



N.C. Wyeth

Title

The Bloody Angle

Medium

Oil on canvas

Date

1912

Dimensions

46 1/4 × 33 1/4 in. (117.5 × 84.5 cm)

Accession number

2014.1

Credit Line

Gift of Charles S. Crompton, Jr., in memory of his wife,
Milbrey Dean Crompton, 2014

Web Description

Wyeth intended *The Bloody Angle* to evoke the general horror of war and specifically to depict a crucial part of the Battle of Spotsylvania, Virginia (1864). Johnston's text is powerful. "Then the storm broke, she wrote, "and the angle became the spot on earth where, it is estimated, in all the history of the earth the musketry fire was the heaviest. It became *The Bloody Angle*." Wyeth compressed both blue and gray soldiers into the lower two thirds of the picture, with the figures in the chaos of battle rising to a compositional angle symbolizing an horrific apex in the history of the war and of the country. He admitted to Mary Johnston that the composition was also constructed with Houghton Mifflin's advertising department in mind, feeling it would make an effective design for an advertising poster.