the highest spiritual and moral plane. Illustration was lifted out of its restricted limitations of “commercial art” and became to the pupil a true American art, worthy of his best and most sincere efforts.

A Wilmington innovation was the Tuesday Evening Sketch Club held during the winter of 1903–1904. One of the group, Allen Tupper True, recalled the meetings:

The Sketch Club—held once a week where each made a sketch of a subject common to all—seemed to me the big convivial and constructive thing H. P. did. Each drawing was numbered and drawing by lots we got one another's drawings—No one ever got a H. P. a second time. I have one H. P. did of the subject “Idiocy”—a fine pen-and-ink of a simple minded shepherd.

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61 Article by Sidney M. Chase in *The Christian Science Monitor*, Nov. 13, 1912. Stanley Arthurs expressed it another way: "... after the hand had learned to draw—then did the soul have a message to convey." Letter from Stanley M. Arthurs to the writer, Apr. 23, 1945.
62 Told by Thornton Oakley to the writer, Oct. 22, 1946.
63 Letter from Allen Tupper True to the writer, July 14, 1947.
The Sketch Club usually assembled in one of the three school studios although it met occasionally in the master's room. Each of the Franklin Street students took a turn at being host. He assigned a subject (such as "The Message," "Idiocy," "The Challenge") to the entire group. Then the members drew upon their imaginations to create illustrations that would best express the topic of the evening. The use of any medium was permissible, but most preferred to use pen-and-ink. After the drawings were completed, each would receive the sketch of another member. The exciting event, of course, was to get a Howard Pyle original. At least one of these hastily executed Pyle creations found its way into a book at a much later date when it appeared on the fly leaf of *Howard Pyle's Book of Pirates.*

Pyle's personality, as at Drexel, continued to exercise a great influence on his pupils. The figure that he cut was long remembered. Anna Whelan Betts described Howard Pyle as "a distinguished looking man" with a high forehead and strong, mobile features. William J. Aylward wrote that "He was a large, ruddy, well-built man with a fine head firmly set on broad shoulders, six feet and over. . . . He did not look at all like an artist—few of the big ones do." N. C. Wyeth, studying Howard Pyle's face with the imagination of an artist, remembered that

The recollection of the masks of Beethoven, Washington, Goethe, Keats, passed in a swift succession before my vision and in a sudden grasp of the truth I realized that the artist's face before me was actually a living composite of the men of history and romance which he had so magically and dramatically perpetuated on canvas.

Pyle's face attracted and commanded the attention of his students. Thirty-six years after his passing, Thornton Oakley retained a vivid impression:

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64 Told by Thornton Oakley to the writer, July 16, 1947. One of these Sketch Club creations appears on a flyleaf of Merle Johnson, *Howard Pyle's Book of Pirates* (New York, 1921).

65 Told by Anna Whelan Betts to the writer, Jan. 21, 1947.


... his countenance, broad, benign; his remarkably small mouth, speaking now with touch of drollery, and now with firmness, now with lofty message that quickens the heartbeats of his fortunate class. His eyes, shadowed by the overhang of brows, by their mystery lend enchantment to his words.

This physical appearance served as a vehicle for Pyle's personality and ideals. He continued, in composition classes, in private discussions, and in social gatherings with his pupils, to stimulate them with his seriousness of purpose and his emphasis on spiritual values. The young, impressionable artist, N. C. Wyeth, was profoundly moved:

... I know that he meant infinitely more to me than a teacher of illustration. It was this commanding spirit of earnestness, and of love, that made his leadership distinctive, and which has perpetuated in the hearts of all his pupils a deep affection kindred to that which one holds toward his own parents.

With patience, sympathy, and humor, Howard Pyle molded his pupils. Four examples may be cited to show how he conducted his individual criticisms and assisted the students. The first comes from Thornton Oakley.

I had been endeavoring with oils and brush and palette to suggest on canvas the spirit of the model that had been posed before us. It was my first handling of the medium—as it was, I believe, of the other raw recruits who formed the class—and my efforts, I full well knew, were terrifying to behold. When H. P. stood before my easel he was silent for many a minute. At length he spoke. "Oakley," he said, choosing his words with care, "either you are color-blind, or else you are a genius."

Harvey Dunn spoke years later of the response made to his own impetuousness in the class:

When I was painting a picture in Howard Pyle's class I had a certain hunch that it should be done in umbers and greens. Pyle came in and said "No, no, that's not the way to do it." Then he proceeded to paint it with lavenders and all colors. After class, although it seemed sacriligious [sic] at the time, I scraped it out and painted it the way I originally intended. When Pyle came in, he said: "Ah—you are motivated by an idea." He approved as long as I had an idea.

71 Charles Andres, Notes Taken in the Picture Class of Harvey Dunn, 1938-1941 (Privately printed, n.d.), 8.
N. C. Wyeth remembered the emergence of another young student named Philip L. Hoyt.

One member, an ungainly lad from the back country of northern New England, found his way into the Pyle classes. He had dreamed in his remote village, of becoming an artist; of picturing his visions of cities he had never seen, and of the lives of the people therein. He had come into the composition class week after week with sketches of society folk and kindred subjects. They were, naturally unconvincing and poor, but the master’s interest in them did not flag. Meanwhile, he assiduously gathered from the fellow accounts of his life in the north woods, of breaking snow-roads, or gathering maple-sap, of log-driving, of corn-husking. It began to dawn upon the Vermonter that his own life at home, the incidents of his own north country, which he knew and loved, were interesting. His pictures gained in vitality and importance. He had found himself.72

The last of these reminiscences, from Allen Tupper True, is a tribute to the patience of Howard Pyle with the young men.

I recall days in the “middle studio” when I was doing my first mag. illustration: H. P. would come to my easel and paint out my horse’s head saying “True a horse’s head is long as a barrel.” And I’d say “But Western horses aren’t built that way.” When he was gone I’d paint the head the way I wanted it. Next day he’d paint it out and I’d paint it in again. This went on for quite awhile—but I stuck it out—and it was all very friendly—although this incident was not in line with the behavior of most of his pupils and called for the exercise on his part of some tolerance.73

These examples show only a few instances of Pyle at work with his pupils. Humor, intelligence, skill, patience, and sympathetic understanding were all brought into play. The methods he employed were as diverse as his pupils were many. The episodes serve only to point out his emphasis on the development of the individual as opposed to the then current concern with class instruction.

Nowhere did the ability of Howard Pyle as a teacher appear to better advantage than in the Monday evening composition classes. These were, apparently, an outgrowth of the Tuesday Evening Sketch Club.

The element which was nearest to Pyle's heart in painting was composition. Even when his students were given a model for practice in drawing he urged them to make something of it—to make a picture. He wanted them to get the composition habit. This point of view is common now, but was not at that time. . . . Pyle used the essential constituents of composition authoritatively.74

Every Monday evening in his own studio or, occasionally, in one of the school studios, an open class was held.75 Students and members of the colony were invited to attend and to submit original compositions for criticism. The drawings submitted were usually rough charcoal sketches rendered in outline. They were signed by their creators, but bore no titles; the subjects of the pictures were optional. Only rarely, as in the case of a competition among the students, did Howard Pyle suggest a theme of one word, such as “frustration,” “fear,” or “joy.” One by one the pictures were placed before the group. After studying and considering the drawing, his remarks would begin. Here is the scene as recalled by Ida Daugherty Aylward, one of the Wilmington Colony76:

Pyle stood under a strong light, usually with one leg on the rung of a stool, and he thumbtacked on the wall one composition at a time (big charcoal drawing, covering a sheet) and took it in. Then he asked the maker if what he had gotten—he stated it—was what the maker had intended to show.

If that wasn’t it, it was unsuccessful. But that was all to the good, for then he turned toward us in the darkness outside that ring of light, and as we listened, enthralled, he dove into his own profound imagination, and described to us what he saw in its depths, as portraying that thing we had tried to show. A wonderful word picture grew before us. We were fired with it. . . . He had gone so much deeper than we could, yet had such a sure grip on reality, and added mystery and beauty and feeling we hadn’t dreamed.

Unfortunately for the historian, these remarks were preserved mostly in the minds and hearts of those who were present. However,

74 Unpublished speech delivered by Prof. Dean Keller, Yale University School of Fine Arts, to the Wilmington Art Center, Wilmington, Del., Apr. 19, 1942.
75 After the first few years—at least by 1907, although the exact date is unknown—these classes were sometimes held on Saturday afternoons instead of Monday nights. See Jessie Trimble, “The Founder of an American School of Art,” Outlook, LXXXV (1907), 453-460.
76 Letter from Dagh Aylward (Ida Daugherty) to the writer, Apr. 8, 1947.
there were some written down, "as near as I could record them in the same words," by Allen Tupper True, a small selection of which is given below.\textsuperscript{77}

"Project your mind into the subject until you actually live in it. Throw your heart into the picture and then jump in after it—Don't take my criticisms as iron clad rules but more as suggestions because while you are there [pointing down] and I am here [holding arm horizontal] nature is away up there [pointing up] . . . ."

"I think of the sky as the source of light and this light lifting things out of the world's gloom produces form. The great clouds of smoke and the engines I saw crowded about the Broad Street Station were very picturesque in the sunset; but not until I depict the laborer and his wife returning from work—or somehow suggest the love and trials of human life do I make a picture that interests Humanity. . . ."

"When you make a picture for a Magazine put yourself in the place of a person who opens its pages and glances on them—is your picture interesting?"\textsuperscript{78}

"The real painter paints for Humanity—not for technique or to please his fellow artists—Ben Johnson's [plays were] perfect literary composition[s]—his technique was perfect—yet people flocked to see As You Like It. —Full of technical errors yet full of humanity. Shakespeare was human in his writings. . . ."

"American illustrators need not confine themselves to American subjects but they must treat the subjects in a way that will appeal to Americans. . . ."

"Make your pictures live! There are 50,000 'artists' but how many make their pictures living? Have an aim in your art. . . ."

"Do the people in your pictures have names?!

"Oh! if young illustrators would only tell what they know of life and of God's beautiful world instead of what they know about applying paint to canvas. . . ."\textsuperscript{79}

\textsuperscript{77}Notebook of Allen Tupper True. "My notebook of H. P.'s. composition class talks (or criticisms of men's work in the studios) was filled day by day as the talks occurred. Usually in the evening after work but sometimes as soon as I could get to the notebook." Letter from Allen Tupper True to the writer, July 14, 1947.

\textsuperscript{78}"Don't make it necessary to ask questions about your pictures. Howard Pyle used to say it's utterly impossible for you to go to all the newsstands and explain your pictures." Miss Taylor, \textit{An Evening In the Classroom Being Notes Taken in One of the Classes of Painting Conducted by Harvey Dunn} (Privately printed, 1934), 31.

\textsuperscript{79}Ibid. The underlining, capitalization, and punctuation is as found in True's notebooks.
There was "not a word about arrangement or design" in these discussions, according to Sidney M. Chase. The policy of emphasizing thought over technique, as demonstrated in the day classes, was continued. If there was any condemnation to be made at all, Pyle would say, "That isn’t right; they wouldn’t do it that way!" Throughout the entire Wilmington period, he continued to stress the ability to project one’s ideals and thoughts indelibly into the picture.

The fame of these lectures spread. Visitors, artists, art editors, and laymen came from Philadelphia and New York. A contemporary magazine writer, Jessie Trimble, noted that "New York art editors take the trip occasionally as a sort of ‘bracer.’" Joseph H. Chapin, famed art editor of Scribner’s Magazine, and Harrison S. Morris of The Ladies’ Home Journal had been known to attend. All of Pyle’s students seem to agree that the composition class was a major element in his teaching. It gave them a new outlook on life and a new philosophy on which to build their futures. Sidney Chase stressed this fact. "He opened my vision to a philosophy of living that has inspired my whole life. Even if I never painted another picture this remains true."

Upon occasion, the teacher would "loosen up and be just ‘one of the boys,’” said Henry J. Peck. This he managed to do without loss of dignity and without injury to the respect his pupils held for him. In the evening Sketch Club he was merely another member of the group. Often in the afternoons before returning to his home he would stop at one of the studios and talk with the students concerning many things: art and its relation to life, his philosophy of illustration, and his ambitions and aspirations. In this manner was driven home to the student the principle that art was a thread woven into the pattern of life itself. He told Wyeth on his arrival at the school: “My boy, you have come here for help. If so, you are here to live your best, and to work hard!”

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81 Ibid.
82 Jessie Trimble, "The Founder of An American School of Art,” Outlook, LXXXV (1907), 456.
84 Letter from Sidney M. Chase to the writer, Jan. 27, 1947.
85 Letter from Henry J. Peck to the writer, Nov. 5, 1946.
By 1910 more than seventy-five students had studied with Pyle for varying periods of time in Wilmington. The amount of time he devoted to teaching had fallen off somewhat after 1905, when he turned much of his attention to mural painting. He continued to give free criticism, and there were occasional composition discussions, but during the last three or four years the school was not as energetically pursued as before. The demands on his health and time were too exacting. But never did he forget his mission as a teacher. There were around him, in the school studios and in studios on nearby Bancroft and Orange streets, young men and women from the early group who were successfully producing illustrations for the foremost periodicals and publishing houses of the nation. Arthurs, Ashley, Aylward, Dunn, Schoonover, Shrader, and Wall were living in Wilmington, Wyeth was located at Chadd's Ford, and Oakley, Harding, and Betts were in studios in Philadelphia. The group was flourishing. Others would arrive from time to time to replenish the colony.

There was yet another phase of Howard Pyle's teaching career. A summer school at Chadd's Ford was founded while Pyle was at Drexel, growing out of his experiences at that institution. "He felt that to a limited number of pupils he could give during the summer months so intensive and so practical a training that it would repay any sacrifice which he might have to make."

Accordingly, ten scholarships were offered in 1898 to members of the Schools of Illustration and of Drawing, Painting and Modeling. These scholarships included free instruction, board and lodging, and models' fees. After a successful season the offer was repeated in 1899. By agreement with the authorities of the Institute, Pyle received no salary for his instruction.

When the school in Wilmington was opened, the summer sessions were resumed in 1901. The regulars in the school studios were invited

87 In 1905 he was commissioned by Cass Gilbert to paint "The Battle of Nashville" for the Governor's Reception Room in the Minnesota State Capitol. Abbott, 231.
88 Ibid., 210.
89 Scholarship students in 1898 were: Stanley M. Arthurs, John H. Betts, Angel de Cora, Clyde O. DeLand, Winfield S. Lukens, Robert L. Mason, Anne A. Mhoon, Frank E. Schoonover, Sarah S. Stilwell and Ellen B. Thompson. In 1899 those selected were: Stanley M. Arthurs, Anna W. Betts, Bertha C. Day, Clyde O. DeLand, Philip L. Hoyt, Robert L. Mason, Emlen McConnell, Frank E. Schoonover, Sarah S. Stilwell, and Ellen B. Thompson. Taken from the Records of Drexel Institute of Technology of Art, Science and Industry.
to attend, and certain members of the colony were given the opportunity to study in closer contact with Mr. Pyle.

Chadd's Ford is the site of the Battle of the Brandywine, on September 11, 1777. It is situated in the rolling hills of the Brandywine Creek twelve miles northwest of Wilmington. Here "for five glorious summers" the students worked with Howard Pyle in an old grist mill converted into a roomy studio.\textsuperscript{80}

It was at Chadd's Ford that teacher-student relations were most intimate and convivial. Ethel Franklin Betts remembered that "The girls were housed at Chadd's Ford in Lafayette's Headquarters—and the boys in the Washington Headquarters."\textsuperscript{91} The Pyle family lived next to the Lafayette Headquarters building in "a lofty, square, early American country mansion of unpretentious dignity with a generous porch surrounding it."\textsuperscript{92} Howard Pyle had married Anne Poole of Wilmington on April 12, 1881. There were seven children from this marriage. One son died in childhood and the remaining six, four boys and two girls, were living during the years at Chadd's Ford. Every Saturday evening impromptu parties were held at the Pyle home. Charades were exhibited from the porch that served as a stage, and both family and students participated in various games.\textsuperscript{93} When it became cool and darkness had set in, there was warmth and light from the fireplace inside the house.

Many of the students had bicycles, and there were sketching excursions that ranged the countryside in search of suitable material. Picnics, attended by Pyle, were not uncommon, and there were holiday trips to such nearby points of interest as Valley Forge.\textsuperscript{94} It was in gatherings like these and in the evening hours of social comradeship that Howard Pyle is best remembered by many of his pupils.

The toil continued as strenuously at Chadd's Ford as in Wilmington. Indeed, there was in the beauty of nature that surrounded the group a constant reaffirmation of the diligent pursuit of Pyle's high ideals. If any student came out to the Brandywine Valley in hopes of a vacation he was sadly disappointed. All day long, from eight in the morning till five or six in the evening, they painted in the old

\textsuperscript{80} Article by N. C. Wyeth in \textit{The Christian Science Monitor}, Nov. 13, 1912.
\textsuperscript{91} Letter from Ethel Franklin Betts (Bains) to the writer, Dec. 12, 1946.
\textsuperscript{92} W. J. Aylward, "The Giant at The Crossroads," ii.
\textsuperscript{93} Told by Phoebe Pyle (Brokaw) and Theodore Pyle to the writer, Feb. 11, 1947.
\textsuperscript{94} Told by Anna Whelan Betts to the writer, Jan. 21, 1947.
grist mill. As an example of the accomplishment of the summer sessions, Howard Pyle wrote to Drexel's president at the end of the first class in 1898 that "... all of the students have shown more advance in two months of summer study than they have in a year of ordinary instruction."95

Emphasis continued to be placed on individual instruction and on composition. The composition class was held on Sunday morning rather than Monday night.96 There was less use of models than at Wilmington; nature served as a more than adequate substitute.97 Pyle would tramp through the countryside with his students and point out the beauties of nature as a reflection of the glory of God. The student was lifted from the commonplace to a new and higher level. He was inspired to represent in his illustrations, no matter how simple they might be, something of the beauty that was in the world all about him. Of these tours, Frank E. Schoonover wrote98:

Of such a nature were the lasting truths gathered upon these pleasant walks of a late afternoon with Howard Pyle acting as interpreter and friend.

That appreciation of the basic truths of nature, with its fragmentary groups of human beings, was divided and subdivided by Mr. Pyle into the most minute detail. Nothing seemed to be too small for careful consideration.

The theory of mental projection was not forgotten. It was often given greater accent and new interpretation by incidents like the one recounted by Mr. Schoonover99:

I remember one frosty day in the fall at Chadd's Ford we had been hunting nuts and had come to a little stream in the meadow, where the shellbarks had fallen into the water. The stream was very cold, and we stood and looked at the nuts on its bed, and finally Mr. Pyle said, "Well, there is only one way to get them, and that is to go right in after them." So we took off our shoes and stockings and waded in and got them. When we came out of the water we were shivering and I remember Mr. Pyle said, "That is the sort of feeling you must put into your work. That is the way the soldiers felt at Valley Forge. They felt that same chill. When you make an illustration of Valley Forge, that is the sort of thing that you must put into the picture."

95 Letter from Howard Pyle to Dr. James MacAlister, Oct. 12, 1898, quoted in Abbott, 212.
96 Told by W. J. Aylward to the writer, Mar. 25, 1947.
97 Ibid.
Such incidents served as a vivid demonstration of Pyle's remarks on projection so often expressed in the studio.

At Chadd's Ford, as in Philadelphia and Wilmington, practical results were objectives. It was a group of his summer students who illustrated Paul Leicester Ford's *Janice Meredith.* Each of the scholarship pupils from Drexel worked throughout the summer on an original composition as a sort of masterpiece or graduation thesis. A number of these were sold to *Harper's.* Of the later Wilmington students, many made drawings and paintings in the summer school at Brandywine Creek which later found their way into publications.

It was held to be an honor to be selected to attend the summer sessions at Chadd's Ford. Pyle was a recognized authority on colonial history. He would talk to the young people about the Battle of the Brandywine, of attack and retreat, of forced march and of skirmish. Wyeth spoke for all the Chadd's Ford group when he wrote: "Thus to know Howard Pyle—in this country of all countries—where Washington had fought in the valley before Pyle's own doorstep... To know Howard Pyle here was a profound privilege." By vivid word picture Pyle made live the people that he had represented with pen and brush. To those who heard him there was a new awareness of what he meant when he said that the artist must live in his pictures. Also, accuracy of research, painstaking thoroughness of factual knowledge, and the practice of illustration as fine art were given new importance and value. One point could not be missed: Howard Pyle created excellent pictures of the Revolutionary period because he knew the story of the era and because his ability was bolstered by a vast host of facts.

After 1903 there was no formal class conducted at Chadd's Ford, although students went there on occasion, in the company of their teacher, to sketch. But Howard Pyle, who always seemed to have more requests for his illustrations than he could hope to fill, was busier than ever. In addition to his illustrating and writing for periodicals and books, he was turning more and more to mural painting. But the purposes of the Chadd's Ford sojourn had been

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100 Abbott, 210.
102 Told by Phoebe Pyle (Brokaw) and Theodore Pyle to the writer, Feb. 11, 1947; told by Harvey Dunn to the writer, Nov. 29, 1946.
served. The intense concentration and the communion with nature had produced in the minds of those who attended an impression that continued through life. There, more than anywhere else, Pyle was revealed as a friend and a fellow student of the arts. There his high hopes and ideals became expressible in words which were absorbed by those who studied with him.

What did Howard Pyle leave with his students when he departed for Europe in 1910, never to return?

First, and above all, he gave to each of them a belief in the high destiny of art and of his role in fulfilling that destiny. Illustration was a worthy way to say worth-while things. Pyle was an idealist, albeit intensely practical in his methods, and his students were aware of this. He spoke often, said Thornton Oakley, “of the underlying spirituality of the subject.” In this lay the way of truth. The evidence of his own high standards shone forth in the achievement of his followers. They had no inferior ideas to express.

Another heritage that he bequeathed was the axiom that the artist must live in his creation. Pyle wanted his students so to project themselves into the picture before them that they would become a part of it. Art, true art, is not cool and detached. It is a transfer of emotion. The more noble the emotion to be expressed, the more lofty the result should be. He did not teach them to be sentimental, but to be unashamed to show those feelings which deserve to be preserved and recorded. The artist is the medium through which that which is true and spiritually worthy is conveyed to the onlooker. Pyle himself was tender without being sentimental, and he showed many of his students the important difference between the two words. “He made me unafraid to be dramatic,” Harvey Dunn said in explanation of the employment of feeling in painting.

In order that the emotions to be portrayed in art should not be crass or vulgar, Pyle stressed the principle of living a worthy life. Art was a window to the soul of the artist, and it could enrich others only when the soul of the artist contained noble and enduring qualities. This he taught, and this he lived. Although he was under no necessity to teach and by so doing lost money, he did it unselfishly. “He was

103 Told by Thornton Oakley to the writer, Oct. 22, 1946.
104 Told by Harvey Dunn to the writer, Nov. 29, 1946.
a devoted teacher with unflagging inspiration. He thought that no effort was ever too much—and gave unstintingly of his time and energies to his pupils.”\textsuperscript{105} His example was a constant inspiration to them.

The spirit of his composition classes lingered in the memories of his students. Not only did he express there his philosophy of art, but, in the technical phases of illustration, he showed them how to compose effectively. They learned to put an idea on canvas logically, clearly, and beautifully. “He was a master of composition,” and he stimulated others to strive for perfection in this most important element.\textsuperscript{106}

Other principles were handed on to his pupils: earnestness of purpose, seriousness of intent, originality, concentration, and thoroughness of execution. All of these principles were a part of Pyle’s existence, and those who knew him received them from him.

But whatever his magic, he was never forgotten by his students. The uniqueness of his methods, the force of his personality, and the reach of his ideals remained enshrined in the hearts of them all. “Among the rich legacies he left the world none is more full of meaning than the ardent group of workers that he sent forth into the illustration field. To them he handed on his Torch of Truth. Theirs now it is to keep afire its flame.”\textsuperscript{107}

\textit{Petersburg, Va.}

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\textbf{Richard Wayne Lykes}
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\textsuperscript{105} Letter from Ethel Franklin Betts (Bains) to the writer, Nov. 30, 1946.
\textsuperscript{106} Letter from Allen Tupper True to the writer, Jan. 13, 1947.