



Howard Pyle

Title

They Used to Drill Every Evening

Medium

Oil on canvas on board

Date

ca. 1892

Dimensions

30 1/4 × 20 in. (76.8 × 50.8 cm)

Accession number

78.27

Credit Line

Purchased with funds given anonymously, 1978

Web Description

An artist, illustrator, author, and teacher, Howard Pyle produced over 3,300 illustrations during his career and wrote and illustrated 19 books, including 13 for children

and young people. His success as an illustrator and writer resulted from his ability to create a realistic sense of drama and action. Pyle placed an emphasis on knowing a subject well before being able to paint it. His teaching influenced the work of N.C. Wyeth, Peter Hurd, Elizabeth Shippen Green, and many other successful artists. Although he illustrated a variety of themes, Pyle preferred subjects from history, particularly the medieval period in England and the American Revolution. He knew that printmakers at this time were still unable to correctly reproduce colored images for illustrations; therefore, he painted in a black and white, a technique called grisaille. *They Used to Drill Every Evening* is an illustration for Pyle's own story "The Soldiering of Beniah Stidham" published in *St. Nicholas* in December 1892. Pyle depicts colonial soldiers mustering before the village tavern as curious townspeople look on. Clearly there is some confusion in the ranks as the commanding officer drills his seemingly new recruits.